



## TODAY

## ALMANAC

## Month &amp; Paksham:

Kartik & Shukla Paksha  
Panchangam

Tithi: 12:47 pm

Nakshatram: 06:03 am (Next Day)

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

Rahukalam: 04:13 pm - 05:36 pm

Yamagandam: 12:04 pm - 01:27 pm

Varjyam: 04:41 pm - 06:28 pm

Gulika: 02:50 pm - 04:13 pm

Good Time: (to start any important work)

Amritakalam: 03:23 am - 05:10 am

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:42 am - 12:26 pm

VIJAYAWADA  
WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny

Temp: 31/20

Humidity: 74%

Sunrise: 06:29 am

Sunset: 05:39 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated November 28, 2020 5:00 PM

Govt to table Fish  
Feed Regulation  
Bill in Assembly

SNV SUDHIR

■ VIJAYAWADA

The State Government is giving final touches to Bill for the enactment of "Andhra Pradesh Fish Feed (Quality Control) Act, 2020," that will regulate the approximately Rs 17,000 crore fish feed manufacturing industry in the state.

Battered by Nivar, farmers  
in AP brace for more stormsC PRADEEP KUMAR  
■ VIJAYAWADA

There seems to be no end to the farmers' trauma — two more cyclones are brewing over the horizon.

Though it's too early even for the weathermen to predict that the low pressure areas brewing over the Bay of Bengal would intensify into cyclones, this is not a relief for the farmers and people living along the coastline in the state.

Eight people were killed in floods caused by heavy to extremely heavy rainfall in Chittoor and Kadapa districts in the last three days, the State

Government said on Saturday. While six people died in Chittoor district, two others were killed in Kadapa.

The impending cyclones — named Burevi and Taketi — are intensifying and moving towards the shore.

These back-to-back cyclones, coming less than two weeks apart, are disrupting normal life, causing heavy losses to farmers during the harvest time.

The two cyclones are expected to hit the coast in the first week of next month — December 2 and December 5.



CM conducts aerial survey of Nivar-hit areas Pg2

TTD owned 1,128 immovable  
properties, reveals white paper

■ Vaikunta Dwara darshan to be allowed for 10 days

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams on Saturday disclosed that it owns 1,128 immovable properties spread over 8,088.89 acres across the country. Some of these assets are prime properties located in metro cities.

The TTD Board released a white paper on the immovable owned by the temple on Saturday.

Speaking to the media after a meeting of the TTD Trust Board, its chairman YV Subba Reddy said that these properties include the assets that had been auctioned since 1974



with Survey Number, place, board resolution, auctioned date etc.

The white paper released by the TTD says that of the 8,089 acres, over 335.23 acres have already been sold along with some properties. As of now, TTD has got 987 assets, it says.

Subba Reddy also said that the Tirumala temple's Vaikunta dwaram will be opened for 10 days from Vaikunta Ekadasi. A decision in this regard was taken during the TTD Board meeting that was held on Saturday in Tirumala's Annamacharya Bhawan.

"Considering requests from pilgrims, after negotiating with the Peethadhipathis, Agama Advisors, we have resolved to open the Vaikunta Dwaram for ten days starting from Vaikuntha Ekadasi day for the benefit of multitude of visiting pilgrims to Tirumala temple," said the Trust Board chairman.

Free power  
DBT begins

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Rajya Sabha member V Vijayasai Reddy on Saturday took to Twitter to announce that the State Government has sanctioned funds to Srikakulam district for release to farmers under the Direct Benefit Transfer as part of the free power scheme.

He said that the State Government has released Rs 6.05 crore for the project for Srikakulam.

PM reviews work on  
vaccines with lab visitsPNS ■ AHMEDABAD/  
HYDERABAD/PUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday visited Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Pune to review coronavirus vaccine development work there.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said the day-long visit was aimed at getting a first-hand perspective of the preparations, challenges and roadmap in India's endeavour to vaccinate its citizens.

Modi began by visiting pharma major Zydus Cadila's manufacturing facility near Ahmedabad. Wearing a PPE kit, he reviewed the vaccine development process at the company's research centre, located over 20 km from Ahmedabad.

Modi was extensively briefed about the vaccine work at the plant by the company officials. He was briefed about the vaccine production procedure. He interacted with scientists and vaccine developers, an official said.

"Visited the Zydus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad to know more about the indigenous

Modi's visit to  
Genome Valley  
validated my  
vision: Naidu

VIJAYAWADA:

Hailing the manifold growth of biotech, TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu said that it was a moment of happiness for him as none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi has visited the Genome Valley to review the progress of vaccine making at Bharat Biotech. "My three decades old vision has become a reality now. It is a dream come true that the vaccine for epidemic is being developed at Genome Valley for which I laid the foundation," Naidu said.

DNA based vaccine being developed by Zydus Cadila. I compliment the team behind this effort for their work. Government of India is actively working with them to support them in this journey," Modi tweeted after the visit.

Doctor murdered at  
home in Avanigadda


PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Kota Srihari Rao, a well-known doctor of Lakshmi Nursing Home was found in a pool of blood in his home in Avanigadda town of Krishna district on Saturday.


The doctor used to live in a bedroom on the premises of the nursing home. The murder took place at a time

his family members were out of station.


Superintendent of Police Ravindranath Babu told media persons said that Avanigadda DSP Mahboob Basha and circle inspector Ravi Kumar rushed to the spot on learning about the murder.



**Sri Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh



# TIDCO HOUSES



Poor man's dream of  
owning a house all set to come true...  
Jagananna Government to disburse

**1,43,600 TIDCO houses,**  
each of 300 sft. area, on 25th December, 2020...

**In this connection, for complete awareness of  
all beneficiaries of 300 sft. houses to exercise their choice,  
we are giving below 2 (two) options.. Of the 2 options...**

## WHAT'S YOUR CHOICE ??

Option - A Then - Previous Government - Babu Scheme	Option - B Now - Our Government - Jagananna Scheme
<p><b>Total cost of 300 sft house</b> - Rs. 6.65 lakh</p> <p><b>Out of this...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Central Government's share - Rs. 1.50 lakh</li><li>State Government's share - Rs. 2.50 lakh</li><li>Amount you have to pay... You have to raise a bank loan and repay it @ Rs. 3,000 per month for a period of 20 years... <b>Amount including principal and interest which you will have to pay</b> - Rs. 7.20 lakh</li><li>You will have rights on your house only after repaying your loan, ie, after 20 years</li></ul>	<p><b>Total cost of 300 sft house</b> - Rs. 6.65 lakh</p> <p><b>Out of this...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Central Government's share - Rs. 1.50 lakh</li><li>State Government's share - Rs. 2.50 lakh + Along with this...</li><li>On your behalf, Jagananna Government will bear the entire amount of Rs. 7.20 lakh.</li><li><b>Amount you have to pay</b> Just Re. 1/-</li><li>You will have full rights on your house with immediate effect without having to wait for 20 long years...</li></ul>

**OPTION-A**

The entire exercise is being done in a thorough transparent process. To know your choice among above two options, ward volunteer will come to you with Hon'ble Chief Minister's letter from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Kindly tick your preference in the option box and hand it back to your ward volunteer, who, in turn, will send it to concerned Municipal Commissioners. Houses will be allotted on the basis of your ticked option duly respecting your choice.

**Best wishes to you all as you step into your own houses**

Soliciting your wishes & blessings...  
Your **Botsa Satyanarayana**,  
Minister for Municipal Administration & Urban Development

While the previous Government kept **Rs. 3,000 crores** dues pending pertaining to TIDCO houses, our Government has not only cleared the entire **Rs. 3,000 crores** amount but also expedited the housing project work on a war footing by already spending **Rs. 1,250 crores...**

Apart from clearing dues of **Rs. 3,000 crores** kept pending by previous Government, our Government is going to spend about **Rs. 9,500 crores** to complete construction of the houses...  
Some houses will be constructed this year...  
The remaining in the next next year...  
Like this, we intend to complete construction of houses within two to two-and-a-half years...  
300 sft (G+3) houses to be distributed at Re. 1/- only...  
Resorting to reverse tendering recently, Jagananna Government finalised tenders at prices **Rs. 392 crores** less than that quoted earlier..

