

ANALYSIS 7 POWERLESS DISCOMS

MONEY 8 CURBS LIKELY ON IMPORT OF FURNITURE

SPORTS 12 NADAL SETTLES KYRGIOS SCORE

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the pioneer

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THERE'S NO COMEDY IN ASWATHAMA: MEHREEN Page 11

GOVT TO SELL STAKE IN AIR INDIA, MARCH 17 DEADLINE FOR BIDS

In a revised push, the government on Monday announced plans to sell its entire stake in Air India. The development comes after an initial attempt to sell a majority stake in the airline failed to draw a single bid in 2018.



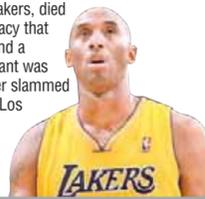
INDIAN-AMERICANS PROTEST IN 30 US CITIES AGAINST CITIZENSHIP ACT

India's 71st Republic day celebrations in the US on Sunday were marred by protests and marches, albeit peaceful ones, against recent changes in the citizenship law by a large number of Indian-Americans in various cities of the country.



NBA LEGEND KOBE BRYANT, TEENAGE DAUGHTER KILLED IN CHOPPER CRASH

Kobe Bryant, the basketball icon who won five NBA championships with the Los Angeles Lakers, died in a helicopter crash Sunday, leaving a legacy that spanned 20 years in professional sports and a growing second career as an investor.



HALF KG HAIR, SHAMPOO PACKETS REMOVED FROM GIRL'S STOMACH

A city hospital has removed more than half kg of human hair besides aplastic pieces like empty shampoo packets from a 13-year-old girl's stomach.



HEIGHTS OF POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM IN THE ELECTION OF CIVIC CHIEFS IN TS

Cong supports BJP and TRS; BJP backs Cong, MIM joins BJP in support of TRS

K VENKATESHWARLU HYDERABAD

Patience Johnson's famous quote "In politics there are no permanent friends, no permanent enemies but permanent interest" has come true, if one goes by Monday's election of chairmen and Mayors of municipalities and Corporations across Telangana state.



During election of chairpersons and Mayors of municipalities and Corporations across the state, no party followed the hard and fast rule, enemies becoming friends and vice versa

Corporators joined the TRS while another Congress corporator extended his support to the TRS mayor candidate. Roads and Buildings Minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy thanked the Congress and Independent candidates for extending their support to the TRS after the election.

A RARE FEAT...

TRS gets Mayor post in all 10 corporations

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TRS chairpersons elected in 112 municipalities out of 120

Congress chairpersons in 4 municipalities, BJP 2, MIM 2

The ruling TRS on Monday achieved a rare feat in the election of mayors and deputy mayors in municipal corporations and chairpersons in municipalities across the state. The TRS swept all the nine Municipal Corporations, winning the posts of Mayors and Deputy Mayors (except in Nizamabad) in Ramagundam, Badangpet, Meerpet, Bandlaguda Jagir, Boduppal, Peerzadiguda, Jawaharnagar, Nizampet and Nizamabad Municipal Corporations.

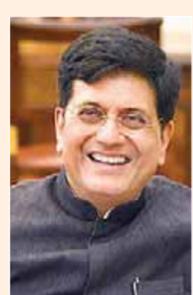


With this, TRS has achieved a rare feat of bagging all the ten mayor posts in municipal corporations that went for polls besides all deputy mayor posts barring Nizamabad. On the Municipality front also, TRS candidates kept up with their winning spree with 112 candidates from the pink party getting elected as chairpersons.



TS mountaineer Amgoth Thukaram conquers Mt. Aconcagua

3



Railways to go '100% Electric' by 2024: Goyal

5



UDAY not failure; new scheme likely in Budget, says RK Singh

8

TODAY

ALMANAC Month & Paksham: Magha & Shukla Paksha Panchangam Tithi: Tritiya: 08:21 am Nakshatram: Shalabhisha: 09:23 am Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work) Rahukalam: 03:17 pm - 04:41 pm Yamagandam: 09:40 am - 11:04 am Varjyam: 04:32 pm - 06:20 pm Gulika: 12:29 pm - 01:53 pm Good Time: (to start any important work) Amritkalam: 03:16 am - 05:04 am Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 pm - 12:51 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER Forecast: Clear with periodic clouds Temp: 33/19 Humidity: 39% Sunrise: 06:49 Sunset: 06:49 Current Weather Conditions Updated January 27, 2020 5:00 PM

KTR: Rs 173 crore per month to municipalities for development

- To adopt Delhi-type Baghedhari system 'Delhi parties' Cong, BJP doing 'silly politics'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Municipalities across Telangana state are guaranteed Rs 173 crores per month to take up developmental works. TRS working president KT Rama Rao said, "Rs 1,037 crore will come from the Finance Commission for all urban local bodies. State government will give a matching grant of Rs 1,037 crore, meaning that urban bodies will get Rs 2,074 crore per year or Rs 173 crore per month."



Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao addresses media persons at the Telangana Bhavan in Hyderabad on Monday.

He reiterated the words of Chief Minister that the money will be released to every municipality in the first week of every month without fail. Pointing to the Baghedhari system followed in Delhi, KTR

said that ward committees of youth, senior citizen, women, RWA committees on similar lines will be set up in the state. The Municipal Affairs Minister said that the government was working towards planned development in

towns. Thanking the people for huge majority in the urban body polls, KTR vowed to ensure that all election promises will be fulfilled. He said that TRS has won 119 of the 127 municipalities.

Continued on Page 4

No stay on new Secretariat designs: HC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Monday made it clear to the state government that it had not granted any stay on the process of finalisation of cost estimates, designs and building plans meant for the construction of a new state Secretariat complex in place of the existing one.

The court made it clear that the stay was only against the demolition of the existing Secretariat building complex and not against the preparation of designs, building plans and estimates of the cost. It allowed the state government to finalise the designs, buildings plans and cost of estimates and submit the same in the form of an affidavit, by February 12, 2020.

Continued on Page 4

Coronavirus in China, fuel prices drop in Hyderabad

Fuel costs dip by over Rs 2 per litre since January 11

NAVEENA GHANATE HYDERABAD

While the world is panicking over the outbreak of coronavirus in China, there are some who feel relieved that the scare has brought down the prices of fuel.

Oil prices have been falling and in Hyderabad, the dip has been over Rs 2 per litre in January.

The coronavirus outbreak has raised concern over its impact on the economy and slowing down of oil demand. Consequently, stocks stumbled on Monday and oil prices



fell; coronavirus raised investor worries about the global economy. According to a report from Goldman Sachs, coronavirus could pull down oil prices by about \$3 per barrel. However, oil prices fell by more than \$3. Hyderabadis, who are now paying Rs 78.38 per litre of

petrol and Rs 72.74 for diesel, are likely to pay less in near future. Petrol, which was being sold for Rs 80.82 per litre on January 11 in Hyderabad, fell to Rs 78.38 per litre on Monday.

Likewise, diesel which was Rs 75.42 per litre on January 11, fell to Rs 73.01 on Monday. Experts expect further price cuts.

G Vinay Kumar, oil marketing agencies association former general secretary said, "The fall in the international oil prices have brought cheer to commuters."

Continued on Page 4

AP Assembly votes to abolish Legislative Council

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Assembly on Monday passed a statutory resolution seeking to abolish the state Legislative Council, days after the YSRCP government failed to get two crucial Bills on its plans to have three capitals cleared by the TDP-dominated Upper House.



the 175-member House, when the division vote was taken at 6 pm, voted in favour and the

resolution under Article 169 (1) of the Constitution was adopted unanimously. Speaker Tammineni Sitaram announced that the resolution was adopted by a majority as stipulated under Article 169 (1) related to abolition or creation of Legislative Councils in states. The Speaker asked two ministers - Pilli Subhash Chandra Bose

and Mopidevi Venkataramana - who entered the Cabinet as members of the Legislative Council to sit aside. Later, he adjourned the House sine die.

The Telugu Desam Party boycotted the day's proceedings, protesting the government's decision to abolish the Council.

Continued on Page 4

Judgment in 2 sensational rape-murder cases put off

PNS ■ ADILABAD

Judgment in the sensational Hajipur killings by psychopath Srinivas Reddy, a lift mechanic, was put off to February 6, according to the judge of the designated special court that tried the case.

Verdict in the sensational Samatha gangrape and murder case, scheduled to be pronounced on January 27, was put off to a later date as the judge of the special court that tried the case proceeded on leave on health grounds.

According to the staff of the special court, the judgment would now be pronounced on January 30. It may be recalled that the police charged Shaik Babu, Shaik Shabuddin and Sahik Maqdoom in the case for outraging the modesty of a balloon hawker in the forest area on the outskirts of Lingapur village in Kumaram-Bheem district on November 24. A special court was set up in Adilabad on December 11 to try the case.

Continued on Page 4

Jagan moves TS HC against CBI court order

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

YSR Congress Party president and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Monday approached the Telangana High Court against the refusal of the CBI special court to give him exemption from personal appearances in the court in connection with the quid pro quo cases pending against him.

Continued on Page 4

'Peak of dictatorship'

AZAD AFTER BEING DETAINED, FORCED TO LEAVE HYD

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bhim Army chief Chandrasekhar Azad, who planned to participate in anti-CAA meetings in the city, and was detained as a preventive measure on Sunday, was put on a flight to New Delhi on Monday morning.



Chandrasekhar Azad to Delhi.

Responding to the police action, Azad tweeted: In Telangana, dictatorship is at its peak; people's right to protest is being snatched; first our people were lathi charged, then I was arrested, now I was brought to the airport and sent

He proceeded to tag the Telangana CMO saying, "Remember, Bahujan society will never forget this insult. It will be back soon (sic)." Continued on Page 4

Press EVM button with anger or love? It's Shah vs Prashant

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amit Shah's comment on "pressing the button (voting) with anger" during the Delhi election to make a point against anti-CAA protesters inspired a sharp retort from Prashant Kishor, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)'s election strategist and the number two leader of BJP's Bihar ally Janata Dal United (JDU).



"EVM buttons will be pressed with just love in Delhi on February 8. It should be a mild current, though, so brotherhood and friendship is not endangered," Prashant Kishor tweeted in Hindi this



morning, in response to the Union Home Minister's widely reported remarks at an election rally in Delhi last evening. Amit Shah made the comments while lashing out at the Shaheen Bagh protest, where

Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan if they escaped religious persecution and arrived in India before 2015. Protesters across the country fear the law will be used to target Muslims. The Shaheen Bagh protest has come to symbolize nationwide anger against the law. "When you press the button (on the voting machine) on February 8, do so with such anger that its current is felt at Shaheen Bagh," Mr Shah said in his rally. "Your vote to the BJP candidate will make Delhi and the country safe and prevent thousands of incidents like Shaheen

Bagh," Mr Shah was quoted as saying by news agency PTI while campaigning for the BJP candidate in Babarpur constituency. Kishor has been routinely criticizing the citizenship law and the National Register for Citizens (NRC) even though it sets him at odds with his party chief Nitish Kumar, the Chief Minister of Bihar. Another JDU leader who has been a vocal CAA critic like Mr Kishor - Pavan Varma - last week wrote an open letter to Nitish Kumar challenging him on his party's stand on CAA and revealing his private views about ally BJP.

# Kejriwal's days as CM are numbered

Many people, who have earlier hesitated to air the slogan 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Jai Hind', are now displaying patriotism and the members of the 'Tukde Tukde' gang, who advocated the country breaking up, have been displaying patriotism uncharacteristic of them and singing patriotic songs. Protesters against the CAA at Shaheen Bagh in Delhi are no exception.

On the lines of Rahul Gandhi who had claimed during the last Lok Sabha elections that he is a devotee of Lord Shiva and also sports sacred thread, some anarchic forces who display no love for the country, its history and culture and are more loyal to Pakistan than India are claiming to be patriotic.

This is purely attributed to time.

Had a great leader like Narendra Modi not appeared on the national political horizon and had the people not held him close to their chest, these demons would not have chanted the Vedas. Because of this, Delhi

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is exercising restraint in his speech on anti-CAA protests. He feels making an issue out of CAA would alienate Hindu voters from AAP and advises party workers to leave CAA alone.

The people of Delhi are well aware of the relations that the AAP has had with the 'Tukde Tukde' gang. The people are also aware of the AAP hand behind the Jamia Millia University campus violence. The Delhi police filed FIR against Deputy CM Manish Sisodia and AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan. The people are not ignorant about AAP government fuelling the protests at Shaheen Bagh.

Vote bank politics savvy Kejriwal is banking on spreading falsehoods to check the BJP in the Delhi polls and also to cover up for his graft. But the people of Delhi have proved that his

**Though there is no BJP government in Delhi, the Centre doled out many benefits to the people. It empowered over 40-lakh poor living in 1,731 unauthorised colonies under the scheme PM Awaas Yojna. Colonies have been provided with drainages, drinking water and community parks.**

political graph is on the decline. 56 per cent of Delhi voters are in favour of the BJP. Anti-incumbency of the Kejriwal government is spreading slowly as an undercurrent because he failed to fulfil his promises to the people.

He promised at the time of last elections to introduce 5,000 new buses fitted with CCTV cameras, but purchased only 50. The promise of over 15 lakh cameras across

Delhi was also not kept. There is no supply of drinking water in more than 650 slums.

Contrary to the claims of extending world class education in Delhi, only 71 per cent of students pass out SSC from state government schools and only 0.84 who cleared 12th secured marks more than 90 per cent.

Smart schools built with 90 per cent of the Central funding are being claimed to



Y SATYA KUMAR  
BJP National Secretary

be the achievement of the Kejriwal government to hoodwink the people.

Hundreds of schools lack basic amenities.

Contrary to claims of AAP on corruption, at least four ministers had to quit the Delhi government for their involvement of sex scandals, receiving kickbacks, fake degree contro-

versy and other corruption scandals.

Kejriwal also holds the Health portfolio, but the health sector in Delhi is in ICU.

As per the Niti-Aayog rankings, health index of Delhi is falling with each passing day. He promised to increase the bed strength in hospitals by at least 30,000 but only increased it by 394. AAP promised to set up 900 PHCs, but failed to set up even one.

Contrary to claims of establishing 130 Mohalla Clinics, the AAP government set up only 50-60 such clinics. The AAP government failed to spend at least 46 per cent of the Central budget on the health sectors. There is a shortage of doctors, specialists, surgeons and administrative staff in government

hospitals. Moreover, the Kejriwal government also failed to implement the Ayushman Bharat scheme of the Modi government.

Pollution is on the rise in Delhi under the AAP and the global standards project Delhi as the worst polluted compared to other cities. Moreover, garbage on the city outskirts is piling up with each passing day and the government is turning a blind eye.

Air pollutions accounts for 3 per cent of deaths in Delhi and people are migrating to other places. Even the Supreme Court found fault with the AAP government on this score.

The Modi government set up smart poles at Connaught Place and other areas to track the air quality and extended a subsidy of Rs 1,156 crore to Punjab and

Haryana governments to acquire machines to prevent farmers there from burning the crop residues. It released Rs 300 crore for waste management and built several cycle tracks and parks in the capital city. In spite of all this, Kejriwal government has failed to fulfill its duty to control pollution.

The Modi government has been providing basic amenities spending lakhs of crores and also implementing many more schemes to benefit the poor, women, farmers, girls and the youth.

The people of Delhi know that the rule of the same party in the state and at the Centre would lead to harmonious functioning of governments. They are witness to rapid development in neighbouring states of UP and Haryana. They are also well aware of the fact that the days of Kejriwal government, which is wasting thousands of crores of public funds and hoodwinking the people, are numbered.

A day is not far off when Ek Bharat Sreshta Bharat slogan becomes a reality.

TRULY SPEAKING

## Seven held for rape, murder of woman

**PNS ■ KHAMMAM**

The police have arrested seven persons allegedly involved in the recent incident of kidnap and rape of a tribal woman on last Friday in Raghunathapalem mandal in Khammam district. Commissioner of Police (CP) Tafseer Iqbal produced the accused before media at Raghunathapalem police station on Monday. The accused number one and two were identified as Azmeera Nageswar Rao of Haryana and Bhukya Sunil Sukini thanda. The other accused were Banoth Upender, Angoth Kalyan, Banoth Mohan, Banoth Chanti of Haryana thanda and Maloth Ashok of Sukini thanda. The police seized six mobile phones, two motor bikes from the possession of the accused and booked a case under relevant sections against them based on the complaint of the victim. The accused were sent to judicial custody.

## BUDGET SESSION

# State government likely to introduce New Revenue Act

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The state government is likely to introduce the New Revenue Act, aimed at bringing in transparency in transaction of lands and simplifying complicated land related matters during the forthcoming Budget session of the state assembly. The proposed Act will eliminate corruption and will not allow any room for laxity. On one hand, the government is trying to check corruption in the Revenue Department and on the other it has plans to make available services easily to people.

An exercise to have an exclusive website Dharani for the Revenue Department is already underway. Once the revenue services are made available online, the government has plans to shift village revenue officials and village revenue assistants to other departments.



**The government is trying to check corruption in the Revenue Department and on the other it has plans to make available services easily to people**

Corruption has been allegedly taking place in the department in the aspects of transfer of the land ownership, distribution of passbooks, and incorporation of changes in the passbooks. Intervention of the revenue officials and Village

Revenue Assistants at the field level has been leading to graft in the department.

Once the management of files is done online with the help of Dharani portal, the government wants to transfer supernumerary VROs and

VROs to other departments to irrigation departments and village panchayats.

The government feels that 94 per cent of the land records have been updated after the cleansing of the revenue records. On the basis of the land records, the government has plans to bring out the Title Guarantee Act and introduce it in the state in phases. Also, the government is toying with the idea of implementing revenue code by bringing out revenue Acts under one umbrella.

Main objective of the government is to ensure that registration, mutations, services pertaining to banks and agriculture department are rendered at one place delivering the service to farmer in a day or two. To introduce the new revenue Act in the next budget, the government has been conducting an elaborate exercise.

## Eight devotees hurt as vehicle overturns

**PNS ■ MULUGU**

Eight devotees who were returning home after visiting Medaram shrine were injured when their vehicle overturned on the outskirts of Tadwai village in the district on Monday. While one person sustained fracture on his hand, the remaining seven escaped with minor injuries. They were shifted to the Government Hospital in Mulugu. The devotees were on their way back to Eturnagaram after visiting Medaram. The accident took place when the driver of the vehicle tried to overtake a lorry and lost control over the wheel.

The vehicle veered off the road and overturned. Locals came to the rescue of the passengers. Police cleared the traffic and ensured there was no traffic jam. With devotees thronging Medaram shrine in large numbers ahead of the jatara, the road has been busy for the last one week.



## KCR congratulates all Padma awardees

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

He said it was their unique individual contributions in their respective fields that brought them the national fame and they became role models to others. "They rightly deserve the Padma Award", he said.

The Chief Minister also appreciated the Centre for honouring people who have rendered service in the fields useful to the people. The Chief Minister also congratulated all the Padma Award winners from different parts of the country.