The previous Government did not spend on providing basic amenities like drinking water, roads, drainage and power supply..

However, Jagananna Government has invited tenders to provide amenities at a cost of **Rs.3,000 crores** and the works will be started in December itself...

**House site pattas to be distributed, free of cost, to about 31 lakh women on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2020..**

**On the same day, construction of around 16 lakh houses to be started as part of the project to build total 30 lakh houses for the poor...**



# BJP's high-octane push in GHMC has a larger purpose



Municipal Corporation election has never attracted so much national attention as the one to be held in Greater Hyderabad on December 1 when an estimated 74 lakh voters are listed to elect 150 corporators. The BJP has pulled out all the stops by despatching its brass from Home Minister Amit Shah to MP Tejaswi Surya for the campaign.

This extraordinary importance the saffron party is attaching to a civic poll and the high-octane campaign of its leaders were initially intriguing beyond the transparent

objective of boosting the cadre's morale and the party's approach of not taking any election lightly. The other simplistic view is the aim of emerging as an alternative to the TRS. Equally facile is the conclusion that the GHMC elections are a semi-final for the Assembly polls in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, West Bengal and Assam in 2021 and in UP in 2022, besides pushing its Hindutva agenda. Yet, it is difficult to envisage how the BJP's success in GHMC will influence voters in the East and the North where the socio-political factors are different.

The BJP's game plan also seems directed at the South, which accounts for 130 Lok Sabha seats and turning its toe-hold into a footprint that extends beyond Karnataka,

**This extraordinary importance the saffron party is attaching to a civic poll and the high-octane campaign of its leaders were initially intriguing beyond the transparent objective of boosting the cadre's morale and the party's approach of not taking any election lightly.**

where it holds power. Amit Shah's visits to Chennai and Hyderabad within a span of eight days should explain this. This was a smart move considering the likelihood of V. K. Sasikala's release from jail, superstar Rajinikanth formally launching his party formally and developments like M. K. Alagiri's inclination to join the BJP. He has ended possi-

ble uncertainty in spite of AIADMK's disastrous show in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections against the virtual clean sweep by the DMK and its UPA allies which won 38 out of 39 seats.

Among AP, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Kerala, the BJP had just two Assembly seats till recently. In Tamil Nadu, it is on the backfoot over Hindi and in



**S NAGESH KUMAR**  
Former Resident Editor, The Hindu

Andhra over its refusal to confer Special Category Status and muddled thinking over Amaravati. It has clearly come to a conclusion that it must play the Hindutva card for a successful foray into the South, a fact BJP leaders openly admit.

In Telangana though, the party took a big leap by winning four Lok Sabha seats as well as the Dubbaka Assembly seat in a byelection earlier this month. Although the victory in Dubbaka was marked by a wafer thin margin, it indicated that non-Modi factors like anti-incumbency can also do the magic.

The twist that BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar gave to the GHMC campaign by threatening a surgical strike against Pakistanis, Rohingyas and Afghans overstaying in the Old City must be understood against this background. It has turned the spotlight on his party with the likes of Tejaswi Surya fanning the flames through incendiary speeches. His audacious claim that the BJP's battle was primarily against Asaduddin Owaisi's

MIM was a clever attempt to put the TRS and MIM in a fix. In spite of some mutually recriminatory statements, their fight is commonly viewed as a friendly match as the MIM is contesting only 51 seats. It walked straight into the BJP's trap by daring the TRS government to demolish memorials of Telugu icons N. T. Rama Rao and P. V. Narasimha Rao built on the foreshores of Hussainsagar Lake.

The BJP and MIM are treading a dangerous path as both sides have their sights fixed on West Bengal too. Buoyant after winning five Assembly seats in Bihar, the MIM sees West Bengal with 27 per cent of Muslims as another hunting ground. This may lend a new dimension to Bengal's electoral landscape as the Trinamool Congress

and BJP are already locked in a battle with strong communal overtones.

Elections in Bihar where the Congress could win only 19 out of 70 seats proved again that the political space for the grand old party is receding in large swathes of the country. This is true also in Telangana where its fortunes are dwindling and its leaders have been defecting to the TRS and lately BJP.

KCR's iteration of his plans to float a third front targeted primarily at the BJP would be another reason for the BJP's attempt to give back as good as they get. They are taking the battle to his home turf as a forewarning to KCR to watch his back before taking a leap from 'gully politics' to Delhi politics, to use Rao's own expression.

# Jagan undertakes aerial survey of Nivar-hit areas

**Kin of 8 flood victims to get Rs 5 lakh ex gratia, announces CM**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Saturday undertook an aerial survey of areas affected by Cyclone Nivar and announced ex gratia of Rs 5 lakh each to the kin of eight persons — six in Chittoor and two in Kadapa districts — who died due to the heavy rains triggered by the natural disaster.

The Chief Minister saw the extent of damage in the three districts of YSR Kadapa, Chittoor and SPSR Nellore during his aerial survey.

He directed the officials to make sure that power was restored as early as possible and to take up enumeration of crop loss on a war footing and compensation be paid by December-end.

The Chief Minister said people in the relief camps should be given Rs 500 each while returning home. Services of



volunteers should be utilised to hand over the amount if they have already left the relief camps.

He instructed the officials to give seeds on 80 percent sub-

sidy to the farmers in the affected areas. A decision to this effect was taken in the Cabinet meeting on Friday.

The Chief Minister directed the officials to act with a humane touch while dealing with the people in affected

areas and to compensate other damages like houses and livestock as per SDRF norms.

He told the officials to complete the temporary restoration works of Pincha and Annamaya projects immediately.

## Free power DBT begins

Continued from Page 1

"A total of Rs 6.05 crore have been sanctioned to Srikakulam district under free electricity pilot project. Chandrababu Naidu has spent Rs 4,000 crore on free electricity but nothing materialised. YS Jagan's government has decided to spend Rs 8,853 crore (sic)," Vijayasai Reddy tweeted.

It has been decided that the Direct Benefit Transfer will be carried out in the Srikakulam district on a pilot basis before being extended throughout the state with effect from April 1, 2021.

The State Government has decided to introduce Direct Benefit Transfer on the subsidy extended as free electricity to farmers and the proposal was approved by the Cabinet in September. Andhra Pradesh will be among the first states in India to adopt this programme.

The decision comes after the Union Government issued a draft proposal for amending the Electricity Act 2003 to address issues in the power sector.

# Government to table Fish Feed Regulation Bill in Assembly

Continued from Page 1

The Bill will be introduced in the forthcoming winter session of the state Assembly.

The Bill will clear the way for a centralised Fish Feed Controlling Authority that will regulate, supervise, and control the manufacture, sale and distribution of fish feed.

The Bill, once it becomes an Act, will replace the Ordinance that was already issued a few months ago. The Act will prohibit the manufacture of fish feed without a licence and the existing fish feed makers will be given four months to obtain a licence.

The licence fee ranges from Rs 10,000 to Rs 2.5 lakh, depending upon the capacity of the plant. Violators would be prosecuted and also penalties up to Rs 10 lakh will be levied.

The Act is aimed at prescribing quality standards for fish feed being sold to aquaculture farmers in the state. It will also



Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy pays homage to Mahatma Jyotirao Phule on his death anniversary at his camp office at Tadepalli on Saturday.

ensure compliance of quality standards of fish feed through the necessary regulatory and supervisory mechanism through legal enforcement.

It will also help aquaculture farmers select quality fish feed as per their requirement, based on the percentage of ingredients.

"Fish Feed manufacturers tend to resort to the illegal practice of mixing adulterants

like urea, which increase inorganic nitrogen to artificially enhance crude protein value. This unethical practice results in incurring huge economic losses for farmers. Due to illegal practices in Fish Feed Manufacturing, high crude protein value is obtained during proximate analysis which results in huge economic losses for farmers due to the low efficiency of fish feeds.

# Battered by Nivar, farmers...

Continued from Page 1

The devastation caused by Cyclone Nivar is gradually coming to the fore, with thousands of hectares of kharif crop getting inundated due to heavy rains that lashed the State during the past four days.

Like every time a natural disaster strikes, it is the farmers that are facing the brunt.

Kharif crop, that was ready for harvesting, has been soaked, dampening the hopes of farmers who had been making preparations to harvest it.

Agricultural crops in 72,755 hectares in Kadapa, 33,269 hectares in SPS Nellore and 9,658 hectares in Chittoor district suffered damage in the deluge, caused by cyclonic storm Nivar.

Similarly, horticultural crops in 1,729 hectares in Chittoor, 3,240 hectares in Kadapa and 931 hectares in SPS Nellore district were also affected.

In SPS Nellore district, 17,163 people, in Kadapa 15,289 and in Chittoor 4,012

people were sheltered in relief camps. Collectors of these districts told the Chief Minister at review meeting.

Kadapa Collector Ch Harikiran said 12,741 people were rescued from floods in the district.

Hundreds of houses and roads stretching to hundreds of kilometres in these districts were also damaged, the Collectors told the Chief Minister.

According to the agricultural department, Cyclone Nivar caused massive devastation, damaging standing crops in 4,30,780 hectare in the state.

Paddy farmers were the most affected, followed by those who cultivated red gram, bengal gram, cotton and other crops. According to preliminary estimates by the office of the commissioner of agriculture, the crop loss is 8,32,969 metric tonnes. In terms of value, the loss is estimated to be Rs 1,846.85 crore. The government has to pay an input subsidy of Rs 580.28 crore to

the farmers whose crops were damaged due to Cyclone Nivar.

Paddy crop was damaged in 2,80,829 hectare — 1,02,890 hectare in Guntur, 63,503 hectare in Krishna and 30,146 hectare in East Godavari district. Crop damage is lesser in other districts compared to these three major cultivators.

Bengal gram crop was destroyed in 57,234 hectare in the state. The highest was 45,113 hectares reported in Kadapa district, and 11,871 hectares in Prakasam district.

Black gram crop was affected in 36,671 hectare in the state of which 16,360 hectares were reported from Prakasam district followed by 12,966 hectare in Nellore district. Red gram crop was damaged in 18,608 hectare, the worst hit being Prakasam district with 18,179 hectare, followed by 349 hectare in Kadapa district. Cotton fields were damaged in 16,878 hectares overall, with Prakasam district reporting damage in 13,188 hectare followed by 1,202 hectare in Kadapa.

# PM reviews work on vaccines with lab visits

Continued from Page 1

Zydrus Cadila chairman Pankaj Patel recently said the company is aiming to complete the vaccine trial by March 2021, and could produce up to 100 million doses a year.

Modi spent over an hour at the plant, before leaving for the airport, from where he left for Hyderabad at 11.40 am.

Modi landed at Hakimpet Air Force station near Hyderabad around 1 pm and proceeded to pharma major Bharat Biotech's vaccine manufacturing facility at Genome valley, located around 20 km from the air station, by road.

At the facility, he reviewed the progress of Covaxin, a vaccine candidate being developed by the company. He also interacted with Bharat Biotech Chairman and Managing Director Krishna Ella, scientists and senior management.

"At the Bharat Biotech facility in Hyderabad, was briefed about their indigenous COVID-19 vaccine. Congratulated the scientists for their progress in the trials so far. Their team is closely working with ICMR to facili-

tate speedy progress," Modi tweeted after his hour-long visit there.

After leaving the facility, Modi got down from his vehicle at the main gate and waved to the media persons and the cheering crowd standing nearby.

Covaxin, being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research and National Institute of Virology, is undergoing phase-3 trials.

At 3.20 pm, Modi took off for Pune, where he landed at 4.30 pm. From the airport, Modi proceeded by helicopter to the Serum Institute of India (SII) at Manjari, located 17 km from the airport.

Modi interacted with scientists at the Serum Institute of India and went around the facility, taking stock of vaccine development work being carried out there, before leaving for the Pune airport around 6 pm on the way back to Delhi.

Modi's visit to SII was aimed at reviewing the progress of the vaccine candidate for coronavirus and to know about its launch, production and distribution mechanism, an official said.

# TTD owned 1,128 immovable...

Continued from Page 1

The white paper on the TTD's immovable properties assumes significance following the massive controversy that erupted after the Board had in May of this year announced its decision to auction 50 immovable properties located at different places in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Rishikesh in Uttarakhand.

The immovable properties that were proposed to be auctioned included tiny houses and house plots measuring between 1 cent and 5 cents and farming lands between 10 cents and below one acre. However, the announcement led to an outcry from various political parties, forcing the TTD to withdraw the proposal.

The TTD owns properties donated by devotees to the hill shrine several decades ago and the Board said that "non-maintainable and non-revenue generating properties would be auctioned as they were very petty and unviable".

The TTD has proposed to set up a committee on how to bring the temple properties all over the country into good use. Subba Reddy said that a decision has been taken to postpone the move to buy

securities of the State and the Central Governments.

Subba Reddy said that as part of making Tirumala as a Holy Green City and a pollution-free pilgrim centre, the TTD has decided to run 100 to 150 electric buses to Tirumala with APSRTC.

This would help cut pollution by utilising the non-conventional sources of energy including wind and solar. The Board chairman also said that gold plating works of Maha Dwarum, Dwajastambam, Balipeetham in Srivari temple and Surya Prabha vahanam at Sri Padmavathi Ammavari temple with 11.7 kg of gold has been approved.

The TTD Board also decided to reintroduce Kalyanamastu, the mass marriage programme for underprivileged couples with a new set of guidelines.

A boys hostel for SV Balamandiram would be built at a cost Rs 10.75 crore, he said.

TTD Board Member Kumaraguru from Tamil Nadu has donated 4 acres of land to construct Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple in Vulundur constituency in his state and also come forward to donate Rs10 crore towards its construction.

# Gita has all the answers, says Kanchi seer at Tirumala





PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Swamy Vijayendra Saraswathi of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham had darshan of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala on Saturday and later took part in Bhagavat Gita Parayanam at N a d a n e e r a j a n a m Mandapam.

After the Parayanam, in his religious discourse, the seer said that Gita provides ultimate solution to all the problems being faced by human beings and makes them to lead a righteous path.

He said all the Parayanam programmes mulled by TTD are reaching millions and millions of devotees across the globe via SVBC live and lauded the efforts of TTD authorities in spreading Sanatana Hindu Dharma Prachara.

TTD chairman YV Subba Reddy, EO KS Jawahar Reddy, board members Govinda Hari, DP Ananta, Krishnamurthy Vaidyanathan, Additional EO AV Dharmara Reddy were among those present.

VIJAYAWADA BULLION RATES	
 GOLD	
₹ 49,090 (10 gm)	↓
₹ 670	
 SILVER	
₹ 64,700 (1kg)	↑
₹ 200	
CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
	
Dressed/With Skin	₹161
Without Skin	₹183
Broiler at Farm	₹111
EGG RATES ₹/100	
	
VIJAYAWADA	444
HYDERABAD	428
VISAKHAPATNAM	435
RETAIL PRICE (IN VIJAYAWADA)	₹4.44

# Modi's visit to Genome...

Continued from Page 1

He said that amid growing expectations about Covid-19 vaccine 'Covaxin', the spotlight has turned on the Hyderabad-based Genome Valley which was founded, way back in 1999 to boost biomedical research, training and manufacturing.