## Kobe death: KTR expresses anguish

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

IT Minister KT Rama Rao expressed his anguish over the death of Basketball legend Kobe Bryant and his 13-year-old daughter Gianna, in a helicopter crash in California, USA. In a tweet he said "Shocked and anguished to learn that my favorite Kobe Bryant and his daughter are no more". He is five time NBA (National Basketball Association) champion, two time NBA finals Most valuable player (MVP), four times All star MVP, two time NBA scoring champion, NBA slam dunk champion and No. 8, 24 retired by the Lakers." KT Rama Rao said listing the glorious past of the player. "RIP and Tearful adieu to the fabulous #Kobe Bryant #Black Mamba," his twitter handles sums up.



dunk champion and No. 8, 24 retired by the Lakers." KT Rama Rao said listing the glorious past of the player. "RIP and Tearful adieu to the fabulous #Kobe Bryant #Black Mamba," his twitter handles sums up.

## Man injured in wild boar attack

**PNS ■ ASIFABAD**

A youngster sustained injuries when a wild boar attacked him at Lambadiguda village in Bejjur mandal on Monday.

His condition was stated to be stable. Sources said that the injured youngster was Bhukya Santosh, a ward member of Lambadiguda village in Bejjur mandal. He received injuries on his left leg when the wild animal gored him when he was protecting his jowar crop at 7 am. He was shifted to a government hospital in Sirpur town and then to Mancheril for better treatment.

Local farmers said that they were registering losses due to the menace of wild boars. They wanted authorities to address the problem at the earliest. They regretted that the wild boars were damaging paddy, maize and jowar crops for quite long.

## ROAD SAFETY



Transport Minister P Ajay Kumar, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, film actress Eesha Rebba and police officials ride motorcycles at HMDA grounds in Hyderabad on Monday as part of 31st National Road Safety Week from January 27 to February 2.

# OPPO ties with IIT-Hyderabad to boost AI

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Chinese smartphone maker OPPO on Monday said it has entered into a partnership with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Hyderabad) to promote collaborative research on advanced and emerging technologies. The collaboration is aimed at promoting joint research and development for multiple projects over a period of two years for the development of new technologies in areas specific to camera and image processing, battery, networks (5G), system performance and Artificial Intelligence (AI), among other areas.

The partnership is in line with OPPO's effort to build localised solutions for the Indian market. "We are happy to collaborate with OPPO India through the expertise of our researchers, to further support and strengthen their R&D efforts in bringing technological breakthroughs for the Indian market," Sumohana S. Channappayya, Dean - Research and Development, IIT Hyderabad, said in a statement.

"This collaboration with OPPO will help in the development of indigenous solutions to cater to the dynamic needs of the Indian consumers," Channappayya added. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between IIT Hyderabad and OPPO to facilitate exchange of ideas and carry out research.

"Our collaboration with IIT Hyderabad is in line with our vision to enhance R&D and innovation capabilities at OPPO India as we

continue our endeavour to build localised solutions for the Indian market," said Tasleem Arif, Vice President and Head R&D, OPPO India. "This collaboration aims to pave the way to carry out quality research and promote the rapid integration of cutting-edge technology, particularly in the areas of 5G and AI," Arif said.

continue our endeavour to build localised solutions for the Indian market," said Tasleem Arif, Vice President and Head R&D, OPPO India. "This collaboration aims to pave the way to carry out quality research and promote the rapid integration of cutting-edge technology, particularly in the areas of 5G and AI," Arif said.

**HYDERABAD BULLION RATES**

**GOLD**

₹ 40,600 (10 gm)

₹ 470

**SILVER**

₹ 47,200 (1kg)

₹ 1000

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**CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG**

Dressed/With Skin ₹155

Without Skin ₹177

Broiler at Farm ₹107

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**EGG RATES ₹/100**

HYDERABAD 350

VIJAYAWADA 383

VISAKHAPATNAM 410

RETAIL PRICE ₹3.70

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**  
Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department  
Siddipet District  
**FORM-C**  
**NOTIFICATION**  
(Under Section 11(1) and 10A exemption of the right to fair compensation and transparency in land acquisition and rehabilitation and resettlement Act 2013 as amended by the right to fair compensation and transparency in land acquisition and rehabilitation and resettlement (Telangana amendment) Act 2016 (Act No. 21/2017) (See rule 6/12)

Dist. Collector File No. G1/250/2019 Date: 22-01-2020  
Revenue Divisional Officer (Land Acquisition), Gajwel, File No. F/435/2019 Date: 21-12-2019  
Gazette No. 30/2020 Date: 22-01-2020

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/ District Collector, Siddipet that a total of admeasuring Ac.6-39 guntas of land in the village of 'Sangapur', Gajwel Mandal, Siddipet District is required for public purpose namely for construction of houses for the land displaced persons.

Therefore the Preliminary notification is issued for starting of following land acquisition work admeasuring Ac.6-39 guntas in the village of 'Sangapur', Gajwel Mandal, Siddipet District.

Sl. No.	Survey No.	Nature of land	Type of land Area to be acquired	Name and address of Land Pottadar (P) Enjoyer (E) Interested person	Boundaries			Road	Trees, Borees, streams and other structures
					East	West	North		
1		Dry	1-22	Govt. Land	90 & 91	88 & 85	55	Ro	Trees, Borees, streams and other structures
2	89	Govt. Land	Dry	5-17/Mehamad Abdhul Ali (Mehamad Bahadull)	90 & 91	88 & 85	55	Ro	Trees, Borees, streams and other structures

Total Area 6-39

This notification is made under Section-11(1) (Central Act 30(2013) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 as amended by the Right to Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Telangana Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No. 21 of 2017) to all whom it may concern.

A Plan of the Land and details kept in the office of the District Collector, Siddipet and Revenue Divisional Officer (Land Acquisition), Gajwel. Concerned persons may be inspected on working days during office hours. The Government of Telangana/ District Collector, Siddipet is pleased to authorise Revenue Divisional Officer (Land Acquisition), Gajwel, his Staff to enter upon any of the above Land and Survey Land, take levels of the land, dig or bore into the Subsoil and do other acts required for proper execution of their work under Section 12 regarding land acquisition.

Under Section 11(4), no person shall make any transactions i.e. Purchase/Sales/Mortgage regarding the land mentioned in Such notification without permission of District Collector, Siddipet from the date of this Preliminary Notification issued in connection with land Proposed for acquisition. Under Section (15) If any Concerned Persons having objections on land acquisition mentioned in above land after the Preliminary Notification issued, They may Submit their objections before District Collector / Land Acquisition Officer in writing within in 60 days from the notification issued.

Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-
Tahasildar	Revenue	Joint	District
Gajwel	Divisional Officer,	Collector	Collector
Mandal	Gajwel	Siddipet Dist.	Siddipet Dist.

DIPR No.No.1202/LA/PP/Agency/2019-20

**CRIME CORNER**  
**Human trafficker detained under PD Act**

**HYDERABAD:** Rachakonda Police detained a habitual human trafficker under Preventive Detention Act on Monday. The offender has been identified as 34-year-old Krishna Shil, a driver by profession and a native of West Bengal, he was residing at Neredmet. The accused started running a prostitution racket after procuring girls from other states. In the month of August, 2018 he was accused in cases at Narayana Police station and was absconding. He and his wife started running a brothel house. He was also absconding in this case and left along with his wife to his hometown to avoid arrest. Meanwhile, Shil met Mohd Sohail Hussain and started running a prostitution racket. A case was registered in this regard at Kusaiguda Police Station. Acting on a tip-off, the Kusaiguda Police arrested Shil on August 27, 2019 and was lodged at the Central Prison in Cherlapally. To prevent him from committing such illegal activities, Mahesh Bhagwat, the Commissioner of Police, Rachakonda invoked Preventive Detention orders against him and was detained at Central Prison in Cherlapally on Monday.

**Student dies as bike rams Metro pillar**

**HYDERABAD:** A 20-year-old engineering student died in a road accident when he crashed his bike into a pillar at Begumpet on Sunday. The victim identified as Dhru Parik is a resident of Bowenpally. He was pursuing engineering at a private college. According to the police, Parik ramed his two-wheeler into a metro pillar at Begumpet after losing control over it. "The man hit the metro pillar at high speed after losing control over his motorcycle. He sustained serious injuries and died on the spot," said the Begumpet Police. The body was shifted to Gandhi Hospital mortuary where a postmortem examination was performed and later handed over to the family on Sunday evening.

**Woman hangs herself over harassment**

**HYDERABAD:** A 21-year-old woman committed suicide by hanging herself to the ceiling fan, unable to bear her husband's torture at Adithya Nagar in KPHB Colony on Monday. The victim was identified as Vasundara. She was married to Sanjeev. The couple had a love marriage in the year 2014. According to the police, the victim's mother said that soon after the couple's marriage, Sanjeev began harassing Vasundara. On Sunday, Vasundara called her mother and told her how Sanjeev kept beating her every day. After the phone call, her parents decided to go to Adithya Nagar to meet the couple on Monday. While they were on their way, they received a call from their elder daughter, Rajeshwari, informing her that Vasundara committed suicide by hanging herself to a ceiling fan rod with a saree. She was shifted to a private hospital where she was declared brought dead. Based on a complaint, the KPHB Police registered a case and are investigating.

**Spread of coronavirus is causing concern: V-P**

● Naidu asks CCMB to develop Rapid DNA Testing Kits to detect genetic disorders

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
The Vice President, M Venkaiah Naidu underscored the need for global cooperation for early detection of new viruses and to contain any fallout from outbreak of epidemics. Addressing scientists and researchers of CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad on Monday, the Vice President while referring to the newly-discovered strain of coronavirus, said that it was spreading across the nations and causing a major concern to health authorities.



Vice President Venkaiah Naidu at CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad on Monday.

**Vice President calls for global cooperation for early detection of new viruses and to contain serious fallout from outbreak of epidemics**

He pointed out that period outbreak of epidemics and new viruses highlighted our vulnerability to diseases. Referring to the vital role of the Indian Science and Technology Innovation (STI) System in achieving national goals as India aspires for sustainable and inclusive growth, he appealed to the private sector to create a fund for financing innovative scientific projects that will address societal concerns. Observing that investment in STI plays a major role in promoting research and developing cutting edge technologies, Naidu said the funding for basic research also has to be stepped up.

Stressing that the outcome of every scientific endeavour must improve the lives of people, he called upon scientists to find answers to the many challenges the world was facing. Lauding CCMB for developing bacterial blight-resistant Sambah Mahsuri rice variety in collaboration with Indian Institute of Rice Research (IIRR), Naidu urged scientists to find ways to develop more disease and pest-resistant crops

**Hospitals set up isolation wards for treating 'nCoV'**  
**HYDERABAD:** Gandhi hospital, Chest hospital and Fever hospital have set up isolation wards and critical care units for providing treatment to any suspected case of novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection. While the isolation ward in Gandhi and Fever hospitals kept 40 beds ready, Chest hospital kept 20 beds ready to treat patients. The officials of Gandhi hospital set up a critical care unit and ICU dedicated for coronavirus. Special training has been given to staff working in these wards. As many as three persons from Hyderabad who returned from China have been kept in isolation ward at Fever hospital on suspicion that they might have been infected with the novel coronavirus. No positive case has been detected in Telangana and India at large, though samples of three passengers have been sent to the ICMR-NIV Pune lab. Central team consisting of a public health expert, a clinician and a microbiologist reached the city on Monday. The team will visit Gandhi and Fever hospitals on Tuesday to review the 'preparedness' of the state in dealing with a possible outbreak of the coronavirus. Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan chaired a video-conference meeting with the officials of Health Departments of the states. Principal secretary of Health and Family Welfare Department, Shanthi Kumari also interacted with the officials.

CCMB was working in that direction. He also urged CCMB to develop Rapid DNA Testing Kits for detection of some of the rare diseases and many other genetic disorders. "It is important to predict and prevent genetic diseases as more than 70 million Indians are estimated to be suffering from genetic disorders, according to the Organisation for Rare Diseases India (ORDI)," Naidu added. He also advised institutions like CCMB to take up campaigns on a massive scale to create awareness among the people about the health risks associated with consanguineous marriages, particularly those relating to congenital disorders.

The Vice President said that young scientists should be allowed to take up challenging research assignments and come up with innovative and out-of-box ideas. Earlier, he went around the exhibits which highlighted the research activities undertaken by CCMB. CCMB director, Dr Rakesh Mishra, directors of various CSIR labs, senior scientists and researchers were present on the occasion.

**Centering worker gets three years in jail for kidnap, rape**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
A local court at LB Nagar convicted a man of kidnap and rape of a student and awarded him a three year prison sentence. Though the incident occurred in 2014, the victim was finally delivered justice on Monday. The accused person, Raghapur Anil, 28, is a centering worker from Hafeeznagar in Sanathnagar. The Sanathnagar Police received a complaint from the victim's uncle on June 23, 2014 when his 18-year-old niece, a Btech student, was found missing. The victim's uncle, said that told him she was going to college and did not return. Based on his complaint, the police registered a missing person case and began an investigation.



However, after the victim returned, the police learnt that she was kidnapped and raped. Based on the statement of victim, the case was altered from a missing person to Section 366(A), 420, 201, 376(2)(n) of the IPC. Police said that Anil used to stalk the victim and meet her at the Borabanda bus stand. He slowly initiated a conversation with her and maintained a close relationship. Anil then told her that he liked her and even gave her a SIM card to contact him. On June 23, 2014, the girl met Anil at Borabanda bus stand where he told her that they were going for a day's outing and took her to Medak church. After visiting the church, Anil rented a room for the night where he sexually assaulted her against her will. Later on, he promised to marry her and took her to Hyderabad and Warangal where they stayed as wife and husband. However, the girl got to know that Anil was already married. The investigating officer said that Anil raped the victim by keeping his marriage issue in dark and cheated her.

Model Schools in Telangana State are accepting online applications for admission test for Class VI for the year 2020-21 and also for vacant seats for Class VII to X. Online payment can be done from February 3 to 29 for Class VI and from February 7 to March 2 for Class VII to X. Hall ticket can be downloaded on dates between April 9 and 12. The examination for Class VI students will be held from 10 am to 12 pm on April 12 and from 2 pm to 4 pm for Class VII to X in their respective district headquarters. For queries, students can visit the website <http://telanganams.cgg.gov.in>

**Applications invited for admission in model schools**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
Model Schools in Telangana State are accepting online applications for admission test for Class VI for the year 2020-21 and also for vacant seats for Class VII to X. Online payment can be done from February 3 to 29 for Class VI and from February 7 to March 2 for Class VII to X. Hall ticket can be downloaded on dates between April 9 and 12. The examination for Class VI students will be held from 10 am to 12 pm on April 12 and from 2 pm to 4 pm for Class VII to X in their respective district headquarters. For queries, students can visit the website <http://telanganams.cgg.gov.in>

**'Complete railway infra works on a war footing'**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
Gajanan Malhya, general manager of South Central Railway held performance review meeting with principal heads of the department and divisional managers of all six divisions at Rail Nilayam in Secunderabad on Monday. The general manager under took a comprehensive review of performance, achievements and status of all the ongoing infrastructural works pertaining to the zone. He stressed on according top priority to safety, passenger facilities, punctuality and cleanliness of the



Gajanan Malhya, GM, SCR presides over performance review meeting at Rail Nilayam in Secunderabad on Monday

Zone. Gajanan also advised that the Zone must attain the targets set in and strive for achieving new mile stones in freight loading, passenger transportation. He also stated for speedy completion of infrastructure works such as construction of new lines, doubling, tripling and electrification. Gajanan advised to focus on generating revenue mainly through freight, passenger and parcel sectors.

**Boeing hints at further expansions in Telangana**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
IT Minister KT Rama Rao pushed for Boeing to consider Telangana as a hub for their technology and engineering divisions. The Minister met Boeing leadership team led by Sir Michel Arther, president of Boeing International, Salil Gupta, president of Boeing India, Surendra Ahuja, managing director of Boeing India, Defence Pvt Ltd, Ashwini Bhargava, supplier management director and Praveena Yagnambhat, chief of staff of Boeing India. Principal secretary Jayesh Ranjan IAS and



A delegation, headed by Boeing International President Sir Michael Arthur called on IT Minister KT Rama Rao in Hyderabad on Monday.

**Minister shared a desire to establish a world class Aerospace University in Hyderabad in partnership with the industry and global academic partners**

KTR discussed on how the progressive State Industrial Policy- TSIPASS and the superior infrastructure offered by the state has led to the growth of aerospace sector in TS. The state has attracted several mega investments from global Aerospace and Defence majors including Boeing in the past five years. Minister encouraged Boeing to consider TS as a hub for their Technology and Engineering divisions. Minister also shared the state desire to establish a world class Aerospace University in Hyderabad in partnership with the industry and global academic partners.



**Telangana mountaineer conquers Mt. Aconcagua**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
A 21-year old tribal mountaineer from Ranga Reddy district, Amgoth Thukaram, has successfully added another feather to his cap by scaling the toughest Mt. Aconcagua in South America on January 26. He did so despite inclement and harsh weather conditions of snowfall and incessant rains. Among the seven mountaineers, two women and one man returned to base camp unsuccessfully. Thukaram was one of the three of the seven mountaineers who overcame the harsh and arduous track and safely returned back from the peak. After achieving his mission of successfully scaling Mt. Aconcagua, Thukaram and other mountaineers sang National Anthem on the occasion of 71st Republic Day. The feat is part of Thukaram's tryst with adventure as he has climbed three

highest mountain peaks of world in a span of nine months. He had scaled Mt. Everest on May 22, 2019, Mount Elbrus in Europe on July 27, 2019 and now the latest and trickiest climb of Mt. Aconcagua. As on date Thukaram has so far conquered the highest peaks in four continents in the world. Recounting his experiences and heralding the dangers of global warming and the urgent need to preserve ecological balances to avoid polluting our rivers and skies, Thukaram also thanked Tridandi Chinnajiyar Swami who sponsored his Mt Aconcagua Expedition. He will be reaching Hyderabad on February 1. Amgoth Thukaram is son of Amgoth Ramdas and hails from Thakkalappally Thanda, Yacharam Mandal, Ranga Reddy district. He has been climbing peaks since the last three years and has never looked back.

**IIIT-Hyderabad takes steps to improve gender diversity**

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**  
IIIT-Hyderabad has decided to take positive steps to improve the gender ratio among its undergraduate students. Towards this goal, the institute has set a target of 25 per cent representation of girls among students admitted to the 4-year B Tech programme through the JEE mode of admission for 2020-2021. Several measures are being taken to facilitate this, including: introduction of scholarships, fellowships, and partial waiver of tuition for girl students; partial/full waiver of application fee; and establishment of a diversity pool of seats for the JEE mode of admission. Events will also be organised at various points in the admissions season to publicise what the institute offers in terms of academics, extra-curricular activities, scholarship opportunities, and residential facilities. Deadline for applications is May 19, 2020. For more details visit <https://www.iiit.ac.in/admissions/undergraduate/>



GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA Revenue (Land Acquisition) Department FORM-C										
(PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION) (Under Section 11(1) and 10A exemption of the right to fair compensation and transparency in land acquisition and rehabilitation and resettlement Act 2013 as amended by the right to fair compensation and transparency in land acquisition and rehabilitation and resettlement (Telangana amendment) Act 2016 (Act No. 21/2017) (See rule 6/12)										
Collector File No. G1/2940/2019					Date: 21-01-2020					
Revenue Divisional Officer/ Land Acquisition Officer					Date: 23-09-2019					
File No. B/198/2019					Date: 18-11-2019					
Gazette No. 688/2019										
As per the orders of Government of Telangana/ District Collector/ Siddipet that a total of admeasuring Ac. 23.31 guntas of land the village of Chinna Gundavalli, Siddipet (Rural) Mandal, Siddipet District is required for public purpose namely for construction of main canal (CR) Distributary Maltanna Sagur under Kaleswaram Project. So the notification issued under section 11(1) of right to fair compensation and transparency in land acquisition and rehabilitation and resettlement Act 2013.										
Therefore the notification is issued for starting of following land acquisition works admeasuring Ac. 23.31 Guntas in the village of Chinna Gundavalli, Siddipet (Rural) Mandal, Siddipet District.										
SCHEDULE										
Village: Chinna Gundavalli Mandal: Siddipet (Rural) District: Siddipet										
Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Reqd. Land	Name and address of the Land Patta/holder/ Employer	Nature of land	Boundaries	East	West	North	South	Trees/ pipes/ Drains/ Wells/ Bore and others on land
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	131	0.31	Kalakuntla Bhagavanta Rao s/o Ranga Rao	Patta	132	145	130	145		
2	132	0.26	Kalakuntla Bhagavanta Rao s/o Ranga Rao	Patta	133	131	131	138		
3	133	0.18	Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Pedda Anthireddy	Patta	134	132	133	138		
4	133	0.34	Marouj Balachari s/o Purushotham	Patta	134	132	133	138		
5	134	0.18	Rajaramangari Lalitha w/o Durga Reddy	Patta	135	133	137	137		
6	134	0.03	Kakakuntla Giri	Patta	135	133	137	137		
7	134	0.04	Rang Rao s/o Narsingh Rao	Patta	135	133	137	137		
8	134	0.32	Yerram Siddaiah s/o Rajiah	Patta	135	133	137	137		
9	134		Preshar main	Patta	135	133	137	137		
10	135	0.32	Chikoti Ranjeet Kumar s/o Mallesham	Patta	136	134	137	134		
11	142	0.07	Rajaramangari Ravi Kiran Reddy s/o Gunda Reddy	Patta	141	147	143	147		
12	143	0.19	Rajaramangari Ravi Kiran Reddy s/o Gunda Reddy	Patta	141	147	144	142		
13	144		Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Anthi Reddy	Patta	145	146	145	143		
14	144		Rajaramangari Yella Reddy s/o Chinna Anthi Reddy	Patta	145	146	145	143		
15	144		Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	145	146	145	143		
16	144		Rajaramangari Raji Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	145	146	145	143		
17	144		Rajaramangari Venkat Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	145	146	145	143		
18	144		Rajaramangari Veera Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	145	146	145	143		
19	145		Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	138	128	131	139		
20	145		Rajaramangari Raji Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	138	128	131	139		
21	145	1.16	Rajaramangari Venkat Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	138	128	131	139		
22	145		Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	138	128	131	139		
23	145	0.06	Kalakuntla Bhagavanta Rao s/o Ranga Rao	Patta	138	128	131	139		
24	147	0.14	Rajaramangari Narsa Reddy s/o Gunda Reddy	Patta	143	146	146	193		
25	193	0.14	Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Pedda Anthireddy	Patta	148	194	219	147		
26	193	0.19	Rajaramangari Srinivas Reddy s/o Pedda Anthireddy	Patta	148	194	219	147		
27	193	0.24	Rajaramangari Ram Reddy s/o Gunda Reddy	Patta	195	193	139	218		
28	211	1.17	Chandireddy Raghobham Reddy s/o Bal Reddy & others	Patta	210	281	216	282		
29	213	0.14	Chandireddy Yerrala Srinivas s/o Siva Reddy	Patta	210	281	216	282		
30	213	0.04	Chandireddy	Patta	212	215	217	216		
32	216	0.04	Yerrala Raju s/o Malla Reddy	Patta	218	241	217	213		
33	216	0.11	Chandireddy Yerrala Srinivas s/o Siva Reddy	Patta	216	241	217	213		
34	216	0.03	Chandireddy Srinivas Reddy s/o Siva Reddy	Patta	218	241	217	213		
35	217	0.09	T. Hanmanth Reddy s/o Linga Reddy	Patta	218	220	219	216		
36	219	0.15	Chandireddy Narayana Reddy s/o Raghava Reddy	Patta	218	220	193	217		
37	219	0.13	Aadhikam Lingaiah Goud s/o Channa Malaiiah Goud	Patta	218	220	193	217		
38	-	0.04	Road	Patta	-	-	-	-		
39	278	0.31	Luikka Nagaiiah s/o Veeraiah	Patta	295	277	280	-		
40	278	0.14	Alwala Laxmi w/o Chandraiah	Patta	295	277	280	-		
41	281	0.28	Sangiala Santhosh Kumar Sarma s/o Vital Sarma	Patta	282	280	216	278		
42	282	0.14	Chandireddy Raghobham Reddy s/o Bal Reddy & others	Patta	283	281	211	285		
43	312	0.14	Gadeela Raj Reddy s/o Rama chandra Reddy	Patta	299	391	389	311		
44	312	0.04	Road	Patta	299	391	389	311		
45	314	0.11	Kotagi/Balaiah s/o Gundiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
46	314	0.04	Manda Malaiiah s/o Ramaiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
47	314	0.04	Manda Yadagin s/o Ramaiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
48	314	0.04	Manda Narayana s/o Ramaiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
49	314	0.04	Manda Nagamma w/o Ramaiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
50	314	0.04	Manda Lecharva w/o Ramaiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
51	314	0.11	Luikka Nagaiiah s/o Veeraiah	Patta	299	312	314	312		
52	315	0.04	Kotagi/Balaiah s/o Gundiah	Patta	316	388	310	314		
53	316	0.21	Luikka Nagaiiah s/o Veeraiah	Patta	296	310	278	315		
54	389	0.17	Gadeela Raji Reddy s/o Ram Chandra Reddy	Patta	314	403	388	312		
55	389	0.11	Kotagi/Balaiah s/o Gundiah	Patta	314	403	388	312		
56	390	0.21	Gadeela Ram chandra Reddy s/o Raji Reddy	Patta	319	402	389	392		
57	391	0.21	Gadeela Ram chandra Reddy s/o Raji Reddy	Patta	312	390	389	310		
58	392	0.17	Yerrala Malaiiah s/o Balaiah	Patta	391	401	390	393		
59	400	0.24	Samaleti (Manda) Manjula w/o Srinivas	Patta	406	409	406	399		
60	401	0.31	Pullagurlla Yalla Reddy s/o Shiva Reddy	Patta	402	40	404	400		
61	401	0.05	Maskuri (Abraveni) Narasimlu s/o Gundiah	Patta	402	40	404	400		
62	401	0.14	Abravani Ramulu s/o Gundiah	Patta	402	40	404	400		
63	401	0.16	Maskuri (Abraveni) Narasimlu s/o Gundiah	Patta	402	40	404	400		
64	402									

CAPSULE

Need for constructive discussion on CAA: Kishan Reddy

HYDERABAD: Union Minister for state of Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy on Monday opined that there is a need to take up constructive discussion on Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). Kishan Reddy alleged that biased intellectuals increased in the nation. While targeting Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao for stating that he will convene a Chief Ministers meeting on CAA at Hyderabad, Kishan Reddy said that India is a secular country and Minorities have more rights. But the Minorities will not have rights in Islam countries, he pointed out. Kishan Reddy said that the economy of the nation is in good condition alleging that some are staging agitations against CAA as part of their conspiracy to see that the investments not to come from other nations.

Police lathicharge followers of TRS leader in Bollaram

SANGAREDDY: Tension prevailed at IDA Bollaram municipality as two candidates from TRS competing with each other for the municipal chairman post. The police had to lathicharge followers of one of the contestants as they tried to barge into the municipal office on Monday. Prior to municipal election, tension prevailed at the municipal office as Chandra Reddy and Balreddy are in the race for the post. In all, the TRS ended with a tally of 17 seats with 8 members backing Chandra Reddy and nine supporting Bal Reddy. Besides, Balreddy has the support of BJP (3) and Congress (1). The police officials resisted Chandra Reddy's followers as they tried to barge into the municipal office. In spite of the presence of the police, the activists tried to enter the office leading to the police and the political activists pushing each other. To restore normalcy, the police had to lathicharge the bullying aides of Chandra Reddy.

TRS ensures social justice in chairperson, mayor elections

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A total of 240 TRS leaders got elected to chairperson, vice-chairperson, mayor and deputy mayor posts in 121 municipalities and municipal corporations.

Addressing the media at Telangana Bhavan on Monday, TRS working president KT Rama Rao said that a lion's share has been given to leaders from BC, SC, ST, and minority sections which did not have strong political representation until now. No other party can deliver social justice the way TRS does, he said.

"By this, we have shown our commitment towards the welfare of BC, SC, ST, and minorities," he said.

Interestingly, BC, SC, ST and minority leaders have also chaired positions in the general category in these elections.

A total of 103 TRS leaders from the BC category got elected to chairperson and mayor positions. That includes 58 chairperson and mayor positions and 45 vice-chairperson positions. Each one from



Kummari, Pattari, Perika, Rajaka, Vellapu, Reddika, and Avusala which are Sub castes of Backward Caste won the elections. The list also includes Gouds 17, Mudhiraj 13, Munnuru Kapu 21, Padmashali 13, Yadav 18, Lingayath 6, Kuruma 4, Arya Kshetriya 3.

From the OC category, TRS leaders won 38 chairperson positions and 46 vice chairman positions making it a total of 84. The count includes 53 - Reddy, 16 - Vysya, 5 - Velma, 2 - Kamma, 2 - Marwadi, 3 - Brahmin and 4 - Kapu.

Leaders from Scheduled Castes won 17 chairman and 9

vice-chairperson positions making it a total of 26. The count includes 1-Netakani, 6-Mala, 16-Madiga, 1-Safai, 1-Budagajungalu.

While five leaders from Scheduled Tribes got elected, Muslim leaders got elected to 16 positions.

Many castes that did not have any political representation until now have come to power for the first time with the efforts of the TRS party and its sincerity in delivering social justice.

In Parakala, the chairperson position has been given to SC (Safai). Many leaders from castes such as Netakani,

KTR stated that as per the directions given by the CM, utmost importance has been given to the marginalised sections in the municipal elections

Budagajungalu which are a sub-caste of Scheduled Caste have been given political representation for the first time in these elections.

While Suryapet was reserved for general women, a woman from Scheduled caste named Annapuramma was given the opportunity to become the Chairperson. In the Medchal district, Pocharam municipality, the seat was open to the general category. However, Redya Nayak, an ST leader won the Chairperson seat. In Kagaznagar of Adilabad district, a Muslim leader has been given the opportunity in a general seat.

'TRS purchased councilors'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress MP from Bhongir Komatireddy Venkat Reddy has alleged that the Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and TRS party working president KT Rama Rao are behaving like animals.

Speaking to the media at Yadagirigutta on Monday, Komatireddy said that the residents of Yadagirigutta gave clear majority to the Congress.

However, the TRS made their councilor as the chairman of Yadagirigutta municipality using TRS MLC from Warangal Kadiam Srihari as an ex-officio member.

Komatireddy said that the TRS grabbed municipal chairman position of Yadagirigutta in illegal way. The Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar



Komatireddy alleged that former Nizamabad MP K Kavitha purchased 500 acre land illegally in Thurkapally

Rao murdered the democracy, he said.

Warning KCR to be careful, Komatireddy alleged that TRS MLA is doing illegal real estate business in Yadagirigutta. He alleged that former Nizamabad MP and KCR's daughter K Kavitha purchased 500 acre land illegally in Thurkapally. He said "I have evidences regarding Kavitha's land pur-

chase. KCR did nothing to Yadagirigutta people though he visited it for 12 times," he alleged. Finding fault with KTR's remarks that the Congress and BJP joined hands, Komatireddy alleged that TRS had the history of entering into alliance with BJP.

Komatireddy alleged that TRS purchased councilors in illegal ways at Pedda Amberpet and Adhibhatla.

TRS wins big in Nizamabad

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

The ruling TRS has swept all the municipalities in Nizamabad district including the mayor post of Nizamabad Corporation. The party nominee, Dandu Neethu Kiran won the mayor post, while Idris Khan of MIM won the deputy post. The TRS has won all the municipalities in Nizamabad and Kamareddy districts. The party took the support of Congress and MIM corporators for this.

In Bodhan, Thumu Padma of TRS became the chairperson, and Sohail her Deputy.

In Bheemgal, TRS candidate - Mallepalli Rajashri became the chairperson, while Bharath was elected the vice-chairperson.

KVP VOTE CONTROVERSY

Suryapet collector transferred

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a sudden development late on Monday, the state government issued orders transferring Suryapet district collector D Amoy Kumar.

He was posted as collector of Ranga Reddy district in the place of S Harish, who is discharging duties as FAC (full additional charge).

Yadadri-Bhongir district collector Anita Ramachandran was placed in FAC as Suryapet collector in the place of Amoy Kumar. Official sources revealed that the controversy surrounding the voting right of Congress Rajya Sabha member KVP Ramachandra Rao in Neredcherla municipality in Suryapet district, in his capacity as ex-officio member, was said to be the reason for Amoy's ouster.

The TRS objected to KVP's vote saying that he hails from Andhra Pradesh. Subsequently, the Suryapet district administration has denied voting right to KVP.

He strongly opposed this and lodged a complaint with TS Election Commission. He submitted all the official documents from Rajya Sabha Secretariat to prove that he represents Telangana.

Following this, the commission restored the voting right of KVP on Monday.

In this backdrop, the state government reportedly transferred Amoy Kumar for taking

TRS tried to obstruct KVP: Congress leader

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC Election Commission Coordination Committee convener Marri Shashidhar Reddy has said that Congress Rajya Sabha member Dr KVP Ramachandra Rao was elected from Telangana state.

However, TRS hatched a conspiracy to obstruct him from participating in elections for municipal chairman of Nereducharla municipality. The State Election Commission (SEC) abolished the order given on Sunday and gave an opportunity to KVP to cast his vote as an ex-officio member.

Speaking to the media after meeting SEC commissioner V Nagi Reddy along with TPCCCECC co-convenor G Niranjan, Marri Shashidhar Reddy explained that Rajya Sabha member K Keshava Rao had been allotted to Andhra Pradesh state and KVP had been allotted to Telangana state. However, both Keshava Rao and KVP applied election commission



Dr KVP Ramachandra Rao

to change them Andhra to Telangana and vice versa.

However, the EC not yet released any gazette in this regard. He said that they will be considered as the Rajya Sabha members from the states allotted to them till gazette comes.

SEC allowed KK to cast his vote at Thukkuguda, he said questioning the SEC to tell as to how it will give an opportunity to cast KK to vote at Thukkuguda. He alleged that the TRS tried to obstruct KVP in the name of application. One can understand how the TRS is pressuring the officials, he said.

decision on KVP vote without verifying the facts properly. The voting for elections of

chairperson and vice chairperson of Neredcherla municipality will take place on Tuesday.

Jagan moves TS HC against CBI court order...

Continued from Page 1

Jagan filed a petition in the High Court challenging the CBI court order. In his petition, the YSRCP president said that the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, he had to discharge his official duties and as such, he would not be in a position to attend the courts personally in the cases pending against him.

He said that since the CBI court was refusing to give him exemption, he was forced to move the High Court. Jagan requested that his co-accused from Jagathi Publications be allowed to appear on his behalf in the ED cases.

It is to be mentioned here that the High Court had earlier dismissed a similar petition filed by Jagan, stating that it was the CBI court that should take a call. Now, Jagan is trying his luck again.

Last Friday, the CBI court expressed anger over Jagan's petitions seeking exemption from personal appearances every week. It dismissed the petition in connection with hearing on the five charge sheets filed by the ED with regard to alleged money laundering cases. The judge commented that Jagan cannot continuously seek exemptions from court appearances. It ruled that Jagan should compulsorily appear before it for the next hearing on January 31 and if he failed to do so, he would be constrained to pass "appropriate orders."

On January 3, the court gave a similar order, dismissing his petition seeking exemption from personal appearances in the court in connection with the CBI cases.



Monday he was watching developments closely in China and said he felt confident that the new virus would be contained. Traders fear that the spread of corona virus in China, which has so far claimed 80 lives and shows no sign of slowing down, will hit global oil demand.

Coronavirus in China, fuel prices drop...

Continued from Page 1

We noticed a difference of Rs 2 since January 1. This was not done in one go, but was going done 25 paise, 15 paise etc. We estimate that it is going to further fall, if crude oil prices continue to tank internationally.

It may be mentioned here that Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Prince Abdul-Aziz bin Salman Al-Saud said on

Monday he was watching developments closely in China and said he felt confident that the new virus would be contained. Traders fear that the spread of corona virus in China, which has so far claimed 80 lives and shows no sign of slowing down, will hit global oil demand.

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Nereducharla municipality election postponed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Election of chair person and vice chairman to the Nereducharla municipality in the erstwhile Nalgonda district has been postponed to Tuesday. The ex-officio votes of Rajya Sabha members of the sibling states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have turned into a bone of contention on the day of election for Mayors and Chairpersons of corporations and Municipalities. While the TRS objected to Congress Rajya Sabha member KVP

Ramachandra Rao's vote under Telangana quota in Neredcherla in Suryapet district, the BJP objected to TRS RS Member Dr K Keshava Rao's ex-officio vote in Tukuguda Municipality.

Keshav Rao comes under AP quota, BJP leaders contended. The BJP objected to Keshav Rao voting as ex officio member as it got nine votes against 5 of TRS. With Keshav Rao on their side, the TRS position is bound to improve.

In Neredcherla, local MLA Saidireddy objected to the permission given to Ramachandra Rao to vote saying that the Centre in a gazette notification in December 2014, had made it clear that the entry of Ramachandra Rao shall be substituted with the



entry of Dr K Keshava Rao making it amply clear that the former cannot vote in Telangana.

Meanwhile, the TSEC in a notification issued here on Monday, ordered the presiding officer at Neredcherla to proceed with the election by including all the members finalised on January 25 and said that it had earlier suspended the order issued by the Municipal commissioner rejecting the option given to Ramachandra Rao. The TSEC also directed the

District Collector to change the timings of oath-taking and special meeting of indirect election process of Neredcherla Municipality. As per the latest orders, the time fixed for administration of oath to elected ward members will be at 3 pm and election of chairperson and vice chairperson will be at 4 pm. Meanwhile, in Suryapet, Corporator Perumalla Annapurna (SC) has been given the chance to become the chair person post by Minister Jagdish Reddy. Putta Kishore became the vice chairman.