Naidu said that it was his vision to develop Genome Valley as a prestigious high-technology business district spread over 600 sq km across Hyderabad suburban areas like Turakapally, Shamirpet, Medchal, Uppal, Patancheru, Jeedimetla, Gachibowli and Keesara. Now, the making of 'Covaxin' at Bharat Biotech

housed in Genome Valley bore testimony to the effectiveness of that long-term vision, the TDP chief said.

He said that the Genome Valley witnessed the setting up of many companies in the biomedical fields which eventually created lots of job opportunities for the young generation.

It was laudable that the expert teams of Bharath Biotech were making all possible efforts to develop Covid-19 vaccine. Everybody should wish for the success of Bharath Biotech in its efforts to make vaccines available to the people in this health emergency situation, the former chief minister of undivided AP said.

# Doctor murdered at home in Avanigadda

Continued from Page 1

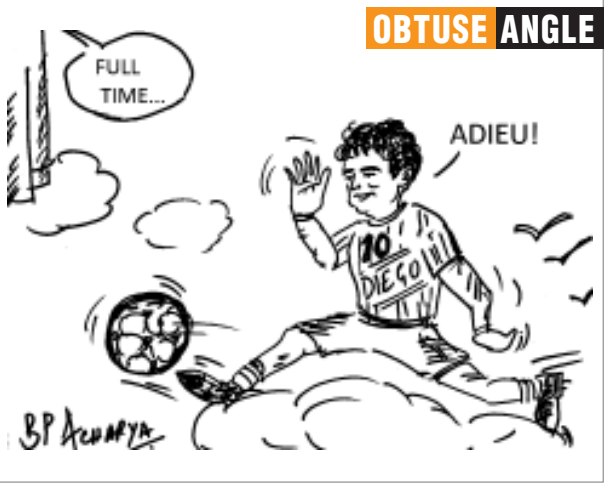
They inspected the scene of offence and found the doctor lifeless in his bedroom. "The killers tactfully changed the CCTV camera's direction to hide their identity," the SP said. He said that since the incident took place at a time not one of the doctor's family member was at home, the

police suspect it to be murder and are investigating the case from that angle.

The SP said that a clues team reached the spot and four teams have been formed to investigate and nab the killers. He appealed to the people to alert the police if they have any information that could lead to the identification of the killers. The SP assured that the names

of the person giving such information would be kept secret and he or she would be rewarded.

The four teams investigating the case are led by DSP Mahabob Basha and C-I Ravi Kumar. The teams have begun questioning the doctor's family members, close relatives, hospital staff and locals to crack the case, said the SP.





# Minister promises rain-hit farmers adequate compensation, all help

Gautham Reddy, YSRCP leaders take stock of flood situation with field visits to affected villages

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister Mekapati Gautham Reddy on Saturday visited the flood-hit villages in SPS Nellore district and reassured farmers who lost their crop due to heavy rains induced by Cyclone Nivar that the Government stands by them and would do everything in its power to ease their suffering. Gautham Reddy also said that high-level bridges would be constructed in the days to come. During his visit, the Minister boarded a boat to reach six villages that were cut off from the mainland and also inspected overflowing lakes in Atmakur constituency.

The Minister visited Nagula Vellaturu village in Chejerla mandal accompanied by RDO, Irrigation, revenue and other officials and inspected the water bodies in spate. He also interacted with villagers and enquired about their problems. He assured farmers who have suffered crop damage that they would get all support from the government.

The Minister later visited Apparao Palem under Atmakur constituency. He said that after 1995, this was the first time that floods had caused damage to the area. He also said that on December 25, some of the homeless will get free house sites.

The Minister took a boat to reach Veerlagudipadu village in Sangam mandal where he assured the villagers that a high level bridge would be constructed to end their problems of commuting during the rainy season. He also inspected the water flow and reviewed the situation with officials concerned. He said that people have been shifted to safer places and relief camps and others that remained in the villages were provided food and water.

With the timely efforts by the authorities there was no loss of life during the cyclone, said Goutham Reddy, appreciating the efforts of the officers and staff.



## Nivar killed livestock worth Rs 47.5L

**VIJAYAWADA:** Cyclone Nivar has its impact on the livestock, mostly in Rayalaseema districts due to heavy rains.

Loss of livestock was reported in YSR Kadapa, Chittoor, Anantapur, Nellore, Prakasam and Guntur districts.

As per the reports by the officials of Animal Husbandry department 1,274 sheep/goat died due to the cyclone in YSR Kadapa district alone.

The total loss of livestock reported in six flood-hit districts in the state from November 25 to 28 are 1,302 sheep/goat, 22

buffaloes/cows, 13 calf/heifer and 162 poultry birds. The assistance sought by the department to compensate the livestock loss during the cyclone was Rs 6,60,000 for buffaloes /cows at Rs 30,000 per animal, Rs 39,06,000 for sheep/goat at Rs 3,000 per animal, Rs 2,08,000 for calf/heifer at Rs 16,000 per animal and Rs 8,100 for poultry birds at Rs 50 per bird. A total of Rs 47,83,599 assistance was sought by the Animal Husbandry department for the loss of livestock in the state.

He visited the relief camp at model ST Colony at Atmakur and distributed bedsheets. Later,

the Minister visited the villages under the Penna River catchment area in Anantha-sagar

## Jagan can know real extent of damage only by field visit: TDP

**VIJAYAWADA:** The TDP on Saturday launched a no-holds barred attack on Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, accusing him of limiting himself to aerial surveys of flood-hit areas instead of conducting field visits that can give a proper picture of the devastation caused.

TDP MLC Nara Lokesh alleged that YSR Congress Party Government "did not make even minimum possible efforts to rescue the flood-hit people, mainly farmers" and demanded that the Chief Minister visit the flood-affected areas in person. Lokesh demanded to know why the Jagan regime "was not carrying out timely enumeration of crops losses" and also not releasing the required compensation to the farmers in times of natural disasters. He said that while the people were suffering terribly due to cyclones and floods, the Chief Minister was doing nothing except conducting aerial surveys. "It's not enough just to conduct aerial surveys as an eyewash as such empty and half-hearted

efforts would not wipe out the tears of the farmers," the TDP MLC said. He asserted that a field level survey and first hand interaction with farmers would give a correct picture.

"Jagan, who travelled on land in the name of Padayatra before the elections, has begun to only fly and is now beyond the reach of the common public after coming to power," the TDP MLC said. He demanded the CM to conduct physical visits to the submerged crops and farmers' damaged farm fields in order to understand the gravity of the situation. "The YSRCP made it a habit of neglecting and ignoring the problems of the people ever since it came to power," Lokesh alleged.

He paid rich tributes to Mahatma Jyothirao Phule on his death anniversary. Speaking after paying floral tributes to a portrait of the social reformer, Lokesh said that the YSRCP Government in Andhra Pradesh was undermining the ideology that Mahatma Phule stood for.

Mandal. He appreciated the efforts of the Police, SDRE, SDRF teams.

The minister reassured the villagers of Varikuntapadu that the power substitution will be set up in the village at the earliest to bring an end to the power issues in the villages.

Elsewhere, AP Agriculture Mission vice-chairman MVS Nagi Reddy, Machilipatnam MP V Balishowry, Avaniigadda MLA Simhadri Ramesh, JD Agriculture T Mohan Rao and others also visited flood-hit villages in Krishna district. They visited villages under Challapalli mandal, Mopidevi mandal and Avaniigadda mandal in the district and assured the farmers whose crops were damaged due to cyclone that compensation will be given for the loss. Officials were instructed to complete the

crop damage enumeration at the earliest.