'Peak of dictatorship'

Continued from Page 1

Azad was detained by the police on Sunday afternoon from a hotel in Habeebnagar area of the city. After his detention, he was shifted to Bollaram police station and later taken to the RGI Airport and asked to leave. Azad took the morning flight and left.

Azad had come to the city to participate in a series of protest meetings against CAA, NPR and NRC scheduled on Sunday and Monday.

On Sunday afternoon, Azad was scheduled to address a meeting at Crystal Garden Function Hall at Mehdiapatnam organised by the All India Dalit Muslim Adivasi Progressive Front at 3 pm. Several persons who had come to the venue were bundled into police vans and shifted to other police stations. The police had rejected permission for the programme at Crystal Garden and ACP Asifnagar RG Siva Maruthi said that the organisers were informed about it.

No stay on new Secretariat designs: HC

Continued from Page 1

A division bench of the High Court passed this order while dealing with a clutch of Public Interest Litigations (PILs) filed against demolition of existing Secretariat buildings by concerned citizens of the state. It may be noted that in its counter affidavit filed earlier in the HC, the government had told the HC that the estimated cost of the proposed new Secretariat complex was about Rs 300 crore to 400



crore. It also said that it required around 12 months to complete the construction of the building complex. The state government had further said that the designs of the proposed complex were not yet finalised due to the pendency of the case before the court.

During the course of arguments of the case, the HC had asked the state government as to how it could mobilise the funds required for construction of new Secretariat buildings despite the financial constraints. It directed the government to file counter affidavit informing about the budget estimation for the proposed new Secretariat complex, comprehensive map of the proposed construction, area of construction, time period to complete it.

KTR: Rs 173 crore per month to municipalities for development

Continued from Page 1

"BJP and Congress, which are Delhi parties, are doing silly things. BJP and Congress have colluded and shared chairperson and vice-chairpersons posts in a few places. Of the two seats won by BJP one was with alliance of Congress," KTR said.



He added: "Just for one or two municipalities, Congress and BJP are coming together and showing their real face to the people. BJP and Congress are like snake and mongoose. Both the national parties fight in New Delhi and across the country. Here, they come together to play cheap politics

TRS the 'B' team of Congress. "With the latest alliance, Telanganites now know who is the 'B' team of which party. Congress and BJP are friends in the backyard while they fight in the streets for power. TRS won 95 per cent of seats in 120 municipalities and nine corporations. We are set to bag Karimnagar Corporation also," said KTR.

Referring to the collusion, he advised Uttam Kumar Reddy to wear BJP scarf.

He said that they will train newly elected mayors-deputy mayors-chairman-vice-chairman. "We are trying hard to bring accountability to municipalities," KTR said.

Judgment in 2 sensational cases put off...

Continued from Page 1

Similarly, in the sensational Hajipur killings by psychopath Srinivas Reddy, a lift mechanic, was put off to February 6, according to the judge of the designated special court that tried the case.

Srinivas Reddy, on the pretext of offering lift to school and college girls of Hajipur in Bommalamaram mandal of Yadadri district outraged their modesty and disposed of their bodies in an old and disused road side well. The court commenced trial in the case on October 20 and examined 44 witnesses and the trial concluded on December 26.

Cong supports BJP and TRS; BJP..

Continued from page 1

The TRS and Congress had won 20 councilors seats each in the town. However, BJP gave a shock to the Congress by extending support to the TRS along with the MIM. Here, the BJP had won five seats and the MIM three.

In Makthal, Congress extended its support to the BJP. With the help of Congress councilors, the BJP grabbed the chairman post. BJP councilor Pavani Mallikarjun became chairperson and another BJP councilor Akhila Rajashkar became the vice-chairperson of Makthal municipality.

In Pedda Amberpet too, the ruling TRS gave a shock to the Congress. Here, five Congress councilors extended their support to TRS, helping it grab the chairperson post. The vice-



chairperson post went to Congress councilor Chama Sampurna Reddy.

In Thukkuguda, TRS gave a shock to the BJP with the help of Independent councilor. The TRS used five ex-officio members to win the post, though it had only five councilors.

TRS succeeded in inducting the Independent councilor Kantekar Madhu Mohan and made the first chairman of Thukkuguda municipality. Education Minister Sabitha

Indra Reddy succeeded in grabbing the Thukkuguda chairperson position though the BJP won nine wards.

The BJP lodged objection against the TRS for using Rajya Sabha member K Keshava Rao as ex-officio member here. The saffron party made it clear that it will move court over the issue.

In Choutuppal, tension prevailed when Munugode MLA Komatireddy Rajagopal Reddy staged a dharna in front of the municipal office along with Congress cadre. Komatireddy tore up the charter of oath alleging that the TRS attracted three CPM councilors who contested the elections in alliance with Congress, by giving them Rs 2 crore as "party fund".

CAPSULE



**POCSO accused hangs self inside Gwalior Central Jail in MP**

**GWALIOR:** A man charged under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and in prison since January 23 allegedly committed suicide in Gwalior Central Jail in Madhya Pradesh, police said on Monday. Narottam Rawat's body was found hanging from a tree in the premises of a temple within the jail complex after a search was mounted around 7:30pm on Sunday as he had not come back to his barracks post dinner, said Gwalior Central Jail Superintendent Manoj Sahu. "He had eloped with a minor girl on January 4 but was held later, charged under the POCSO Act, and sent to jail on January 23," Sahu said. He said jail wardens Omprakash Suman, Manoj Tyagi and Prem Goyal have been suspended, and probe was underway to ascertain how Rawat managed to make a rope out of clothes, climb atop the tree and commit suicide without on-duty personnel getting alerted.



**West Bengal gov't tables anti-CAA resolution in Assembly**

**KOLKATA:** The West Bengal government on Monday tabled a resolution against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in the Assembly. The resolution appeals to the Union government to repeal the amended citizenship law and revoke plans to implement NRC and update NPR. As per reports, state Parliamentary Affairs Minister Partha Chatterjee introduced the resolution in the House around 2 pm. Three states - Kerala, Rajasthan and Punjab - have already passed resolutions against the new citizenship law. The law has emerged as the latest flashpoint in the state, with the TMC opposing the contentious legislation tooth and nail, and the BJP pressing for its implementation. Incidentally, Kerala, Rajasthan and Punjab have passed resolutions against the new citizenship law. The new citizenship law has emerged as the latest flashpoint in the state, with the TMC opposing the contentious legislation tooth and nail, and the BJP pressing for its implementation.

**Hold dialogue with anti-CAA protesters: Digvijay to PM, Shah**

**PNS ■ SEHORE (MP)**

Senior Congress leader Digvijay Singh on Monday appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to hold a dialogue with protesters opposing the CAA-NRC-NPR regime, to prevent "further deterioration" of the current situation. Singh also said the "movement" against the new citizenship law and the two other proposed exercises has now gone out of the hands of politicians, as it has turned into an "emotional issue". "The movement against the CAA, NPR and NRC has gone out of the hands of politicians and political parties and has become an emotional issue, which should not

**Railways to go '100% Electric' by 2024: Goyal**

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

India has set 2024 as the target for 100 per cent electrification of railways, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said today, adding that "we are very very conscious of our responsibility to the environment". By 2030, India plans to make the entire railway network a "net-zero emission network", he further said. "We are embarking on rapid

**By 2030, we plan to make the entire railway network a net-zero emission network. We will have no emission from the railways.... it will run on clean energy and clean power, Union Minister Piyush Goyal said**

electrification of the rail network by 2024. We expect the entire network to be electrified



"By 2030, we plan to make the entire railway network a net-zero emission network. We will have no emission from the railways.... it will run on clean energy and clean power," he said. India would be the first country in the world to run a railway network "of this scale and size" on electricity, he further said. The central minister also spoke of scope of partnership with Brazil for developing

rail infrastructure. Indian Railways has been working to reduce the carbon emission amid global concern over climate change. As per the NITI Aayog data, carbon dioxide emission from the Indian Railways was around 6.84 million tons in 2014. Last year, Mr Goyal, while announcing the electrification goal, had said that the centre is phasing out the old coal plants, which is going to help

reduce environmental pollution. "It will also create the demand for new plants and spur the investment cycle," he had said. India has the fourth largest network in the world after US, Russia and China. Spread across 67,368 km with about 7,300 stations, the rail network runs close to 13,000 passenger trains that carry over 23 million passengers daily, according to government data.

**India map sans PoK, Aksai Chin on KMC's Facebook page; mayor says profile hacked**

**PNS ■ KOLKATA**

Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) Mayor Firdah Hakim has alleged "deep-rooted conspiracy" behind the posting of a distorted map of India, sans Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Aksai Chin, on the civic body's Facebook page on Republic Day. The West Bengal BJP has demanded Hakim's resignation from the mayor post and a statement from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee over the incident.



**Alleging that the Kolkata Municipal Corporation's Facebook profile was 'hacked by people with vested interests to malign the KMC', mayor Hakim said a probe will be initiated into the incident.**

mayor was trolled, following which the KMC deleted the map. The BJP lashed out at Hakim over the incident. "We demand the immediate resignation of Hakim as the KMC mayor. Isn't the civic body endorsing Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's claims on Kashmir?" state BJP general secretary Sayantan Basu said on Monday. Basu also demanded a statement from Banerjee

on the incident as Hakim also holds important ministerial portfolios and is a senior TMC leader. "We also want to know whether the Bengal CM also believes that PoK is not part of India," Basu said. A KMC official said a complaint has been lodged with the cyber cell of the Kolkata Police and New Market police station on January 26 over the incident.

Alleging that the civic body's profile was "hacked by people with vested interests to malign the KMC", Hakim said a probe will be initiated into the incident. The KMC landed in an embarrassing situation after

the map of India, without PoK and Aksai Chin, was seen on its page on Republic Day. Along with the distorted map, the mayor's Republic Day message was on display. As the image went viral, the

**Stalin says he's 'troubled' to see Omar Abdullah's picture**

**PNS ■ CHENNAI**

DMK President M K Stalin on Monday said he was deeply troubled to see a photograph of National Conference leader Omar Abdullah in which he sports an overgrown beard and demanded the Centre immediately release all leaders in detention in Jammu and Kashmir.



**Omar is among the three former CMs of the erstwhile state who continue to be in custody since August 5 when the Centre abrogated Article 370**

The top Dravidian party leader took to Twitter to demand his release and said "Deeply troubled to see this picture of @OmarAbdullah" and tagged three images of the Kashmiri leader. While the first showed Omar Abdullah clean shaven, the next featured him with a medium beard and in the final one an overgrown beard was striking. "Equally concerned about Farooq Abdullah, @MehboobaMufti & other Kashmiri leaders who are incarcerated without trial or due process. Union Govt must immediately release all political prisoners and restore normalcy in Valley," he said.

The DMK has all along been demanding the release of all leaders in detention in Kashmir following the scrapping of Article 370.

A photograph of Omar Abdullah surfaced on Twitter on January 25 in which he seemed almost unrecognisable sporting a salt and pepper beard, triggering reactions of awe and anger from netizens, including West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Omar is among the three former chief ministers of the erstwhile state who continue to be in custody since August 5 when the Centre abrogated the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and divided it in two Union Territories.

**SC notice to Maharashtra on Arun Gawli's plea challenging life term**

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Monday sought response from the Maharashtra government on a plea by gangster-turned-politician Arun Gawli challenging the life term awarded to him in the 2008 murder of Shiv Sena corporator Kamlakar Jamsandekar. A bench of Justices R Banumathi and A S Bopanna issued a notice to the state on Gawli's appeal challenging the December 9 last year verdict of the Bombay High Court which had upheld the life term awarded to him by a trial court. According to the prosecution, Jamsandekar was murdered at the behest of Gawli (64), a former Maha MLA.

the National Register of Citizens (NRC) across the country. "Amit Shah had said that CAA bill will be followed by the NPR and then the NRC in a chronological order. Now, if they want to handle the situation properly then PM Modi and Shah should hold a dialogue with those staging protests. "They should clear all doubts from the mind of protesters otherwise the situation will further worsen in the country," Singh added. Answering a question on Shah's appeal to the people of Delhi where assembly polls will be held on February 8, Singh said, "As they (BJP leaders) have no issues to raise, they are setting the country on fire (by making such statements)".

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**BJP doesn't want to open Shaheen Bagh route: Kejriwal**

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday alleged that the BJP does not want to open the Shaheen Bagh stretch of the Kalindi Kunj road where anti-CAA protests are going on for over a month as the saffron party is doing "dirty politics" over it. He said law and order in the national capital entirely lies with the Centre and "if they are saying that they need permission from me, I am giving them permission, open the road in one hour". "I can give you this in writing, BJP does not want to open the route in Shaheen Bagh. The Shaheen Bagh route will remain closed till February 8 (election day) and it will open February 9," Kejriwal told reporters. He further alleged that the BJP just knows how to do "dirty politics over everything".

**9,000 GPs oppose Maha gov't move to cancel direct elections**

**PNS ■ MUMBAI**

Several thousand gram panchayats in Maharashtra have opposed the Uddhav Thackeray government's decision to cancel direct elections for the post of sarpanch. The new rule states that those elected to the gram panchayat will elect a sarpanch (village headman) from among themselves. "As many as 9,000 gram panchayats have passed a resolution opposing the state government's decision to allow members to elect a sarpanch from among themselves," said Maharashtra State Sarpanch Parishad chairperson Dutta Kakade on Monday. The rule for direct election of sarpanch was brought in by the previous BJP-led Devendra Fadnavis dispensation. The Fadnavis cabinet had, on July 3, 2017, decided to



amend the respective clauses of Maharashtra Gram Panchayat Act of 1958 to facilitate election of sarpanchs (gram panchayat heads) directly from among the people of the village. Incidentally, Thackeray, whose Sena was part of the ruling alliance at the time, had disapproved of this move. Thackeray had, in July, 2017, said that going by this logic (of direct election of sarpanch) a demand for election of state chief minister in a similar way can be raised by people.

**From politics to frogs, Goa RD tableau has netizens hopping**

**PNS ■ PANAJI**

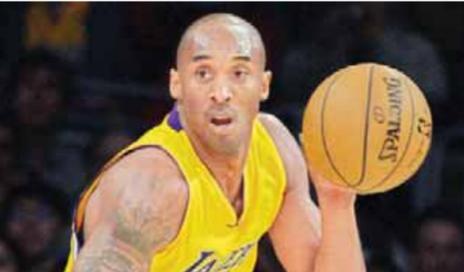
A day after Goa's colourful Republic Day tableau dominated by a large green frog strumming a guitar rolled by Rajpath on Sunday, social media is abuzz with the amphibian motif. While the motif of a frog is aimed at creating awareness about the Goa government's "Save the Frog" campaign designed to prevent poaching of the amphibian in Goa, the popular interpretation of the motif according to a string of social media posts indicates something more tragic-comic. With 15 out of 40 MLAs in the Goa legislative assembly having hopped parties since the state assembly elections in 2017, social media posts seem to sarcastically suggest that the frog is more representative of legislators "hopping" political parties. "The #republicday tableau of #Goa, portraying the #political reality image of Goa to the #world dignitaries and #Indian citizens. #frogs #bebbo," says Alison Morenas from Margao. Bebo is the Konkani word for the frog. "This Republic Day, Goa's Mascot 'The Frog', truly signifies our politics & our politicians, who have become experts in jumping from one political party to another. The rest of our country is not very different either! The Emperor of Frogs strums on his guitar, while our nation burns!" says Candolim-based businessman Ricardo Rebelo. A youth BJP leader Pranav Sanvordekar also took a dig at the float. "Frog on the tableau at #RepublicDay parade was successful in portraying the state of political affairs in #Goa..." he said. Fifteen MLAs have quit the Congress and the Maharashtra Gomantak Party since the 2017 state assembly elections, to join the BJP.

**From Kohli to Warne, cricket fraternity mourns Kobe Bryant's death**

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The cricket community joined the rest of the world in mourning NBA legend Kobe Bryant's tragic death with batting legend Sachin Tendulkar, India captain Virat Kohli and West Indies great Vivian Richards offering their condolences. Bryant, along with one of his daughters, 13-year-old Gianna and seven others died in a helicopter crash on Sunday morn-

ing. He was 41-years-old and regarded as one of the greatest hoopers in the game's history. "Saddened to hear about the tragic demise of Kobe Bryant, his daughter Gianna & others on-board the helicopter. My condolences to his family, friends and fans across the world. #KobeBryant," Tendulkar tweeted. Kohli and India coach Ravi Shastri were devastated with the news. "Absolutely devastated to hear



this news today. So many childhood memories of waking up early and watching this magician doing things on the court that I would be mesmerized by. Life is so unpredictable and fickle. His daughter Gianna passed away too in the crash. I am absolutely Heartbroken. Rest in peace. Strength and condolences to the family," Kohli wrote on his Instagram page. "Absolutely devastated by the tragic news of Kobe Bryant and

his daughter. My heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and fans across the globe #KobeBryantRIP #KobeForever #Kobe," Shastri wrote on his twitter page. Richards on his part said: "A true legend of the sporting world! Rest In Peace dear Kobe and his daughter. May the family have immense strength to overcome this sad time." Australian spin great Shane Warne was "stunned" by the

tragedy. "Like everyone, I'm stunned, shocked and saddened to hear the horrific news about Kobe Bryant and his 13 year old daughter who died in a helicopter crash. Thoughts are with his family and loved ones at this extremely sad time!" Others who expressed their grief included Indian spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, Shikhar Dhawan, Hardik Pandya and former Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene.

# Selling the jewel

The Govt has invited expressions of interest for Air India again. Will it succeed this time in selling off the airline?

What's next for Air India? Even with Ministers in the Government trying to talk up the sale — Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said he would have bought the airline if he weren't a Minister — the fact is that this sell-off is difficult. This time it will not be — thanks to the quality or the lack of it — the asset on sale alone. In a revised push, the Government has made it clear that it plans to sell its entire stake in the carrier. But the sell-off process by the Modi Government during both its terms has been



sporadic and questionable. Take its failure to sell off Can Fin Homes, the housing finance arm of Canara Bank. Without any reason to put it on sale, it has been more damaging to the investor community than any of the protests at Shaheen Bagh or resolutions by the European Parliament. Foreign investors are genuinely worried whether India is open to doing business at all. The Government's negativity has been on display, including that of Goyal's recent statement against Amazon's billion-dollar investment/bailout to its Indian operations. Air India is no ordinary public sector unit (PSU); it is the national airline after all. Talk of its disinvestment have flamed passionate arguments on both sides. On the one hand, some feel that it remains a vital national asset and that the Government must plough in more taxpayers' funds to keep it aloft. On the other, there are those who feel that it is a five-tonne deadweight attached to India's leg and must be divested immediately or better still, shut shop. Air India may be tottering at the edge of the precipice but it still has strengths that can be advantageous in the long run. Whoever rescues it stands to gain for it has some of the prized international slots in profitable routes, a decent fleet and has a well-developed domestic and international footprint. It has some leftover glow from being a superbrand at one time and has skilled and experienced staff, particularly on operations and engineering sides, who are also being sought by most private operators.