YSRCP MLA Dr Gopireddy Srinivas Reddy visited the flood hit villages in Guntur district on Saturday.

He visited Konakan-chivari Palem, Gogulapadu, Kottapalli, Chakaligutta villages under Rompicherla mandal.

Narasaraopet sub collector S Ajay Kumar and other officials accompanied the MLA. He said that the farmers who lost their crop in the floods will get compensation from the government and Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy will support the farmers and stand by his words.

Ajay Kumar alleged that the opposition parties are not leaving any chance to criticise the ruling party for petty political gain despite the state being rocked by a natural disaster.

# Longer session needed to discuss problems: Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday stressed the need for extending the Assembly for a period of at least 10 days in order to discuss the many burning problems being faced by the people in the State.

Naidu said that the YSRCP Government has not only failed to solve the old problems but also created many new one for the people in the past 18 months of its misgovernment. He opined a longer Assembly would have to be held to give a chance for wide-ranging debates on all those issues.

The former chief minister alleged that only statements were being issued but no relief or compensation was given to the affected families on the field level. He further alleged that Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy was making "only aerial surveys" but not coming down to the ground to comfort the flood victims.

Naidu asserted that the



Chief Minister had "miserably failed to deliver in governance and administration". He alleged that there was zero coordination while the official machinery had totally collapsed and it was demotivated.

The former chief minister alleged that floodwater management was thrown to winds which was clearly evident from how the Annamayya project was grossly mishandled. He alleged that without prior warning, water was released leading to flooding and sub-

mergence of several villages which further damaged thousands of crores of property due to the submergence of crops and houses. He stated that also, the Pincha project bund breached.

Stating that the Buggavanka stream was mismanaged, Naidu said that it led to waist-deep flood waters entering houses in Kadapa. He alleged that similar negligence was shown during the last year's floods in the Krishna and Godavari rivers.

# Solution to Bajrang jute mill issue soon, says Velampalli

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Endowments Minister Velampalli Srinivas Rao on Saturday said that the State Government has begun taking steps to resolve the Bajrang Jute Mill imbroglio and ensure justice to the workers.

He said that Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has constituted a High-Level Committee which is working for an amicable solution and has already held consultations with the management and workers. The committee also held a meeting at the Minister's camp office in Vijayawada on Saturday.

The Minister said that the previous TDP government never tried to resolve the Bajrang Jute Mill problem despite workers conducting numerous agitations.



He said that Jagan was keen to set right the issues to do justice to employees and workers.

Srinivas said that meetings were conducted with Guntur district collector, mill management, workers and department officials and the government sought the officials to submit a report about mill restart and resolve of workers/employees issues.

The minister said that soon the government would do justice to the employees and workers.

MLAs Ambati Rambabu and Maddali Giridhar, MLC KS Lakshmana Rao, Guntur district collector I Samuel Anand Kumar, trade union leader Lella Appi Reddy and other officials participated in the meeting.

# Low pressure to bring rains to south India next week: IMD

PNS ■ CHENNAI

A low pressure area over south Andaman Sea and adjoining Bay of Bengal was 'very likely' to concentrate into a depression in the next 48 hours and intensify further before moving towards the Tamil Nadu coast, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Saturday.

Under its influence, various parts in southern states were likely to receive rainfall starting December 1, the IMD said in a series of tweets.

"A Low Pressure Area lies over South Andaman Sea adjacent SE (south east) Bay of Bengal and Equatorial Indian Ocean. It is very likely to concentrate into a depression during next 48 hours and likely to intensify further thereafter," it said. It is likely to move nearly



westwards and reach south Tamil Nadu coast around December 2, it said. Under its influence, scattered to widespread rainfall activity was "very likely" over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Mahe, Lakshadweep, south coastal Andhra Pradesh and south Rayalaseema on Tuesday and Wednesday, the weather office said.

IMD also forecast isolated

heavy to very heavy rainfall with moderate thunderstorm and lightning over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal during this period.

Isolated heavy falls with moderate thunderstorm and lightning was also very likely over south coastal Andhra Pradesh during December 1 and 2 and over Rayalaseema and Lakshadweep area on Wednesday, it added.

# APTDC lines up projects worth Rs 202 crore to lure tourists

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The state-owned Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation has lined up projects worth Rs 202 crore for development so as to attract more tourists.

The state Cabinet, which met here on Friday, approved the APTDCs proposal for securing a Rs 142 crore loan from banks to develop tourism infrastructure, including hotels, at various destinations.

The corporation will spend the balance Rs 60 crore from its internal resources.

AP Special Chief Secretary (Tourism and Culture) Rajat Bhargava told PTI here on Saturday that eco-resorts would be developed at Lambasingi, which was becoming immensely popular as 'Andhra Ooty' in the tribal



region of Visakhapatnam district.

Eco-resorts would also be developed at Mareduhilli and Jagithipalli while a Tribal HAAT and Drive-in restaurant at Araku, the picturesque valley that's one of the most famous tourist attractions in the state.

"APTDC has also drawn up plans to undertake high impact projects like a ropeway and development of Water Tourism

at Gandikota in Kadapa district, known as the Grand Canyon of India.

The YSR Memorial will be developed at Kadapa and a MICE Centre at Kovvuru in West Godavari district," Rajat Bhargava said.

The Special Chief Secretary said the new works proposed were critical from a tourism point of view as AP has improved its ranking as the best performing state.

# 5 Maoists surrender at Chintapalli

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Five militia members of the Maoist party surrendered before the ASP Vidyasagar Naidu at Chintapalli in Visakhapatnam district on Saturday.

They were identified as Mattam Matyaru (26) of Mynakota village, Korra Sanyasi Rao (40) of Guralagondi village, Korra Hari, Baggurri village, (35), Mattam Bhagat Ram, Mynakota village (25) and Korra Purnachander (26) also from Mynakota village.

With this surrender, 13 militia members have surrendered from Chintapalli subdivision alone in November, ASP Naidu said.

He said efforts of community policing created awareness among the active mem-



bers and the local people in general.

Volleyball matches and medical camps were organised in a big way in the agency areas and the response has been overwhelming, he added.

The ASP said CRPF personnel organised a civic action programme and came close to the militia members and the local youth. This helped in the surrender of the extremists. The surrendered militia members also gave assurance to the police that they would not go back to the Maoists.

# 2 bank robbers held, Rs 77 lakh recovered

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The police on Saturday arrested two youths on charges of robbing the State Bank of India, Nadikudi branch a week ago and decamping with Rs 77 lakh.

Guntur rural SP Vishal Gunni on Saturday told media persons that the police have arrested Kedari Prasad (21) and Vinay Ramulu (37), both relatives and natives of Gandhinagar of Miryalaguda in Telangana State and recovered the stolen money.

Revealing details of the theft, the SP said that the duo had been inspired by movies like 'Julayi', and YouTube videos and committed the crime to earn easy money.

"They wanted to get rich easily and settle down in life, but our police foiled their plan by conducting a thorough and scientific investigation," Vishal Gunni said.

He reminded that the theft



took place on November 21 in which the culprits did not leave any evidence. However, the police found a slip of paper on which a phone number was written, a small video clip

and with the phone number and other scientific methods, the police cracked the mystery, the SP said.

Vishal Gunni said that the accused studied till Class X and

Intermediate and planned to earn money inspired by movies and YouTube videos in which bank robbers managed to escape without leaving evidence.

"The duo used to visit Dacheppalli for works. They observed the SBI at Nadikudi, conducted a reconnaissance and stole Rs 77 lakh by cutting open the money chest using a gas cutter. While committing the theft, they took care to wear gloves, detaching CCTV cameras and sprinkled chilli powder to mislead sniffer dogs," the SP said.

He said that the police formed eight teams with the help of a small video clip cracked the case.

He said that the police arrested the duo and recovered the entire stolen amount from them.

"This is perhaps the first of its kind robbery case in the country that was resolved within seven days and the stolen cash recovered," the SP said, appreciating the police teams for their work.

Vishal Gunni said that the teams would be recommended for AP Police awards.

# DEE lands in ACB net for taking Rs 2 lakh as bribe

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Anti Corruption Bureau sleuths nabbed a deputy executive engineer red-handed while he was accepting a bribe of Rs 2 lakh from a woman to do an official favour.

The accused officer has been identified as Damodara Mohan Gandhi, working as DEE at the Chitravathi balancing reservoir at Parnapalli village in Lingala mandal of Kadapa district.

According to a statement by the ACB, the government has paid compensations to the residents of Chitravathi Balancing Reservoir (CBR) as their houses have been inundated due to the floods last month.

The government has sanctioned Rs 21 lakh for Kancham Lilavathi as her house has been inundated due to the



floods. Parnapalli sub-division DEE, Mohan Gandhi demanded Lilavathi to pay a bribe of Rs 2 lakh to get the compensation cleared.

On November 25, she filed a complaint with the Tirupati ACB DSP, Anantapur in-charge DSP and other officials who laid a trap and nabbed

Mohan Gandhi red-handed on Friday. The ACB officials conducted raids at Mohan Gandhi's residence, farmhouse in Pulivendula as well.

He was produced before the special judge for the court of SPE & ACB cases, Kurnool for further action on Saturday, said the ACB.



## PNS ■ MUMBAI

"When he was chief minister, Fadnavis had threatened that he had 'kundlis' (details) of everybody (political opponents). What kind of language was that?" Raut told



Queried about the Bombay HC's ruling on Friday in actress Kangana Ranaut case,

When asked about CM Thackeray not accompanying Prime Minister Narendra

Raut was apparently referring to the searches conducted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) at the premises of Shiv Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaik in a money laundering case.

**PNS**  **LUCKNOW**

It also has a provision under which if someone returns to their



The ordinance says no person

An aggrieved person, his/her parents, brother, sister, or any other person who is related to him/her by blood, marriage or adoption may lodge an FIR about such conversion, according to the ordinance.

**PNS ■ SRINAGAR**

While the voting was sluggish for the first couple of hours in the valley due to cold weather, it picked up pace as the day progressed.

**PNS** ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP members reiterated their demand for removal of Sahoo from the Cabinet as his role in providing protection to the main accused in the Pari kidnap and murder case is not clear.



Leader of Opposition P K Naik of BJP accused Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik of shielding the Agriculture minister instead of giving justice to the victim girls family. His

Naik said his party's demands of a CBI probe into the matter and dismissal of the agriculture minister were yet to be met. The BJP members will continue to agitate in the Assembly and outside till the victims' family gets justice.

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Bansal, a former union minister, is the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge of administration. He will hold the post in addition to his duties as an interim measure, it said. "Congress president has assigned the additional responsibility of AICC treasurer to Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, in-charge administration, as an interim measure to look after the duties of treasurer with immediate effect," a statement from AICC general secretary Organisation K C Venugopal said.

**PNS ■ NAGPUR**

His statement comes a day after the Supreme Court extended the interim bail of Goswami and two others till four weeks, stating that the



Goswami, Neetish Sarda and Feroz Mohammad Shaikh were arrested by Alibaug police in Maharashtra's Raigad district on November 4 in connection with the case.

**PNS ■ BENGALURU**

PNS ■ KOLKATA

"We are in touch with Suwendu Adhikari. We share good terms with him but nothing has been decided as of now

Although Adhikari has resigned from the Mamata Banerjee cabinet in which he was the minister in charge of transport, waterways and irrigation, he has not resigned from TMC or as MLA.

**PNS** ■ **LUCKNOW**

Chaudhary, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the state assembly, in a statement said farmers have been treated as "enemies" by the government, which is "shameful" and needed to be condemned.

**PNS ■ BALRAMPUR (UP)**

Singh suffered 90 per cent burns and was referred to a

On Friday night, there was an explosion in the house after which one of the walls collapsed and one of the room caught fire, police said.

**PNS** ■ **GUND (J&K)**

The first phase was held across Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday and over 22 per cent of the seven lakh voters had

Zahida Begum, a voter at the Government Higher Secondary School in Hariganiwan, said she came out to vote to support a local



"We have many issues that need attention. I do not know anything about Article 370, but I want the issues of our locality to be resolved," she said.

The Centre on August 5 last year had announced abrogation of Article 370, which gave the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir special status, and divided it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

"This election is also important as through this we can keep those parties and people away who took away our special status," Yaseen Ahmad said, adding that though the DDC polls had nothing to do with the issue, but "this would

Of the 1,475 candidates in the fray for 280 DDC seats, 296 candidates are in the first phase, according to officials.



‘DELHI CHALO’

# Stalemate continues as protesting farmers refuse to budge

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI,

Thousands of farmers have reached the national capital on their tractor-trolleys and other vehicles, responding to the “Delhi Chalo” call against the agri-marketing laws enacted at the Centre in September.

On Saturday morning, it wasn't clear if they will agree to move to the Burari ground on the outskirts of the city, where police said they can continue with their protest. Many protesters were demanding a better venue in the centre of Delhi. Originally, the protest was meant to be on November 26 and 27.

**A look at the protest so far:**

**Day 1:**  
On Thursday, thousands of farmers crossed from Punjab to Haryana. At border points, the Haryana Police tried to stop them, using water cannons and teargas. But later they were allowed through. There were skirmishes with police at other points as well on the highway to Delhi as it passed through BJP-run Haryana. A large group of protesters camped for the night near Panipat.



**Day 2:**  
Protesters assembled at Delhi's border at Tigr and Singhu. Police used teargas and water cannons to stop them from breaking through barricades, which included sand-laden trucks. In the evening, they offered to let them into the city and continue their protest at Burari ground. But many appeared reluctant.

**Day 3:**

The standoff continued on Saturday morning at Delhi's border. More farmers were making their way from Punjab and Haryana.

**What farmers fear:**  
Farmer unions in Punjab and Haryana say the recent laws enacted at the Centre will dismantle the minimum support price (MSP) system. Over time big corporate houses will dictate terms and farmers will end up getting less for their

crops, they argue. Farmers fear that with the virtual disbanding of the mandi system, they will not get an assured price for their crops and the “arthiyas” -- commission agents who also pitch in with loans for them -- will be out of business. **Their demands:**  
The key demand is the withdrawal of the three laws which deregulate the sale of their crops. The farmer unions could

also settle for a legal assurance that the MSP system will continue, ideally through an amendment to the laws.

They are also pressing for the withdrawal of the proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020, fearing it will lead to an end to subsidised electricity. Farmers say rules against stubble burning should also not apply to them.

**Key players:**  
The “Delhi Chalo” call was given by the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee. Several other organisations including Rashtriya Kisan Mahasangh and factions of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) came out in support.

The march is being held under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha. The Rashtriya Kisan Mahasanghathan, Jai Kisan Andolan, All India Kisan Mazdoor Sabha, Krantikari Kisan Union, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Dakaunda), BKU (Rajewal), BKU (Ekta-Urgahan), BKU (Chaduni) are among the participants.

Most protesters are from Punjab, but there is a substantial number from Haryana as well.

# Fadnavis targets MVA govt on issues of ryots, Maratha quota

PNS ■ MUMBAI

BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday accused the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maharashtra government of ignoring the plight farmers in the state and failing on the Maratha reservation issue.