With the disinvestment process in a limbo and the Government failing to even make what one could best describe as "easy sells", the question about selling Air India should be put on hold. Simply because selling the national carrier is extremely complex and involves a layered process with terms and conditions. At the same time, despite Jet Airways' collapse actually providing a slight fillip to the rest of the industry, the Indian aviation industry has been hurt due to a multitude of reasons, many not of its own making. IndiGo, India's largest airline, is suffering due to engine issues. SpiceJet, owned by Government-linked entrepreneur Ajay Singh, is faced with a cash crunch, which is not being helped by several of its Boeing 737 Max aircraft grounded. So, the question about who has the money as well as the expertise to buy Air India is open, one that does not have easy answers. The same issues that arose when Jet Airways was going down in flames have re-emerged now. It would be easier and cheaper to establish a new airline than sink hundreds of millions of dollars into Air India unless one really values the slots. At the same time, during the weekend, it emerged that Dubai-based Emirates carried over 50 million Indians to Dubai and beyond, a classic case of how Indian passengers have fuelled the growth of global airlines. There is no doubt that India offers rich pickings for global airlines and could one day become a key driver of the aviation economy. We are poised to be the third largest player in this sector by 2025.

# A censure too far

India has rightly ignored the EU resolutions on CAA, argued the law is an internal matter but we must dispel doubts



It is perhaps a little hypocritical of the European Union (EU) to go so far as to pass resolutions against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) when it has traversed a spectrum of genocidal politics and refugees born of racial hatred itself. That's patronising. India is capable enough to conduct its own democratic scrutiny. Yes, all is not right with the new law that makes religion a criterion for naturalisation. And the civil society dissent against it has indeed become a pan-Indian movement to act as a counter-pressure to the Government. Both

the law, which was duly passed by Parliament, and the mass protests thereafter, are within democratic convention. Though the Government clampdown on discourse is reprehensible, the recent protests have shown how masses of people can effectively turn the tide while being leaderless and without political endorsement. To that extent, the pro and anti-CAA battle will be settled within the spirit and territoriality defined by the Constitution and may actually set us on the self-corrective course of democratic renewal. We certainly won't need any third-party intervention to make that call, India's citizens are enough to do it. Domestic matters, no matter how contentious, will have to be solved domestically. Fellow democracies indeed need to respect that.

Also, such resolutions mean nothing unless they are a precursor to some sort of practical curbs in EU's engagement with India (some EU members have suggested that as well) but that's an extreme option, considering there are nations with worst rights violations. Unless of course, this is being done to negotiate a stronger position when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Brussels for an Indo-EU summit. Having said that, the international narrative does shape global perceptions and attitudes in engaging with India. And the resolutions embody unanimity of opinion from the extreme Right to extreme Left groups, coming from 625 of 752 EU members. Sifting through them, certain key issues do come up on which the Government has to ready its explainers and demonstrate that it is receptive as a vibrant democracy and not combative like an authoritarian regime. It has to engage with counterpoints that scare them away. The key concerns are clearly about the marginalisation of a community implicit in the CAA, its link with the profiling nature of census in the National Population Register (NPR)-National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the clampdowns on dissent, including those in Kashmir following its changed status as a Union Territory. The resolution, which falls under the category of "resolutions on topical subjects," says that India has "created the legal grounds to strip millions of Muslims of the fundamental right of equal access to citizenship" and has linked the rights situation in Kashmir. The US, too, despite the guided tour of the Valley, has been critical of the detention of mainstream political leaders, who have so far worked within India's democratic template and even been allies of New Delhi, without formal charges. The viral images of an emaciated, bearded and unkempt National Conference leader Omar Abdullah have only intensified the sense of victimhood at the hands of an oppressive regime. Till date, the Government's lobbying and efforts to push its own point of view have not been too convincing. It has not made any reconciliatory moves either except by countering criticism with an obstinate aggression that is sharpening polarities. We must realise that intransigence is not always an asset even as we attempt to reset the template of diplomacy from passive to aggressive.

# A Constitutional mandate

Those individuals/leaders, who stand opposed to the CAA, must show respect to the Constitution, which empowers Parliament to make laws regarding citizenship



A SURYA PRAKASH

Continued opposition to the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which was passed by Parliament last month, and to the preparation of the National Population Register (NPR) by several State Governments, who stand opposed to the ruling dispensation, and their threatening postures towards the Union Government do not augur well either for the Republic or our Constitutional well-being.

The CAA, which has now become the law of the land, has amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 to provide succour to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians, who because of religious persecution in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, crossed over to India before December 31, 2014, and are living here without any legal status. These nations are Islamic States, meaning Islam is the State religion over there.

Thus, automatically, unlike in India, adherents of all religions other than Islam are second or third-class citizens. Therefore, all non-Muslims are Constitutionally inferior and this has conditioned the majority to ill-treat the religious minorities in these nations. Ever since Partition, the Hindus and other minorities have been subjected to all forms of harassment and cruelty in these nations, forcing them to either convert to Islam or flee.

As a result, the population of Hindus in undivided Pakistan, which was around 24 per cent in the mid-1940s, has crashed to just 1.70 per cent. Similarly, in Bangladesh, which was earlier East Pakistan, the Hindu population has crashed from 30 per cent to about seven per cent. This should also answer the question as to why Muslims have been left out of the list of persecuted minorities under the CAA. First, they are not "minorities" and second, it is laughable to say that Muslims are "persecuted" by an Islamic State. The CAA seeks to offer some help to these subjugated minorities and to only those who entered India before the cut off date. In other words, this is not an open-ended scheme to allow for future migrants from these nations. Nor does it have anything to do with the citizens of India, whether Hindu or Muslim.

Given this reality, the attempt made by the Communists, the Congress and other parties opposed to the BJP, to spread the word that the CAA is against the Muslim citizens of India is blatantly false. This Act seeks to provide succour to persecuted religious minorities in Islamic States and it is also in line with the *Bharatiya* dharma and Constitutional dharma as well, to reach out to them. Those opposing this are abetting the non-secular, non-democratic behaviour of the citizens of Islamic nations across India's border and will thereby lose the moral right to talk about these values in the country. The Communists and the Congress are also spreading canards about the NPR, the compilation of which is critical for policy formulation. Both parties were roundly rejected in



the last parliamentary election in May 2019. In fact, although the Communists hog 30 to 40 per cent of the airtime on television debates, public support for such parties has fallen dramatically. In the 2004 Lok Sabha election, the two main Communist parties had a combined vote share of 7.07 per cent. In 2014, this was down to 4.07 per cent and in 2019, it crashed to 2.36 per cent.

So, it appears that the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is their last bastion and with the support of the Congress, the two parties seek to avenge the electoral humiliation they suffered by whipping up passions against the Government that received overwhelming public support.

Meanwhile, in a resolution, the Kerala Assembly has said that the CAA passed by Parliament has created apprehensions in various sections of society. This was followed by the Punjab Assembly, which in its resolution stated that the CAA had caused widespread anguish and social unrest in the country. It further said that "the ideology behind the CAA is inherently discriminatory and is as far away as it can be from being a humanitarian measure." The Rajasthan Assembly is the latest one to demand repeal of the CAA. These resolutions are not unconstitutional but unprecedented and are certain to pose a threat to the federal structure.

Even more worrying is that the Punjab Assembly's resolu-

“ THE ATTEMPT MADE BY THE COMMUNISTS, THE CONGRESS AND OTHER PARTIES OPPOSED TO THE BJP TO SPREAD THE WORD THAT THE CAA IS AGAINST THE MUSLIM CITIZENS OF INDIA IS BLATANTLY FALSE. THIS ACT SEEKS TO PROVIDE SUCCOUR TO PERSECUTED RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN ISLAMIC STATES ”

tion refers to "apprehensions" that the NPR is a prelude to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and that it is "designed to deprive a section of people from 'citizenship of India.'" It goes on to say that because of these apprehensions, the Union Government should amend the forms and documentation associated with the NPR.

However, Assemblies in Kerala, Punjab or Rajasthan never shed tears for persecuted religious minorities in theocratic States such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. Further, all lectures on secularism are to be directed towards the secular, democratic citizens of India and the Government elected by them.

Three other developments in recent weeks are extremely worrying. One, several Chief Ministers have declared that they will not implement the CAA in their States. Two, the disgraceful decision to bring kids to protest sites and to get them to raise foul, abusive slogans against a duly elected Prime Minister. And three, telling the Muslims not to respond to queries from enumerators who are tasked to prepare the NPR.

Every Chief Minister and politician in the country, who has declared that CAA will not be implemented in his/her State, must immediately withdraw their statement because it will amount to challenging the supremacy of the Constitution. Parliament is

empowered to make laws regarding citizenship, naturalisation of aliens under item 17 in the Union List and no State or individual has the right to say that the law made by it will not be implemented. If Chief Ministers persist with this line, it will lead to a Constitutional breakdown and the consequences will be terrible because the overwhelming majority in this country swears by the Constitution and will not allow a few malcontents in politics to disturb its rhythm and balance.

Second, the decision by protesters to bring infants to protest sites and to get them to hurl abuses at the Prime Minister is another act of brinkmanship which no reasonable person will support. Last, asking the Muslims to boycott the NPR is equally risky because any attempt to stymie the working of a duly elected Government at the federal level will have its own implications.

Those, who are encouraging such tendencies, are treading a dangerous path. It is indeed unfortunate that one has to make such a gloomy prognosis about what lies ahead around the time when the nation just celebrated its 71st Republic Day. Everybody has to be alert to ensure that the Constitution and the democratic way of life remain undisturbed.

(The writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal.)

## SOUND BITE

The Opposition, the CPI(M) and the Congress must put aside narrow political differences and fight together against the fascist BJP Government at the Centre.



West Bengal CM —Mamata Banerjee

For me fitness is a way of life. It is my daily routine. I cannot operate without exercising regularly or doing something for my fitness. I do yoga, running, sprinting, weights.



Actor —Anil Kapoor

The Government with a 56-inch chest will have to shed its arrogance on the new citizenship law and bend before the people who have been protesting against the law.



Former Union Minister —Yashwant Sinha

I would not say Jinnah has completely won but he is winning. There's still a choice available to the nation between Jinnah's idea and Gandhiji's idea of a country.



Senior Congress leader —Shashi Tharoor

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Imbibing Indian ethos

Sir — As India celebrated its 71st Republic Day, we need to pause and introspect on the larger picture than debate on transient aberrations — social, political and economic — to which we have become so accustomed to. Yes, as a State, we have not slipped as have other contemporary nations who have attained independence. This, we owe to the legacy bequeathed in our philosophy and culture, the tenets of which run through our genes.

The *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* had delineated a vibrant ethos for public and private good. Time and tide have posed questions and we have chosen the right path many times. What is satisfying is that we strive to make amends to the wrongs. Each era is defined by a mix of thinkers and leaders they offer. That at any given time we seem to replace their right proportion remains an enigma. And no nation is an exception to this. Let us nevertheless celebrate an envious legacy we have inherited and pass it on to future generations.

R Narayanan  
Navi Mumbai

### Blunders that require quick remedy

In its report, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had confirmed that the Indian economy would grow at a rate lower than five per cent in 2019-20 rather than 7.2 per cent as predicted by it in April last year. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s periodic survey of the economy, too, gave a lucid account. Noting that the economy was bottoming out and growth had slowed from a rapid pace, it said recovery had been hurt as non-banking financial companies — which contribute a large share to its financing, weighing on job creation, income and consumption — are under stress. And now, the *Reuters* has forecast that India's corporate and income tax collection is likely to fall below what was collected in 2018-19, a fall for the first time in two decades.

It is here that it is difficult to fathom the philosophy behind some of the decisions taken by the ruling Government. The subjugation of Kashmir and its people and the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) have all made prospective investors wary of parking funds here. A new facet of Indian politics now is a flurry of saffron foot soldiers who remain alert all the time to counter every critic of the Government. Recently, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella had to face the wrath for his tweet on CAA. He said, "I think what is happening is sad...It's just bad." During his visit to India, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos pledged



to invest \$1 billion. His proposal didn't earn approval from the Government. A few days ago, George Soros, the billionaire investor and philanthropist, made a candid observation during his speech at the World Economic Forum, "A democratically elected Narendra Modi is creating a Hindu nationalist State" in India, alluding to the CAA. He, too, wasn't spared. These are men who command respect and wield considerable clout among the business fraternity across the world. For a country, which banks heavily on foreign investment to revive its economy, attacks on well-meaning critics will only be self-defeating.

Haridasan Rajan  
Kozhikode

### Stop creating walls

Sir — The Chinese have always had a fascination with walls culminating in the "Great Wall of

China" to keep the invaders out. Soon, they realised that the walls do not stop things from coming in. Now, they have put up another set of walls across a number of cities, initially Wuhan, to prevent

the spread of coronavirus. But again, the walls failed. Coronavirus has already claimed 80 lives in China and the country is making desperate attempts to stop its spread. But

emphasis must be on curing rather than just containing it. The modern world moves too fast for walls to work.

The real dilemma is to find a cure to it using scientific research, including vaccinations. There's a dire need to raise funds for medical research. Let's hope there is a solution and that it is found soon.

Dennis Fitzgerald  
Melbourne

### Learn from Kerala

Sir — The coronavirus threat in China has put millions of people in lockdown at a time when they should be celebrating the Lunar New Year. Given the way this disease has been spreading, many fear that it may become pandemic. Early reports suggest that the disease may have originated in bats. China must learn from Kerala's experience, which successfully contained the Nipah virus outbreak in 2018 due to adequate planning and infrastructure.

Sravana Ramachandran  
Chennai

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

**FIRST COLUMN**

# Leaders must get their act together

China seems to be a prime source of viruses. The doctors will do their duty as always but it would be nice if Chinese politicians act fast



**GWYNNE DYER**

In an emergency, the good thing about dictatorship is that it can respond very fast. The bad thing is that it won't respond at all until the dictator-in-chief says that it should. All little dictators, who flourish in this sort of system, won't risk their positions by passing bad news up the line until the risk of being blamed for delay outweighs the risk of being blamed for the emergency in the first place. You can see how this works if you consider China's response to the emergence of nCov-2019 (novel coronavirus 2019), a new viral threat potentially as serious as the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus of 2003. Some things it has done well but others it did very badly and the odds that the virus will spread globally are now probably even or worse.

The local health authorities in Wuhan, the 11-million-strong city in central China where the virus first appeared, spotted it on December 31, 2019, when only a few dozen cases had come to their attention. That's as fast as you could ask for. And they promptly shut down the seafood and wild game market where the victims caught the disease. Score: Nine out of 10.

China's national health authorities also acted fast. On January 9, they announced that they had a brand new coronavirus on their hands and just one day later they released its full genetic sequence online so that medical researchers worldwide could start working on it. Elapsed time: Just 11 days. Known deaths at that point: One. Score: 10 out of 10.

But these are medical professionals doing their duty according to internationally-agreed protocols. We don't know what they recommended to China's political authorities at that point but they must have called for widespread testing and probably also for travel restrictions to control the spread of the virus. But nobody dared to rock the boat: Nothing was done.

A pause here to recall how countries control the spread of a new infectious disease for which there is no vaccine nor any effective cure. Isolate the victims as soon as they are identified and give them medical support: Some will die but most will usually survive. And if you do that soon enough and thoroughly enough, the global pandemic never gets going.

There are often complicating factors. The spread will be far faster if the virus can pass from one person to another in the air. It will be much harder to isolate the people carrying the virus if they become infectious before they develop visible symptoms. But the methods available to slow or stop the spread are still the same: Identify the carriers and isolate them.

Now, back to what happened in China. The medical people did their job; the political people did not. It was two more weeks before the city of Wuhan was cut off from the rest of the country and the world. I live in London, 15 hours' flying time away and during those two weeks 2,000 people arrived from Wuhan at London's airports.

Lunar New Year, the biggest holiday in China's calendar, was coming up fast but nothing was done although half the population goes home for a visit at this time every year. Wuhan and a dozen other Hubei cities are now in lockdown but it's too late: Wuhan's mayor, Zhou Xianwang, admits that five million people have already left the city for the New Year celebrations. Score: Two out of 10.

We now have two pieces of bad news that would have made it even more urgent to seal Wuhan off had we known them at the time. The new virus does propagate through the air and people carrying it do become infectious before they display any symptoms.

Zhou didn't dare advocate isolating the city and neither did anybody else, until the Great Panjandrum Himself had spoken. President Xi Jinping finally spoke on January 25, saying that China faces a "grave situation" and now the system is racing to do what it should have been done two weeks ago.

Too bad but this pandemic (if that is what it becomes) will probably be on the same scale as the SARS virus and that is not really horrific: Deaths in the high hundreds or a few thousands worldwide. The mortality rate among those who catch it appears to be about two per cent, compared to one per cent for ordinary seasonal influenza. And ordinary flu kills about 400,000 (mostly elderly) people every year.

But one of these days something like the 1918 virus that caused the Spanish influenza will emerge again. That killed around 50 million people worldwide, out of a global population only a quarter of what it is now. Since Chinese food markets now seem to be a prime source of dangerous new flu-related viruses, the Chinese Government has a particular responsibility to contain them early. The Chinese doctors will do their duty, as always, but it would be nice if China had its political act a bit more together before then.

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

ON FEBRUARY 8 MORNING, PRESS THE BUTTON WITH LOTUS SYMBOL SO HARD THAT ITS CURRENT FORCES SHAHEEN BAGH PROTESTERS TO LEAVE BY EVENING.  
 —UNION HOME MINISTER  
**AMIT SHAH**

**POINT COUNTERPOINT**



EVM BUTTONS WILL BE PRESSED WITH LOVE IN DELHI. IT SHOULD BE A MILD CURRENT SO THAT FRIENDSHIP AND BROTHERHOOD ARE NOT ENDANGERED.  
 —JD(U) NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT  
**PRASHANT KISHOR**

# Powerless discoms

The house must be set in order, else this will have catastrophic consequences for power producers, banks, States and Modi's plans to supply electricity to every household



**UTTAM GUPTA**

Even as there are incessant promises from the ruling establishment of electrifying all villages in the country and making power available to each and every household for maximum duration in a day, the most crucial wheel required for making this happen has got stuck. And the irony is that the political brass is only paying lip service to the urgent need for extricating it. The reference here is to the power distribution companies (discoms) — mostly owned and controlled by State Governments which procure electricity from the independent power producers (IPPs), Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) like the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) and so on, besides their own undertakings such as Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam (RVUN) and sell to consumers. There are some discoms in the private sector as well but they, too, can't ignore the diktats of the state.

Ever since the dawn of the present century, the discoms have been incurring losses primarily due to three factors. First, being their sole owner and controller, the ruling establishment runs discoms as an extension of the state machinery, ordering them to sell electricity to a certain category of consumers viz. poor households and farmers either at a fraction of the cost of purchase and distribution or even free. On the units sold to this class, the discoms incur heavy under-recovery. At the same time, they are told to sell to industries and businesses at a price much above the cost to enable them to offset under-recovery on sale to preferred customers. But, even after offset, losses remain.

Second, in the course of transmission and distribution of electricity, there are so called "technical and commercial" (T&C) losses. Most of it is plain theft which is facilitated by faulty transformers, meters and other equipment. There being no revenue from stolen power, this further exacerbates the losses.