The former chief minister said the government has failed to provide financial aid to farmers. The MVA government completes a year in office on Saturday. “The Thackeray government has failed in providing financial assistance to farmers. The government has completely ignored their plight. Cotton, soybean crops got destroyed due to pest attack, but no help was provided to farmers,” Fadnavis said in a press conference.

“This government has miserably failed in Maratha reservation as well,” he alleged.

“Some of the state ministers are deliberately making contradictory statements on the Maratha reservation issue. They are doing so to cover up the government's failure. This government is deliberately dragging its feet in the Supreme Court,” he said.

The BJP leader also said that he had not seen any chief minister in Maharashtra, other than



**The Thackeray government has failed in providing financial assistance to farmers. The government has completely ignored their plight. Cotton, soybean crops got destroyed due to pest attack, but no help was provided to farmers, said BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis**

Uddhav Thackeray, who threatened the opposition “so much”, and said his recent interview to ‘Saamana’ (Shiv Sena mouthpiece) did not befit the constitutional post he held.

Fadnavis further said, “The Supreme Court and the Bombay High Court's recent decisions are enough to underscore the constitutional breakdown in the

state.” He was apparently referring to the Supreme Court's decision to extend journalist Arnab Goswami's interim bail and the Bombay High Court's observation that the Mumbai civic body's action of demolishing part of actor Kangana Ranaut's bungalow in Mumbai was illegal and smacked of malafide intentions.

# Biden represents the best in us: Kamala

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Joe Biden will be a president who represents the best of America, his deputy and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has said, asserting that he is a leader the world will respect.



Lavishing praise on the 78-year-old US President-elect, Harris on Friday said that Biden will be a president for all Americans. “Know that” Biden “will be a president who represents the best in us. A leader the world will respect and our children can look up

to,” Harris said in a tweet.

Harris, 56, the daughter of an Indian immigrant from Chennai, has created history by becoming the first Black American woman to be elected as the country's Vice President.

While Indian-origin politicians have been elected as heads of the state in various parts of the world in the last several decades, from Mauritius to Fiji, Harris as the vice president of the United States would be the most powerful politician ever. Biden, in a series of tweets, called for unity in the country.

# PM Modi lauds student who made his sketch

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Ajay Dake, a sixth standard student from Maharashtra has become the toast of his school as Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded his “exceptional art talent” after receiving his sketch from him. Ajay, a student of the Bal Vidya Mandir High School in Parbhani made a sketch of the prime minister and sent it to him, not expecting that he would receive a reply. He was in for a pleasant surprise when he received a letter from Modi, in which the PM lauded his “exceptional art talent”.

# 4 central police organisations functioning without regular chiefs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Four central police organisations are functioning without regular heads for varied lengths of time as the government has not appointed their full-time chiefs.

The latest organisation to come under this category is the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) as its chief Rajesh Ranjan is set to retire this month-end and the Union home ministry has given the “additional charge” of the post to SSB director general Kumar Rajesh Chandra “till the joining of regular DG. CISF or until further orders, whichever is earlier” as per an order issued on November 26.

Similarly, the charge of the federal counter-terrorist force NSG, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the central police think tank -- Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) -- is being rendered in additional



capacities by various Indian Police Service (IPS) officers.

Indo-Tibetan Border Police chief S S Deswal is handling the “additional charge” of the National Security Guard since incumbent A K Singh retired on September 30.

Border Security Force (BSF) chief Rakesh Asthana is holding the additional charge of NCB since July last year after incumbent DG

Abhay was appointed as the Director of Hyderabad-based Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy.

Abhay, who goes by his first name, is now serving as the DG of Odisha Police. Special secretary (internal security) V S K Kaumudi is holding the additional charge of BPRD since August after he was appointed to the present post in the Union home ministry.

# US imposes sanctions on Russian and Chinese firms

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

The US has imposed sanctions on four companies from China and Russia for supporting Iran's missile programme that remains a “significant proliferation concern,” Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has said.



The announcement was made on Friday as the US continues to take tough measures against Iran for continuing their activities related to nuclear arms.

“The US has sanctioned four entities in China and Russia for their support of Iran's missile programme, which remains a significant proliferation concern. We will continue to use all our sanctions tools to prevent Iran from advancing its missile capabilities,” Pompeo said.

The companies are Chengdu Best New Materials Co Ltd and Zibo Elim Trade Co, Ltd, in China and Nilco Group, which is also known as Nil Fam Khazar Company and SanTERS Holding and Joint Stock Company Elecon in Russia for transferring sensitive technology and items to Iran's

missile programme.

President Donald Trump withdrew the US from the landmark Iran nuclear deal in 2018.

After withdrawing from the Iranian nuclear deal, Trump has asked all countries to reduce their purchase of oil from Iran to zero or face secondary sanctions.

Iran insists its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes. Pompeo said all countries need to be vigilant to efforts by Iran to advance its missile programme.

“These measures are part of our response to Iran's malign

**The announcement was made as the US continues to take tough measures against Iran for continuing their activities related to nuclear arms**

activities. These determinations underscore the continuing need for all countries to remain vigilant to efforts by Iran to advance its missile programme,” Pompeo said.

“We will continue to work to impede Iran's missile development efforts and use our sanctions authorities to spotlight the foreign suppliers, such as these entities in the People's Republic of China and Russia that provide missile-related materials and technology to Iran. The sanctions imposed include restrictions on US government procurement, US government assistance, and exports and will be in effect for two years,” he said.

# Nearly 8000 IT professionals get jobs through 'Karma Bhumi'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Nearly 8000 jobs have been secured by IT professionals in West Bengal who have returned from other places due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an official of the state Information Technology department said.

The state IT department had developed the ‘Karma Bhumi’ app for professionals who had returned from other places to enlist themselves for getting employment in the state for a limited period of time. “With the advent of COVID, there has been a huge influx of IT professionals here from outside,” said Sanjay Das, joint secretary, IT Department, government of West Bengal.

# NSA Doval holds talks with Maldivian Defence Minister

PNS ■ COLOMBO

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval has met Defence Minister of Maldives Mariya Didi and held a cordial and detailed discussion on deepening bilateral partnership with the key island nation in the Indian Ocean.

Doval's talks with Didi was part of a trilateral maritime dialogue among India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives being held here in the Sri Lankan capital.

Sri Lanka is hosting the fourth national security advisor trilateral meeting on maritime security cooperation with India and the Maldives.

The meeting is taking place after six years - the last meeting was held in New Delhi in 2014.

“NSA #AjitDoval and @MariyaDidi, Defence Minister of #Maldives held a cordial & detailed discussion on deepening bilateral partnership between India & Maldives in defence and security,” High Commission of India in Maldives said in a tweet.

Doval arrived in Colombo on Friday for the trilateral maritime dialogue.

The high-level engagement that covers a wide range of subjects is designed to initiate collective action on maritime security including maritime domain awareness, legal regimes, train in search and rescue, maritime pollution response, information sharing, curbing piracy drugs arms and contraband trafficking in the Indian Ocean region.

# ED attaches assets of ex IAS officer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Assets worth over Rs 27 crore of Chhattisgarh-based former IAS officer Babul Agrawal have been attached by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the central probe agency said on Saturday.

The agency is probing Agrawal, his family members and others in connection with a money laundering case linked to charges of alleged corruption and disproportionate assets.

# Nomads under lens as child missing cases rise

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala police is keeping a special watch on nomads and migrant workers in the wake of an increase in child missing cases in the state, a top official said.

The state police chief, DGP Loknath Behera informed the state Human Rights panel that the Janamaithri wing of the police department had been entrusted with the task of tracing children who had gone missing under various circumstances in the southern state.

Information on nomadic



groups and migrant workers were being collected, he said.

The ‘Janamaithri Suraksha Project’ is a prestigious com-

munity policing initiative of the Kerala government.

The rights panel chairman, Antony Dominic, had recently directed the DGP to submit a report on the steps taken to control the disappearance of children.