Third, under the power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed by discoms, States allow inflated tariff to generators taking recourse to "gold plating" (euphemism for claiming higher investment than actual), excessive overheads and over-invoicing of fuel bills and so on.

The above three factors make a deadly combination leading to shortfall in the realisation from sale, vis-à-vis the cost of supplying electricity which gets manifest in their loss. Funded by borrowings, this leads to accumulation of debt to unsustainable level. To ensure that they are able to sustain operations and the spillover effect on the rest of the economy is arrested/avoided, the Government had come out with three bail-out packages since 2000 — the latest being in 2015.

In 2015, under a financial restructuring package (FRP) orchestrated by the Union Government, over 75 per cent of the outstanding debt, about ₹400,000 crore of discoms were taken over by State Governments whereas for the balance 25 per cent, they were allowed to issue bonds — backed by sovereign guarantee — to raise funds at concessional interest rate. The FRP was intended to enable discoms to wipe the slate clean, reduce losses and eventually eliminate them.

During 2016-17 and 2017-18, they did show significant reduction with losses declining from

“A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION CAN EMERGE ONLY BY TACKLING THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO LOSSES OF DISCOMS. THE CENTRE AND STATES SHOULD PUT THEIR HEADS TOGETHER TO DO AWAY WITH SOPS TO FARMERS AND HOUSEHOLDS, ELIMINATE THEFT AND REIN IN INFLATED TARIFF UNDER PPAS”



₹52,000 crore during 2015-16 to ₹32,000 crore during 2016-17 and ₹17,000 crore during 2017-18. During 2018-19, this trend was reversed with losses increasing to ₹28,000 crore. The trend continues during the current year. A collateral damage has been by way of increase in pending payment to power generators. Thus, the amount due for more than 60 days increased from about ₹23,000 crore as of March 2018 to ₹71,000 crore as of November 2019. All dues including those pending for less than 60 days — as on this date — were even higher at about ₹81,000 crore.

This has a debilitating effect on the ability of generators to service loans taken from banks and financial institutions (FIs). A good chunk of those loans have already become non-performing assets (NPAs). Moreover, given their precarious finances, discoms are forced to reduce off-take which affects capacity utilisation. It leads to an anomalous situation whereby despite ample capacity, electricity generation declines affecting supplies.

There is an urgent need to set the house of discoms in order, or else this will have catastrophic consequences for all stakeholders, viz. power producers, banks/FIs, finances of States and jeopardise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's grandiose plans to supply electricity to every household. So, what is the Government doing to set things right?

From August 1, 2019, it made mandatory for discoms to open letters of credit (LOC) for getting supply from generators (gencos). Under the LOC arrangement, the bank guarantees that a buyer's payment to a seller will be received on time and for the correct amount; in the event that the buyer is unable to pay, the bank will be required to cover the full or remaining amount which in turn, it will recover from the

buyer using all available legal means. Relying on the above, in September, 2019, the Union Power Minister, RK Singh even exuded confidence that this would prevent creation of fresh dues. But this has not happened as may be seen from arrears continuing to be on an upward trajectory from about ₹49,000 crore in February, 2019 to over ₹71,000 crore as of November 2019. Clearly, the mechanism has not worked even as generators are forced to maintain supplies despite not receiving payment.

Singh was also optimistic that by incorporating a provision for penalty (or surcharge) for delayed payment at commercial rate of interest of 18 per cent in the New Tariff Policy (NTP), it should be possible to eliminate all pending dues. This may work while dealing with private entities (in fact, in those cases, the problem may not even arise in the first place) but not when it comes to dealing with state entities. So, it is unlikely that the legacy dues would be cleared.

Under the NTP (this is yet to be approved by the Union Cabinet), the Government has also proposed capping of tariff hike to 15 per cent of the under-recovered power supply cost. Further, they won't be eligible for grant or loan if they don't make efforts to reduce losses. These, too, are unlikely to work in improving their financial position and ability to clear the arrears and make timely payments in future.

Let us not forget that at present, even after increasing tariff — mostly directed at industries and businesses (a big chunk of households and farmers are never touched) — discoms incur loss. If a hike is restricted to just 15 per cent then their loss would be even bigger. Far from any help in reducing, such a stipulation will only end up increasing losses

as they lose the flexibility to hike tariff. Similarly, the pressure by way of denying grant or loan won't be of much help.

The Government is also contemplating a Special Loans Plan (SLP) under which banks will be asked to give loans to discoms to enable them to clear their dues to gencos. This will have serious implications for the banks. Considering that discoms won't be able to pay back (given their precarious finances and no effort being made to address the fundamental factors behind their losses), these loans will be NPAs from day one. For banks struggling to come out of the crisis they got into (courtesy, legacy NPAs), this will compound their woes.

True, payment by discoms to gencos (enabled by SLP) will enable the latter service loans they had taken from banks thereby preventing those loans from becoming NPAs. However, for banks, this is no consolation as one set of NPAs would have been substituted by another. Besides, the gencos will continue to remain vulnerable to payment default as long as the discoms remain financially unviable. The SLP may solve today's problem but after some time, dues will pile up requiring Centre's intervention yet again.

Let it be understood in no ambiguous terms that whether it is the FRP (granted thrice over earlier) or SLP under consideration now, these are merely "band aids". These don't offer sustainable solution even as the problem keeps on festering beneath.

A sustainable solution can emerge only by tackling the fundamental causes which contribute to losses of discoms. The Centre and States should put their heads together to do away with SOPs to farmers and households, eliminate theft and rein in inflated tariff under PPAs.

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

# India is not there yet

The NITI Aayog's index of UN's Sustainable Development Goals reveals that Kerala is on top of the chart in the country while in the north, Himachal Pradesh is a leading performer and Haryana and Punjab are laggards



**PINKI RAMAUL**

On December 30, 2019, the NITI Aayog released the second edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, 2019, which is more robust than the first edition, SDG India Index: Baseline Report 2018, on account of a wider coverage of goals, targets and indicators and has greater alignment with the National Indicator Framework (NIF). A composite score was computed in the range of zero to 100 for each State and Union Territory (UT). If a State/UT gets a score of 100, it signifies that it has achieved the 2030 national SDG targets. The higher the score, the closer the State/UT gets towards achieving the objectives.

For North India, the report revealed contrasting performances by States, with Himachal Pradesh (HP) fortifying its position as the lead performer and securing the second rank with a composite SDG index of 69. Punjab was placed 12th with a score of 62 and Haryana ranked much lower at 18th place with a score of 57, which was even lower than the country's average of 60. Overall, Kerala achieved the first rank with a tab of 70, while Bihar was the worst performing State with a tally of 50.

The SDGs consist of a set of 17 broad-based global goals adopted by 193 countries at the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Summit at UN Headquarters in New York in September 2015. The objectives were intended to be achieved by 2030 as a part of the resolution, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development." These SDGs for 2030 evolved from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015. India is committed to achieve the 17 SDGs, the 169 associated tar-

gets and 232 SDG indicators, which comprehensively cover the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development.

The present analysis of the three North Indian States covers only 15 SDGs since the SDG 14 (life below water) is excluded as it applies only to nine coastal States and the SDG 17 (Partnership for the goals) is only qualitatively analysed in the report.

Out of the 15 SDG indices, HP is the best performer among these three States on 11 SDG indices while Punjab is the best performer on three goals viz. SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 3 (good health and well-being) and SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy) and Haryana is the best performer on only one of the goals viz. SDG 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure).

However, appreciably, at an all-India level, Haryana is among the top three States in respect of SDG 9. However, Punjab has not found mention among the top three States at the all-India level on any of the 17 indices used for evaluating States and

UTs on parameters of development. Significantly, on the other hand, at the all-India level, goal-wise HP has been the top State in three SDGs viz. Goal 4 (quality education), Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities).

Besides applauding the achievements of the States, the report also highlights several challenges before them, which need to be comprehensively addressed by Governments. Some of the critical issues highlighted reveal that at the all-India level, Haryana ranks second-highest in urban income inequality. Punjab and Haryana have less than 10 per cent of their geographical area under forest and tree cover. Both Haryana and Punjab have surpassed the maximum limit of annual groundwater withdrawal, which is 70 per cent, so that the ground water is replenished at a normal rate. These States have to improve this ratio.

Unfortunately, in terms of sexual crimes against the girl child as well as total crimes against children, HP is the worst. Moreover, it does badly

in terms of SDG 2 (zero hunger), which reflects poorly on the performance of the State Government on ending starvation, thus requiring a more focussed approach on nutrition.

Among the positive aspects, Punjab has the highest agricultural productivity at 4,169.67 kg/Ha and is nearing the targetted productivity of 5,033.34 kg/Ha. Similarly, Punjab with Gross Value Added (GA) in agriculture at ₹2.4 lakh, has the second-highest GA after Goad at ₹3.7 lakh, which is already above the target of ₹1.3 lakh.

Cellular density is over 100 per cent in both HP and Punjab and with a HIV incidence per 1,000 uninfected population at 0.01, HP is closest to achieving the UN target of zero HIV-incidence. In terms of the average annual drop-out rate at the secondary level, HP is the best performing State with a 7.03 per cent rate as compared to 19.89 per cent in India. It leads the States in the Female Labor Force Participation Rate at 39.70 per cent as compared to the all-India rate

of 17.7 per cent.

In terms of the share of renewable power as a proportion of the total electricity generated, HP leads the country with 94 per cent of the total electricity generated in the State coming from renewable sources. The above analysis emphasises that the SDG India Index Report 2019 would spur the States towards necessary course-correction wherever required and encourage them to ensure timely achievement of the goals.

At the global level, it is widely agreed that India will play a leading role in determining the relative success or failure of the SDGs, as it is the second-most populous country, accounting for one-sixth of the world's population. In this context, it is worthwhile to quote Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General, "The coming years will be a vital period to save the planet and to achieve sustainable, inclusive human development."

(The writer is an author and editor)



## LEST WE FORGET OUR DARK PAST

This Holocaust Memorial Day, and the ceremony that will take place in Poland, carry a special poignancy because of the diminishing number of survivors and the landmark nature of the date. In the last 75 years, survivors have talked about it out of a sense to duty to the dead and the living. Philosopher Santayana said of the Holocaust: "He who does not learn from history is doomed to repeat it." That lesson must never cease to be taught. (The Guardian, editorial)

CAPSULE



**JPVL appoints R K Porwal as Chief Financial Officer**

**NEW DELHI:** Jaiprakash Power Ventures (JPVL) on Monday said it has appointed R K Porwal as Chief Financial Officer of the company. Porwal is a chartered accountant besides holding masters' degree in commerce and LLB. He has over 32 years of post-qualification experience in finance, accounts, taxation, auditing, contract management. "The board has approved the appointment of R K Porwal as Chief Financial Officer... with effect from January 27, 2020, based on the assessment of the nomination and remuneration committee and recommendation and approval of the audit committee of the company," a BSE filing said.



**Maruti launches BS VI compliant CNG version of Alto**

**NEW DELHI:** Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Monday said it has launched BS VI compliant CNG version of its hatchback Alto with price starting at Rs 4.32 lakh (ex showroom, Delhi). The Alto S-CNG offers a mileage of 31.59 km/kg, MSI said in a statement. "With the introduction of Alto BS6 S-CNG, we reinforce our efforts towards sustainable green mobility," MSI Executive Director (Marketing & Sales) Shashank Srivastava said. The launch of company's S-CNG vehicle range is aligned to government's vision of reducing oil import and enhancing the share of natural gas in the energy basket of the country from 6.2 per cent now to 15 per cent by 2030, MSI said. The auto major has already sold over 1 lakh BSVI Alto units in the country, it added.



**India asks Qatar to lower LNG price to reflect market**

**NEW DELHI:** India on Monday pressed its largest LNG supplier Qatar to lower price of gas supplied under long-term contract to reflect falling rates of the spot or current market, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said. Qatar supplies 8.5 million tonnes of liquefied natural gas annually to India at a price linked Brent crude oil. Landed price comes to USD 9-10 per million British thermal unit, while the same gas is available in spot market at half the rate. After talks with visiting Qatari Energy Minister Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, Pradhan said, "LNG contracts should reflect current market reality".

**Raman Rao to join Hilleman Labs as CEO**

**NEW DELHI:** Hilleman Laboratories, a joint venture between pharma company MSD and Wellcome Trust, on Monday said Raman Rao will assume the role of its chief executive officer on February 1, 2020. He will replace Davinder Gill who will leave as CEO of the company on January 31, 2020, Hilleman Laboratories said in a statement. Rao has more than 22 years' experience in research and development, manufacturing and commercialisation of vaccines for infectious diseases, and is joining from Takeda Vaccines where he was Vice President of Global Product Operations, it added. Established in 2009, Hilleman Laboratories is a research and development joint venture with a not-for-profit mission to develop affordable vaccines for diseases that commonly affect low-income countries.

**Govt issues bid document; to sell 100 pc stake in Air India**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Monday announced sale of 100 per cent stake in debt-laden Air India as it issued the preliminary bid document for the strategic disinvestment and has set March 17, as the deadline for submitting expression of interest.

As part of the strategic disinvestment, Air India would also sell 100 per cent stake in low-cost airline Air India Express and 50 per cent shareholding in joint venture AISATS, as per bid document issued on Monday.

Management control of the airline would also be transferred to the successful bidder. This is the second time in less than two years that the government has come out with proposal for selling stake in Air India, which has been in the red for long.

The government has set March 17, as the deadline for



submitting the expression of interest (EoI).

AISATS is an equal joint venture between Air India and Singapore Airlines. It offers ground handling services.

Air India also has interests in Air India Engineering Services, Air India Air Transport Services, Airline Allied Services and Hotel Corporation of India.

These entities are in the process of being transferred to a separate company -- Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL) -- and would not be a part of the proposed transaction, the document said.

According to the document, debt of Rs 23,286.5 crore would remain with Air India and Air India Express at the time of closing of the disinvestment.

The remaining debt would be allocated to AIAHL.

A person in the know of PIM details said staff would be given shares on discount under Employee Stock Option Programme (ESOP).

Air India staff will be offered three per cent of the airline's total shares in the government's disinvestment process.

About 98 crore shares would be set aside under the ESOP, the person said.

**Air India, AI Express great assets: Puri**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday said Air India along with Air India Express is a "great asset", as the government came out with preliminary bid document for disinvestment of the national carrier. The Minister of State for Civil Aviation said the successful bidder would continue to use Air India brand.

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**DCM Shriram Q3 net profit falls 22 pc to Rs 175 cr; income up**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

DCM Shriram Ltd, which is mainly into chemical, sugar and fertiliser businesses, on Monday reported a 22 per cent fall in its consolidated net profit to Rs 175.43 crore for the December 2019 quarter, on higher expenses and provision for losses in sale of foreign subsidiaries.

The company's net profit stood at Rs 225.65 crore in the year-ago quarter, the company said in a regulatory filing. Total income, however, rose to Rs 2,229.49 crore during the third quarter of this fiscal year from Rs 2,135.2 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year.

DCM Shriram said the board has "approved the proposed sale of entire equity capital and the underlying business including all assets and liabilities thereof on a going

concern and 'as is where is' basis of the step-down subsidiaries in Indonesia and Vietnam by Bioseed Holdings PTE Ltd, a subsidiary of the company in Singapore."

The agreements to sell have been entered into with the buyer and, pursuant to that, an amount of USD 5,20,000 out of the total net consideration of USD 9,50,000 has been received as earnest money.

The balance amount will be received at the time of entering into share purchase agreement which is expected to be completed by March 2020, it added. The buyer is Prasad Seeds Global PTE Ltd.

**Goyal pitches for activation of India-Brazil biz leaders forum**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday suggested the Brazilian side to reconstitute and activate India-Brazil Business Leaders Forum to boost economic ties between the two countries.

The minister said that he would be happy to hear from Brazilian side on the suggestion. "I have a suggestion for consideration of the Honourable President (of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro) and business leaders of both the sides. Some years ago, we had started India Brazil Business Leaders Forum, which some how for various reasons has not yet taken off," Goyal said.

He was speaking at the luncheon meeting of business leaders of both the sides in the presence of the Brazilian President.

Goyal said that both the countries can use this oppor-



**Goyal said that both the countries can use the opportunity provided by the presence of business leaders to activate the forum**

tourism, agriculture, clean energy and startups.

The minister said that both the countries have set up a target to take the bilateral trade to USD 15 billion by 2022 from the current USD 8.3 billion.

Speaking at the function, Bolsonaro said that huge potential is there for Indian businesses in Brazil. "Brazil's potential is unmatched," he said, adding for both the countries, "opportunities are right before us".

Brazilian Foreign Minister Ernesto Fraga Araujo said both the countries can increase cooperation in attracting investments.

**Nissan revises India strategy, plans 1 new model every year; compact SUV on anvil**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Japanese automaker Nissan plans to launch one new product every year, starting with a compact SUV, as part of its revised strategy for a turnaround in the Indian market, a top company official said on Monday.

The company, which has so far failed to make an impact in the market, now plans to focus primarily on the Nissan brand in the country and introduce multiple products with different body styles, including SUVs and sedans, going ahead instead of depending only on its SUV lineage as part of an



**Nissan now plans to focus primarily on the brand and introduce multiple products with different body styles**

earlier plan announced in 2018. It will also continue with Datsun brand, with focus on providing value proposition to the customers.

"We plan to launch at least one new product every year going forward. The first prod-

uct is going to be an all-new compact SUV which would be rolled out in the first quarter of the next financial year," Nissan Motor India Managing Director Rakesh Srivastava told reporters here.

The company would launch

multiple products in order to build a profitable and sustainable business in the country, he added.

Currently, Nissan sells six models in India under both Nissan and Datsun brands. Commenting on the new product, Srivastava said the model has been designed in Japan keeping in mind requirements of the Indian market.

"Globally, we have a range of SUV products. We are now looking to enhance our commitment to the market by coming out with a new offering in the B-SUV space (sub four metre compact SUV)," he noted.

He also told that the scheme has a conditionality that discoms must work out their trajectory for loss reduction.

**Curbs likely on import of furniture**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is likely to impose restrictions on imports of furniture with a view to boost domestic manufacturing and reduce inbound shipments of non-essential items, an official said. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade has suggested to its commerce counterpart to put the restrictions.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade is expected to soon come out with a notification regarding this, the official said.

Putting a product in restricted category means an importer will require licence or permission for the inbound shipment.

**Prestige Estates Q3 profit jumps over two-fold to Rs 162 crore**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Prestige Estates Projects Ltd has reported over two-fold jump in consolidated net profit at Rs 161.8 crore for December quarter and raised Rs 437 crore through preferential allotment of shares to Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC.

Its net profit stood at Rs 58.1 crore in the year-ago period.

Total income from operations also rose sharply to Rs 2,696.3 crore during October-December of 2019-20 from Rs 1,079 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, Bengaluru-based developer said in a regulatory filing.

The board of directors has allotted 1,34,41,654 equity shares of Rs 10 each to an



**Total income from operations rose to Rs 2,696.3 cr during October-December of 2019-20 from Rs 1,079 cr in the corresponding period of the previous year**

investor, on a preferential allotment basis, at a price of Rs 325 per equity share.

Last month, the board had approved "issue and allotment of 1,34,41,654 equity shares at a price not less than floor price of Rs 323.22" on preferential basis to GAMNAT Pte Ltd, which is an affiliate of GIC.

Prestige group announced development of 250 projects across India with completion of seven projects, including three housing and four commercial, across Bengaluru. The company last week launched a new township project Prestige Finsbury Park.

**BLR airport investing Rs 13,000 cr on expansion**

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (KIAB or BLR Airport) welcomed 33.65 million passengers during the calendar year 2019, registering a 4.1 per cent growth, compared to previous years 32.33 million.

While international passenger traffic witnessed double-digit growth of 14.0 per cent,



lion to 28.78 million.

The year 2019 has been a turbulent year for Indian aviation, mostly impacted by the closure of a large airline and supply-side challenges caused by the grounding of some aircraft types, according to a BLR airport statement.

These factors had a ripple effect as the ATMs at BLR Airport were down by 0.1 per cent as against the double-digit

CAGR witnessed in the previous five years (CY14 to CY18).

The total ATMs during 2019 was 235,058 as compared 235,190 in CY 2018. Notably, international movements remained on the upswing, growing by 13.0 per cent with a total of 30,556 ATMs as compared to 26,966 ATMs in CY 2018, owing to the launch of new routes and new flights during Winter 2018.

**Government pegs 7 pc rise in onion output this yr; sees production fall in major fruits**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Monday projected the country's overall onion production to increase by seven per cent to 24.45 million tonnes in the current 2019-20 crop year, which may bring relief to consumers from high prices seen in the last few months.

Releasing its first forecast, the Agriculture Ministry said onion crops have been grown in 12.93 lakh hectare in the 2019-20 crop year (July-June), slightly higher than 12.20 lakh hectare achieved during the previous year.



of onion -- the key kitchen staple -- is estimated to increase to 24.45 million tonne this year from 22.81 million tonnes in the 2018-19 crop year.

Onion is grown during both kharif (summer) and rabi (winter) season. The ministry had recently said there was around 22 per cent damage in kharif

the said period. The ministry has projected marginal drop in production of beans, parwal, pumpkin and tapioca this year.

However, overall production of vegetables is estimated to be higher at 188 million tonne in 2019-20 crop year from 183 million tonne in the previous year.

Among major fruits, production of apple is expected to be higher at 2.73 million tonne this year compared with the final output of 2.31 million tonne last year, but there is likely to be a fall in output of mango, banana, grapes, and pomegranate.

**SIAM seeks incentive-based scrappage policy, GST rate cut**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Auto industry body SIAM on Monday urged the government to announce an incentive based scrappage policy ahead of the Budget, while also seeking a reduction in GST on BS-VI vehicles to 18 per cent.

Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) also suggested Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to increase budget allocation for internal combustion engine (ICE) bus procurement by state transport undertakings.

"As SIAM, we have urged the Finance Ministry to consider announcing an incentive based scrappage policy and also increase Budget allocation



for ICE bus procurement by State transport undertakings," SIAM President Rajan Wadhwa said in a statement.

He further said increased cost of BS-VI vehicles may effect demand. "Hence, we have also requested government to reduce GST rates for BS-VI vehicles effective April 1 from 28 per cent to 18 per cent," Wadhwa added.

## Hyderabad's OWN GULLY BOY

Rap is all about rhythm and poetry. Asahel Shamir Jannu aka The Mutant speaks to SIDDHESH SUMAN about his journey into rap so far. While many people struggle due to many issues in this field, life started out tough for Asahel as he was born with spina bifida. But this did not let his spirits down and he is here to tell the world a good story

Rap is a medium of expression using poetry and music. One of the ideas behind the origins of rap is to make people aware of the vices in society such as rape, murder and discrimination. It soon became a medium for the youth to make their voices heard. *Desi* hip hop has grown a lot in recent years. Bollywood portrays rap as rich people wearing huge gold chains, fur coats, driving expensive sports car and singing about alcohol and women. But Indian rap music is much more deeper than that. The underground scene started shaping in our country since the beginning of this century with groups like 2.ShadeZ, Machas with Attitude, Bombay Bassment, Gully Gang and so on pioneering the Indian rap music scene.

The Mutant is a Hyderabad-based rapper and musician and was born with spina bifida — a birth defect

where a baby's spinal cord fails to develop properly. He has however not let that come in the way and is breaking barriers and creating ripples in the underground hip hop scene.

In an interview with *The Pioneer*, Asahel said, "I started off as a poet at the age of 12. Rap was more of a hobby back then, but once I turned 14, I turned professional and there has been no looking back. My stage name explains my story. Mutant is someone who is an outcast and according to Marvel's *X-Men* comics, it means a superhero. My physical condition has never been a hurdle for me. The only time it's been a



To all youth who are passionate about rap just remember to exploit, excavate, experience, elaborate and, most importantly, stay eccentric. Authenticity and originality is everything when it comes to rapping. Don't listen to anyone who has anything bad to say about your passion

ASAHEL SHAMIR JANNU  
 RAPPER

problem is when I travel. Otherwise the way I am, makes me who I am." "Rap has been a way of expressing myself. It gives me meaning and my music defines who I

am. Rap is what I live for," he added. Talking about the image rappers have in mainstream culture, he said, "The mainstream image of rappers that films have created is not good. No one can explain a

lifestyle in an hour or two. What an actual artist goes through is a lot more." Speaking of the problems he faced in becoming a rapper, he said, "The major problem I feel is that organisations, clubs and other bodies don't pay artists well and

that has to change as soon as possible." Asahel said that the rap culture in the city is mixed as half of the people who take part in this culture are clueless about rap itself. "But that is changing now. People are getting more aware about it and I feel that's perfect. I love

the audience of Hyderabad as they support every artiste. Hip hop has grown so much in the past decade. People from our city are lovely." Asahel won many competitions in the city such as the rap battle at the Infocus Film Festival and the Patsav's Ultimate Rap battle this year. He also judged various rap battles held by colleges around the city. He is currently working on a new album which will be released

soon. "To all youth who are passionate about rap just remember to exploit, excavate, experience, elaborate and, most importantly, stay eccentric. Authenticity and originality is everything when it comes to rapping. Don't listen to anyone who has anything bad to say about your passion. Collaborate with other artistes around the city and keep the unity in the community. Hustling can do miracles for you," he said on a concluding note.

What are the barriers that art can cross? Anand Vishwanadha, a poet, shares with ANUSHKA PRADEEP about how he managed to overcome his disability to make it big

## In tune with nature

Anand Vishwanadha, despite being faced with a hearing disability, is in tune with nature, be it through poetry or photography. "I am fascinated by nature and I find newer narratives with greater depths in every intimate encounter with nature. I am someone who writes about those experiences, demystifies those riddles for my readers," he said.

His time amidst nature led him to publish three books of English poetry namely *Moving On*, *Ink Dries* and *Stray Birds*. His photographs of birds have been exhibited at several places in the city including the Goethe Zentrum and Thalam and the Indian Photo Festival (IPF) 2005.

In an interview with *The Pioneer*, Anand talks about his trust with poetry in his life. "I never doubted the fact that I wanted to be a poet. Whenever I met published poets and authors at events, I would show them what I had written and ask for an honest review. They would read my work and encourage me to continue writing."

On being asked about pursuing writing as a career, Anand said, "I don't think writing is a viable mainstream career option in India. Content writing is my main source of revenue. It may take a person an entire lifetime to be an established poet whose books sell well. If you list out 10 famous poets you'd see that eight of them would have passed away even before their work saw the light of day. Art is indeed something that outlives the artist. But more realistically, writing professionally can be considered an option if you are good at writing fast, coming up with several books a year."

"I think it's important to have a career aside from your passion because following a passion is easier as long as there is a source to fuel the passion. That is my advice to those who want to pursue their passion. Thanks to networking over social media nowadays, the support artists get is growing," he added.

Apart from being a professional copywriter in the corporate sector, Anand has also founded Chitrak Eco Ventures where he works as the chief sustainability officer. It is a wilderness camp in the Jawai Bandh region of Rajasthan which is famed for leopards, raptors and other wildlife.

Upon being asked about how his disability has affected his work, he says, "I do face a certain amount of discrimination because of my disability. I get my books self-published but many publishers are not willing to commit to publishing. So I have to market my books and being hearing impaired is an impediment. Speech and hearing are intricately linked. Inability to hear properly affects the ability to speak."

However, he said that being a poet helped him retain his voice thanks to his yearning to voice out his thought or opinion.

"Writing is a very lonely activity. I believe it is important to have one's family as a support system in order to sustain life as a writer," he concluded.



## Mirroring the past in style

Actor Priyanka Chopra's white Ralph and Russo gown at the 2020 Grammy Awards red carpet was stunning for many reasons, the main one being its plunging neckline.

Comparisons were inevitably made between her dress and the now-legendary green Versace dress worn by singer Jennifer Lopez exactly 20 years ago.

Expected for the similar plunging neckline that JLo's dress had there are no other similarities: JLo's dress was made of sheer

tropical print fabric and Priyanka's pure white outfit was embellished with tassels and diamante. But the inevitable comparisons were made and it only looked like an attempt to top something that has been seared into fashion-pop culture the way it has.

This emulation of Jennifer Lopez, deliberate or otherwise, did not escape Twitter, where some poked fun while others extended support.

Priyanka Chopra was her husband Nick Jonas' plus one at the Grammys. Jonas Brothers were nominated for the Best Pop Duo/Group Performance

for their song *Sucker*, losing to Lil Nas X and Billy Ray Cyrus' *Old Town Road*.

While they didn't take an award home, a good time was had by the Jonas Brothers and the 'J-Sisters' as Priyanka, Sophie Turner and Danielle Jonas (married to Joe and Kevin respectively). "So proud of this fam (sic)," Priyanka captioned a Jonas-special post that had Jonas brother and their wives. The Grammys were held on Sunday evening. It was a big night for Billie Eilish, who won Record, Album and Song of the Year. — PNS



Anand Vishwanadha

**PARTY**

## JOYOUS UNION

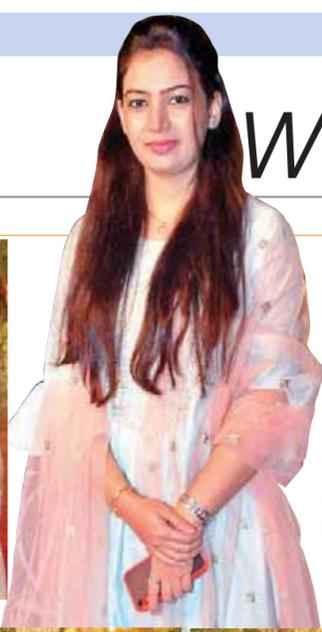
Dinesh and Nita Patel recently celebrated the silver jubilee of their marriage in a grand ceremony at SNS Convention. Several prominent people from across the city gathered at the venue to bestow their blessings on the couple. Guests were entertained with delightful music throughout the evening, that concluded with a scrumptious dinner.



● Dinesh and Nita Patel



● Bijal



● Karishma



● Ramesh and Maya Patel



● Purvi



● Palak



● Shradha



● Sushila Bokadia



● Sneha and Snehal

Photos by SV Chary

**CITY GUIDE**

» COMEDY



**BHEEM**

● Bheem is a Telugu patriotic play written by Harsha Chaklam based on the Telangana's freedom fighter Komaram Bheem who fights for his water, Forest and Land. The play is being organised by Manch Theatre at Lamakaan on February 8 at 7.30 pm.

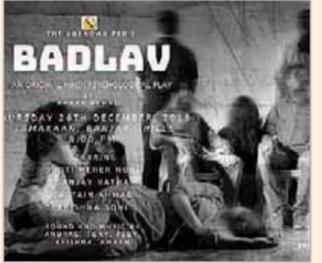
**THE ACT OF KILLING**

● Cinephiles Film Club is screening a film 'The Act of Killing' tomorrow at Lamakaan from 7.30 pm. Filmmakers expose horrifying mass executions of accused communists in Indonesia and those who are celebrated in their country for perpetrating the crime.



**DRAUPADI - A DANCE DRAMA**

● Draupadi is a dance drama in Kuchipudi format, with Sravya Manasa playing the lead role as Draupadi. It deals with the less familiar phases of Draupadi's life along with her inclination towards Karma. The play shall be held at Phoenix Arena on February 1 at 7 pm.



**BADLAV**

● Badlav is an original hindi psychological play written and directed by Amaan Ahmad. Touching the core of Theatre of the Absurd, 'Badlav' is a one of a kind play that traverses through multiple questions concerning human consciousness in a twisted manner. Set in an indefinite timeline, the play questions the very nature of 'change'. The play shall be staged on February 6 at 8 pm at Lamakaan.



**ANNUAL BELLYDANCE RECITAL**

● The students of Payal's Dance Academy bring the second edition of the Annual Bellydance Recital. Special guest performances include other dance styles like Ballet, Afro and Contemporary by some of the best dancers of Hyderabad. The dance Recital shall be held at Phoenix Arena on February 2 at 7 pm.

**AN INSPECTOR CALLS**

● An Inspector Calls, is the Telugu adaptation of the original English play by the same name by J B Priestly written in the year . The play revolves around the apparent suicide of a young woman called Shwetha and an unsuspecting family which is visited by a mysterious Inspector. The play will be held at Phoenix arena on February 7 at 7 pm.



**GET YOUR EVENT LISTED:** To get your events listed, send your details along with a poster and contact number to [pioneer.features@gmail.com](mailto:pioneer.features@gmail.com)

**FUN**

**ARCHIE**



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**GARFIELD**



**NANCY**



**GINGER MEGGS**



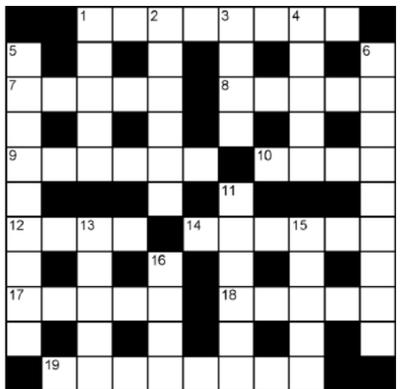
**REALITY CHECK**



**SPEED BUMP**



**CROSSWORD**



**SUDOKU**

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

**Yesterday's solution**

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

**Rules**

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

**ACROSS**

- Speaks very quietly
- A builder follows these when building a house
- The backbone
- Athens is the capital city of this country
- Fewer
- You see with these
- The large country just north of the USA
- Weary
- Near
- Young people

**DOWN**

- Lift up
- Food that looks like lots of worms
- A daily publication
- A small dish under a cup
- Garden soil
- A nut from an oak tree
- A worshipped statue

**SOLUTION**

A	Q	A	R	I	U	M	E
M	S	T	E	W			
B	L	E	C	E	A	S	E
U	A	H	S	I			
L	I	L	A	C	Q	U	E
A	N	R	E	R	O		
N	I	E	C	E	D	E	S
C	I	A	W	A			
E	N	I	D	R			
N	T	E	A	C	H	E	R

# SREEKARAM JOINS THE SUMMER RACE



Directed by B. Kishore, a hit short film maker, the film will see Sharwanand essaying the role of a farmer, writes NAGARAJ GOUD

**T**he first look of Sharwanand-starrer *Sreekaram* was unveiled by the film's makers on Monday. Dressed in casuals, the actor, who is essaying the role of a farmer for the first time, is seen taking a stroll through paddy fields. Directed by B. Kishore, *Sreekaram* is being considered for a release in April by Achanta brothers. The director had earlier made hit short films like *Idedho Bagundhe* and *Shatamanam Bhavathi*. News is that films like *Red* (starring Ram), *Love Story* (Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi), *Solo Brathuke So Better* (Sai Tej) and *Uppena* (Vaishnav Tej) are likely to release in the same month as well.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Kishore said that *Sreekaram* is almost 70 to 80 per cent through with its shooting. "Major sequences have already been shot till now.

We are planning another Tirupati outing for 15 days from February 10, with which all talkie portions will be wrapped up, leaving us with a couple of songs to shoot. The film has rich scope for background score and composer Mickey J. Meyer asked me to give close to 40 days for it," he said.

Besides Sharwa who has always been a safe bet, Kishore is happy that Rao Ramesh took the film to another level. Initially, another senior actor was in talks for the part but later the makers had a change of heart and felt that the role should be played by Rao Ramesh.

"The producers and I've shared the same feeling but neither of us was willing to come forward and propose Rao Ramesh garu's name. Later I mustered the courage and said that I'm looking at Rao Ramesh to play Sharwa's father Keshavula. The producers happily obliged. When Sharwa anna was mentioned about it, he too expressed his consent by stating, 'I haven't worked with him after *Gamyam*, let

him get on board. Their scenes will be a major asset to the film."

Although Sharwa will be seen as a farmer, Kishore is quick to clarify that the film will not address pressing issues of farmers. "In fact, the farmland episodes will be nothing short of hilarious, as Naresh garu and Satya will bring the roof down with their antics," Kishore said, with a smile.

Clearly in awe of Sharwanand who he equates to gold, Kishore added, "He is a proven actor and I need not add anything to him. What his role required him was to strike a fine balance between being extremely active and underplaying the emotions. He ace'd it. His dialogue modulation will be different from what he has done in the past. I've had a great time till now working with him. We shot at a farmland in Tirupati where lord Venkateswara Swamy insignia would be overlooking us. So happy with the scenery around that every day after pack-up, he would stay at the spot and happily discuss next day sequences with us till late into the evening."

Major sequences have already been shot. We are planning another Tirupati outing for 15 days, with which all talkie portions will be wrapped up. The film has rich scope for background score and composer Mickey J. Meyer asked me to give 40 days for it



B. KISHORE DIRECTOR



## Srikanth's dual avatar

**A**ctor Srikanth, whose solo career has been on a downward spiral in the last decade or so, has agreed to headline a new film, *Maranamrudangam*, *muhurat* of which was held in Hyderabad on Monday. Successful director Anil Ravipudi sounded the clapperboard for the first shot, as veteran director Kodandarami Reddy switched on the camera and later directed the honorary first shot. To be directed by Venkatesh Redba and produced by Madhu Redba and Vabbilishetty Chiranjeevi, the film is a revenge-drama set in mafia backdrop. Speaking after the launch, Srikanth said the title is apt for the story. "I like the title a lot. I've watched Chiranjeevi garu's *Maranamrudangam* multiple times. Our film has no relation to the old film. I liked the story and I've signed it after listening to multiple narrations. I will be seen in dual roles. The pre-production has been meticulous and we will wrap up the film on time," he said.

Expressing his happiness on directing Srikanth, director Venkatesh said he has grown up watching the actor's films and he never expected to direct him this early in his career. He added the film, written by Thulasi Das, will go to sets mostly after February 15. Anand, who has composed music for Charmme Kaur last decade, is on board to render tunes.

— NG

## A whistling Gopi



**A**ctor Gopichand's next with Sampath Nandi has got a title. Film's producer Srinivasaa Chitturi on Monday announced it as *Seetimaara*. A sports-based drama, the film will see the macho actor as the coach of the AP female Kabaddi team and so the title. His leading lady in the film, Tamannaah, has donned the coach hat for Telangana female Kabaddi team.

Speaking about the film's progress, the producer said, after wrapping up schedules in Hyderabad and Raja-

mahendravaram until now, the new outing kicked off at Ramoji Film City on Monday. "We will shoot it non-stop from here on and will ensure that the film is readied for a summer release," the producer said, adding, budget-wise, the film will be Gopi's biggest till date.

Digangana Suryavanshi, who made her Telugu debut with *Hippi* last year, is playing a supporting role in the film, while Tarun Arora will be seen as the antagonist. The likes of Bhoomika, Rao Ramesh, Posani Murali, Pragathi and Annapurna are essaying supporting roles, said sources. It's a Mani Sharma musical.

### FIRST LOOK

**H**ere is the first look of actor Sudheer Babu from Indraganati Mohana Krishna's much anticipated *V*, which is headlined by Nani. The actor plays an IPS officer in the action-thriller, which is scheduled to release on March 25. A joint production between Dil Raju, Srish and Harshith, the film is a cat and mouse game between Nani and Sudheer. Nivetha Thomas and Aditi Rao Hydari are the leading ladies.



### ALI GOES HOLLYWOOD

**J**agadeesh Daneti, who made the damp squib *Tippu* sometime back, is going Hollywood. He has roped in Telugu actor Ali for his possible Hollywood projects and together they've recently met, Prakash Javdekar, Information and Broadcasting Minister in New Delhi, to discuss films and seek permissions for shooting at some critical locations in India. The minister appreciated Jagadeesh's efforts towards Indo-American film collaborations. Congratulating Ali, he assured that he will forward the matter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Jagadeesh mentioned that Hollywood elite are scheduled to visit India next month or in March and will announce the projects. Furthermore, he said Ali's experience and expertise will drive certain subjects through execution and he is privileged to be launching him in Hollywood. With Ali on board, it seems many star heroes, actors and technicians are passing their names to enter the west through the director. Johnny Martin of Martini Films, Pink Jaguars Entertainment and other reputed Hollywood Production houses from USA will be partnering Jagadeesh for the projects.

### There's no comedy in Aswathama: MEHREEN

**T**he month has been a mixed bag for Mehreen Pirzada. While her Tamil film, *Pattas* with Dhanush has set the box-office on fire, her other release, *Entha Manchi Vaadavuraa* (EMV), with Kalyanram fizzled out in no time after its first day release. "Yes, it was disappointing that EMV didn't do well but everybody who worked on it gave their 200 per cent. I'm happy and satisfied with both the films," she says. The actress is now looking forward to the release of *Aswathama*, in which she is cast opposite Naga Shaurya. More than her role, it was the film's

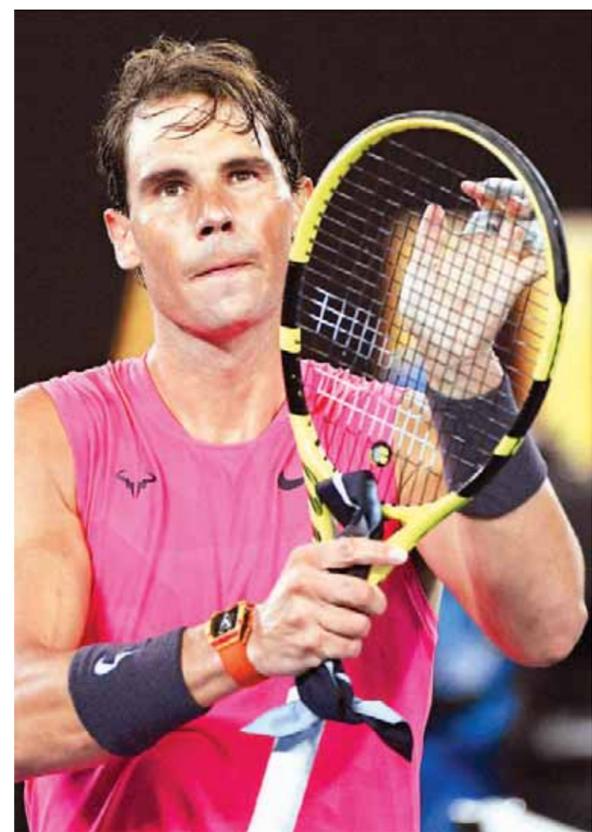
theme on women safety that led her to sign it. "There are certain films that you feel the need to be a part of and this is one such film. There's no humour in the film. I play a role which helps Shaurya to achieve his mission. The only lighter moment in the film is my introduction with him. It's an emotional action-thriller told in a gripping way," she adds. It is for the first time the actress has paired opposite Shaurya and talking about her experience with him, she says, "He would be the first one to arrive on sets. Off screen he is shy and reserved but once the camera rolls, he is a different person altogether," she informs.

— NG



# Nadal settles Kyrgios score

World No 1 beats home favourite in four-set classic to step closer for 20th Slam



Rafael Nadal celebrates after defeating Nick Kyrgios in their fourth round singles match AP

AFP ■ MELBOURNE

Rafael Nadal won a grudge match with Nick Kyrgios to reach the Australian Open quarter-finals and keep the heat on Roger Federer's record for Grand Slam titles on Monday.

The world number one, labelled "super salty" by Kyrgios after he criticised the Australian's behaviour last year, fought off a furious challenge to go through 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4).

As the tennis world mourned the death of Kobe Bryant, Kyrgios arrived at Rod Laver Arena wearing an LA Lakers shirt, and 15-year-old Coco Gauff had tributes to the basketball great scrawled on her trainers during the doubles.

Nadal and Kyrgios had been feuding after some bad-tempered matches but the Spaniard said he was impressed by what he'd seen from the often-temperamental Australian at this tournament.

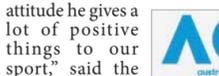
Kyrgios fought back to challenge Nadal in a high-octane clash played in good spirit, with a polite handshake afterwards — a far cry from some of their previous exchanges.

"When he is playing like today with this positive



Simona Halep serves to Elise Mertens during their fourth round singles match AP

**Australian Open**  
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attitude he gives a lot of positive things to our sport," said the Spaniard.

"He's one of the highest talents we have on our tour and I like the Nick Kyrgios during the whole of this tournament."

The 19-time Grand Slam winner will next play Austria's Dominic Thiem — his victim in the last two French Open finals — as the clay king targets Federer's all-time record of

20 Major titles. Elsewhere, powerful Swiss Stan Wawrinka beat fifth seed Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 2-6, 4-6, 7-6 (7/2), 6-2 to set up a quarter-final with Germany's Alexander Zverev, who overcame close friend Andrey Rublev 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

And Simona Halep rose to number two in the world with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Elise Mertens, taking a big step forward in a rapidly clearing women's draw.

The Wimbledon champion from Romania, who avoided an exodus of top

seeds in the previous round, will next play Estonia's Anett Kontaveit, a 6-7 (4/7), 7-5, 7-5 winner against Iga Swiatek of Poland.

"She's strong. I'm here just to face any challenge I have. So I'm not thinking negative," Halep said of Kontaveit. "I just want to go there and to give my best."

Angelique Kerber, the 2016 champion, was the latest big name to fall as she went down to Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (7/4), 6-2.

Pavlyuchenkova's quarter-final will be against Garbine Muguruza, the two-time Grand Slam

champion who is resurging since reuniting with coach Conchita Martinez, beating Kiki Bertens 6-3, 6-3.

"It's like couples, we all want Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston to get back together, right?" joked Martinez, the 1994 Wimbledon champion.

Earlier, Martina Navratilova and John McEnroe were among the big names to criticise Court, the 24-time Major winner whose 1970 sweep of the Grand Slam titles was marked with a short ceremony at Rod Laver Arena.

Navratilova said the devout Christian's deeply conservative views were "actually hurting people", while fellow American legend McEnroe called Court a "crazy aunt".

In today's quarter-finals, six-time champion Roger Federer will play America's Tenny Sandgren and title-holder Novak Djokovic, going for his eighth title, is against big-serving Canadian Milos Raonic.

Australia's women's world number one Ashleigh Barty plays two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova, and Tunisia's Ons Jabeur, the top-ranked player from Africa, takes on America's Sofia Kenin.

## Tough to hit Bumrah: Tom

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

In awe of Jasprit Bumrah, New Zealand wicketkeeper Tim Seifert says the Indian speedster's subtle variations have been difficult to pick in the ongoing T20 series and his side needs to learn a thing or two about adapting from the visitors.

India beat New Zealand by seven wickets in the second T20 International in Auckland on Sunday to grab a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

Bumrah returned with figures of 1-21 from his four overs as Indian skipper Virat Kohli changed his bowling plans from the first game.

"Even in the first game, Bumrah bowled slower balls that were going wider. Normally, death bowlers get into straighter lines, plus yorkers and mix it with chest height. He kind of changes things a lot and is tougher to play," Seifert said.

"...The ball was holding a lot more which made it tougher. So sometimes as a batsman you have to move away from the stumps and see if they bowl straight. I was backing myself to do something different instead of just standing there at the wicket," said the stumper, who remained unbeaten on 33 off 26 balls.

"It was tricky and the ball was holding a little bit. When Kane (Williamson) got out in the over against Yuzvendra Chahal, we knew it was the over to push because they had Bumrah coming back," he added.

He said New Zealand batsmen need to take a cue from their Indian counterparts on how to adapt to different conditions quickly.

"...Indian batsmen showed how to get under the ball and time it. They showed it a couple of times that and on the slower wickets you just have to keep it like that. Once you lose your shape, you are not in position," he said.

"Try to get them (bowlers) off line or off balance, try to get into that position to hit good balls. That's T20 cricket as well. Sometimes it's going 100 per cent but some times you have to take a breath and re-assess. Indian batters did that well."

Seifert believes New Zealand bowlers did reasonably well in the two games but they have been outplayed by the Indian batsmen.

"To be honest, in the first game they were 110-1 and they had wickets in hand. We didn't bowl too badly in that first game. In the second game, we only got 130 and it is tough to bowl at Eden Park (with that total)," he said.

"170 was the target in mind but once you get 130 on the board, that was going to be very hard at Eden Park against a team that is very strong and playing really well. But our spinners were outstanding. Good balls have gone to boundary."

He said coming into the T20 series on the back of a lost Test rubber in Australia also didn't help New Zealand's cause in the first two games.

"Boys are coming off a Test series (in Australia) and a lot of them haven't played T20 cricket for a while," he said. "But for some like me, I have had the Super Smash for the last two months, so I have played a lot of T20 cricket. They have two games under their belt now so hopefully they will have a better understanding."

Asked if New Zealand would want to play on India's strength of chasing, Seifert replied, "Even in ODI cricket, India have chased down big totals but I think on that wicket it was going to get slower and slower."

## PSG go 10 points clear

AFP ■ LILLE

Neymar dedicated his second goal in Paris Saint-Germain's 2-0 win at Lille to basketball legend Kobe Bryant, whose death in a helicopter crash earlier on Sunday shocked the world, as his double shot the French champions 10 points clear at the top of Ligue 1.

The world's most expensive player slotted home the 52nd-minute penalty and went over to television cameras by the side of the Stade Pierre Mauroy pitch to make the number 24 with his fingers in the honour of Bryant's shirt number.

"It's deeply saddening for the world of sport and



Neymar celebrates after scoring AP

for all of us," said Neymar to Canal+ after the win, which put PSG 10 points clear at the top of the league.

"Not just for basketball fans, but for everything he did for sport."

He had already put his side ahead with a fine strike in the first half before putting the game out of reach and increasing the gap between them and second-placed Marseille.

His 12th league goal of the season tipped the balance in the Parisians' favour after a positive start for the home side, who were unbeaten at home ahead of the match.

"We deserved to win, I think we played well," said PSG coach Thomas Tuchel.

"We controlled the match and counter-attacks and this is not easy to do against a good team like Lille."

Lille stay seventh after the defeat, two points away from the European places.

## Struggling Napoli beat leaders Juve to spoil Sarri San Paolo return

AFP ■ NAPLES

Piotr Zielinski and Lorenzo Insigne scored in the second half as struggling Napoli shocked champions Juventus 2-1 to spoil coach Maurizio Sarri's return to the Stadio San Paolo on Sunday.

Sarri had not been back to Naples since being sacked in May 2018 after three successful campaigns, and before moving to Chelsea.

This season he has taken over eight-time reigning champions Juve, a move seen as a betrayal by his former team, the two-time Serie A runners-up.

Juve missed the chance to open up a six-point lead on Inter Milan at the top of the table, after Antonio Conte's side were held for

## Past haunts the present



Lorenzo Insigne, center, celebrates with teammates after Napoli beat Juventus AP

their third consecutive draw.

Inter are three points behind Juve with Lazio a further two points adrift in third after city rivals Roma ended Simone Inzaghi's side's 11-match winning streak.

"It is pleasant and exciting to go back," said Sarri despite the

whistles and insulting banners of his former fans, reserving his criticism for his "under-par, mentally bland" team.

"We lost a match against an opponent who had done the minimum to win," he added. "We were passive throughout

the game, always halfway between pressure and waiting, we made mistakes."

In Naples, Zielinski broke the deadlock after 63 minutes finishing off a rebound after Insigne was denied by Juve goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny.

Insigne volleyed in a second after 86 minutes to an explosion of joy among the crowd.

Cristiano Ronaldo pulled a goal back as the game headed into injury time for his 13th goal in nine consecutive games in all competitions.

The visitors pushed for the equaliser but Alex Meret smothered Gonzalo Higuain's goal-bound effort, as Juve crashed to just their second defeat of the season.

Napoli move up to tenth place, 12 points off the Champions League places after ending a run of three consecutive defeats.

## Warriors look to bounce back against Rockets



PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Awadhe Warriors will look to capitalise on home advantage and bounce back to form when they take on the Mumbai Rockets on the final day of their home leg at the Premier Badminton League here today.

With both coming off a loss in their last tie, it will be a stern test of nerves for the two teams.

The Awadhe Warriors suffered a 1-2 loss at the hands of Hyderabad Hunters while the Rockets went down 2-5 to the Pune 7 Aces in their previous outings.

Having begun their campaign on a high with a gritty 4-3 victory over the North Eastern Warriors, the Awadhe Warriors were aiming to continue their winning streak but the Hunters proved to be too strong.

Despite the outcome not going their way, they had a few positives coming out of the match.

Ko Sung Hyun and Shin Baek Cheol's partnership is growing stronger day by day. The pair, who won three BWF titles last year, has taken their confidence into the league and remains unbeaten so far.

Former world No 10 Wong Wing Ki Vincent gave an effortless display in front of the roaring home fans while Subhankar Dey's stamina and tenacity impressed one and all.

The Warriors also have world No 14 Beiweng Zhang in their ranks.

"Our last match did not go our way but that hasn't dampened our spirit. The crowd support here has been fantastic. We are looking forward to finishing our home leg with a win," said Zhang.

Meanwhile, Mumbai Rockets will be gunning for their first victory of the season after a disappointing start for the former runners-up that saw them lose to the high-flying Chennai Superstarz and the Pune 7 Aces.

## All senior players, Klopp to miss FA Cup replay

**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp confirmed he will not take charge of the Reds' FA Cup replay against Shrewsbury, nor will any senior players from the European champions take part.

Klopp made 11 changes as the League One side, 59 places below Liverpool in the English football pyramid, came from 2-0 down to secure a replay at Anfield on Sunday.

However, the German did still include a handful of experienced players such as Adrian, Joel Matip,



Dejan Lovren, Fabinho and Divock Origi.

Even they are set to miss the replay as it falls a few days into Liverpool's two-week winter break from Premier League action.

Klopp said he has already promised that week off to first-team players and that under-23s coach Neil Critchley will take charge of team.

Liverpool went out of the League Cup in December when a team fielding five debutants and an average age of 19 was beaten 5-0 by Aston Villa.

Critchley was also in charge for that game with Klopp and the first team away in Qatar for the Club World Cup.

## Third Pak-B'desh T20 rained off

PTI ■ LAHORE

The third Twenty20 international between Pakistan and Bangladesh was abandoned without a ball being bowled Monday because of bad weather in Lahore, giving the home side a 1-0 series victory.

Murky conditions and drizzle delayed the scheduled 13:00 pm (0830 GMT) toss at the Gaddafi stadium pitch, but play was called off three hours later.

Pakistan won the first match by

five wickets on Friday and the second by nine wickets the next day.

The series win helped Pakistan hang on to their number one ranking in Twenty20 internationals with 270 points, leading Australia by just one point.

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam said the series win will help the team's confidence.

"Our bowling was outstanding in both the games... helped us keep them down to low totals," said Babar who lost 2-0 in Australia last year in his first series as skipper.

## Real go top with win

AFP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid moved top of La Liga for the first time since October on Sunday after grinding out a 1-0 win away at Real Valladolid to make Barcelona pay for their surprise defeat to Valencia.

It is 16 weeks since Madrid last finished a round top of the pile and it looked like a scrappy contest at the Jose Zorilla would end goalless until Nacho Hernandez headed in the winner with 12 minutes remaining.

Victory means Zinedine Zidane's side pull three points ahead of Barca, whose 2-0 loss away at the Mestalla on



Nacho embraces Real's coach Zinedine Zidane after scoring AP

Saturday under new coach Quique Setien could prove a turning point in a nip-and-tuck title race.

"Nothing changes, we are happy with the win,"

said Zidane. "There are 16 games left and we will have to fight until the end if we want something. Nothing changes."

Madrid now have the luxury of hosting their struggling city rivals Atletico Madrid, who are 10 points back after a goalless home draw with Leganes, with a cushion next weekend, not to mention on the back of a 19-game unbeaten run.

"We are top of the table again after being there a long time ago," said captain Sergio Ramos. "We have to keep going."

"Defensively what we are doing we are doing very well, it is our strength," said Zidane.

## Indian women's lose 1-2 to NZ



PTI ■ AUCKLAND

The Indian women's hockey team lost 1-2 to New Zealand in its second match of the ongoing tour here on Monday.

The Indians had earlier defeated New Zealand Development squad 4-0 in the opening match of the tour. New Zealand started the game on an attacking note and earned a penalty corner early in the first quarter and the chance was brilliantly converted by Megan Hull in the third minute of the match.

India drew parity when young Salima Tete converted a penalty corner in the dying minutes of the first quarter.

The visitors matched New Zealand in the second and third quarters but a defensive error in the final 15 minutes cost India dearly as they concede a penalty stroke, and Megan

Hull made no mistake from the spot.

India's chief coach Sjoerd Marijne was disappointed with the result.

"We created enough scoring opportunities but we were not productive enough. New Zealand were very successful in the little changes they got. They executed them well," he said.

"It is not about how many opportunities you create but how effective you are. New Zealand were stronger today and in the beginning we were struggling with that. But after the first quarter, we played much better."

"We created eight shots on goal and four penalty corners. We are definitely working on being more effective in the coming matches," he added.

India will again take on New Zealand in the third match of the tour on Wednesday.