In the report, the top cop said immediate and effective action is taken if a complaint is received about a missing child and to trace them.

The police report also said an investigation was progressing to find out the circumstance in which seven-year-old Devananda, a school going girl who had gone missing while playing in

the backyard of her home and later found dead in Kollam district recently.

The rights panel sought the police report based on a complaint filed by human rights activist, P K Raju.

According to Kerala police's latest crime statistics, a total of 91 cases of kidnapping and abduction of children were reported in the southern state in the initial three months, till March, this year.

Of the total 1217 crime reported against children during the period, 331 were rape and seven were murders, it said.

# 12 arrested for duping aspiring Delhi Police constables

The Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force has arrested 12 persons for taking money from aspiring Delhi Police constables, promising their selection in the entrance examination to be held shortly by the central area's Staff Selection Commission. Twelve persons including the racket kingpin Mahendra Singh have been arrested by the STF from Gorakhpur on Friday, an official statement said here on Saturday. The STF sleuths also seized 11 mobile phones, 14 Aadhar cards, six fake id-cards of exam recovered from them. During interrogation, Mahendra Singh told STF that he used to run the racket of promising candidates' selection by having “question solvers” sit in the test in their place, it said. The gang used to charge hefty amount from candidates for their services. A detailed probe is on in the matter.





# ‘Navy to execute \$ 51bn orders for ships, submarines’

PNS ■ PANAJI

Union Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik on Friday said expected orders for surface ships and submarines to be executed from 2020 to 2030 by the Indian Navy are to the tune of USD 51 billion.

Naik was addressing a virtual meet on opportunities at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and Mazagao Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDSL), organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

The union minister said that more than 60 per cent of the Indian Navy's budget is dedicated to capital expenditure and nearly 70 per cent of this capital budget has been spent on indigenous sourcing, amounting to nearly Rs 66,000 crore in the last five years.

He said that with more than 60 major surface and sub-sur-



face platforms being built for mainly the Indian Navy and the Indian Coast Guard at Goa Shipyard Limited, Mazagon Docks Shipbuilders Limited, Garden Reach Shipbuilder and Engineers (GRSE), Hindustan Shipyards

Limited (HSL) and Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), the potential for MSMEs is vast.

Naik said "expected orders for surface ships and submarines to be executed from 2020 to 2030 are to the tune of USD 51 billion".

Speaking during the event, CII Goa State Council Chairman Blaise Costabir said that with India's maritime interests growing at a fast pace in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a USD 5 trillion economy by 2025, the country's shipbuilding will see increased focus and demand.

The country's vast coastline and the evolving geopolitical situation in India's neighbourhood has also put a greater thrust on maritime safety and security, he added.

Chairman and Managing Director of GSL said the defence shipbuilding sector will continue to see robust growth.

There was 9.3 per cent growth in the defence budget in 2019-20, he said and added that the country expects to see the same trend for the next 10 years.

## FDI up 15 pc to \$ 30 billion during April-Sep: Govt data

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign direct investment (FDI) into India grew by 15 per cent to USD 30 billion during the first half of the current fiscal, according to official data.

Inflow of FDI during April-September 2019-20 stood at USD 26 billion, as per the data of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

In July, the country had attracted USD 17.5 billion worth of foreign investments.

Sectors which attracted maximum foreign inflows during April-September 2020-21 included computer software and hardware (USD 17.55 billion), services (USD 2.25 billion), trading (USD 949 billion), chemicals (USD 437 million) and automobile (USD 417 million).

# Petrol price crosses Rs 82 mark, diesel above Rs 72 /ltr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol price on Saturday crossed Rs 82-mark in Delhi and diesel surpassed Rs 72 a litre after eighth increase in rates in past nine days.

Petrol price on Saturday was hiked by 24 paise per litre and diesel by 27 paise as hopes of a vaccine development led to a rally in international oil prices.

Petrol price in Delhi rose to Rs 82.13 per litre from Rs 81.89, according to a price notification from oil marketing companies.

Diesel rates went up from Rs 71.86 to Rs 72.13 per litre.

This is the eighth increase in rates since November 20 when oil companies resumed daily price revision after nearly two-week hiatus.

In nine days, petrol price has gone up by Rs 1.07 per litre and diesel rate has risen by Rs 1.67.

Prior to the November 20 hike, petrol prices had been



static since September 22 and diesel rates hadn't changed since October 2.

Public sector oil marketing companies - Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd - revise rates of petrol and diesel daily based on benchmark international oil price and foreign exchange rate.

They have, however, resorted to calibrating the rates since the pandemic broke out with a view to avoiding volatility in retail prices. The 58-day hiatus in petrol price revision and 48-day status quo on diesel rates were preceded by no change in rates between June 30 and August 15 and a 85-day status quo between March 17 and June 6.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Ather discontinues 450 scooter, replaces it with 450X, 450 Plus

Electric two-wheeler startup Ather Energy on Saturday said it has decided to replace its first product, Ather 450, with Ather 450X and Ather 450 Plus, which have been built on the same platform, with improved hardware and software capabilities.

The company had launched the Ather 450 in 2018. The company will stop the sale of Ather 450 on November 28 in both Bengaluru and Chennai, Ather Energy said in a statement. This marks the end of phase one of Ather Energy as a company as it moves on to a new stage of rapid growth aided by a new round of Series D funding, it added. "Our maiden model, Ather 450 was the outcome of four years of continuous work on R&D, design, prototype building and testing, and improving the product to make it production worthy. The learnings from Ather 450 in terms of design, specifications and production along with feedback from the owners has helped shape the Ather 450X and Ather 450 Plus," Ather Energy Co-founder and CEO Tarun Mehta said. The company is now looking forward to delivering new products across all cities, he added.



### ‘PM’s presence to motivate firm to bridge unmet healthcare needs’



Drug firm Zyclus Cadila on Saturday said the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at its Zyclus Biotech Park will motivate the company to scale greater heights in its pursuit to bridge unmet healthcare needs. Modi visited Zyclus Cadila's manufacturing facility near Ahmedabad, as he began his three-city visit to review ongoing coronavirus vaccine development work. "His inspiring presence will motivate us to scale greater heights in our quest to bridge unmet healthcare needs," Zyclus Cadila said in a regulatory filing. The Zyclus family comprising 25,000 Zyclus stands committed to the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' mission and offering the nation safe and efficacious vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics to fight COVID-19, it added. Zyclus Cadila had earlier announced that the phase-I clinical trial of its vaccine candidate ZycovD is over and it commenced phase-II clinical trials from August.

### Baba Ramdev on board of Ruchi Soya; brother Ram Bharat to be MD

Yoga guru Swami Ram Dev, his younger brother Ram Bharat and close aide Acharya Balkrishna will be on the board of soya food brand Nutrela-maker Ruchi Soya that was recently acquired by Patanjali Ayurved. Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd in a notice to shareholders sought approval for appointment of Ram Bharat, 41, as the Managing Director of the company. Subsequent to a consortium of Patanjali Ayurved Limited, Divya Yog Mandir Trust (through its business undertaking, Divya Pharmacy), Patanjali Parivahan Private Limited and Patanjali Gramudhyog acquiring Ruchi Soya in insolvency proceedings last year, the new management got right to appoint the board, the notice said. "The board of directors of the company at its meeting held on August 19, 2020 appointed Shri Ram Bharat as managing director of the company with effect from August 19, 2020 to December 17, 2022 and his designation was changed from whole-time director to managing director," it said. Now the shareholder approval is being sought for the appointment. Bharat will be paid a salary of Re 1 per annum, the notice said.



### ‘PSEs should strengthen decision making to improve performance’

Public sector enterprises (PSEs) should strengthen internal decision-making and project implementation capabilities for improved performance, SAIL Chairman Anil Kumar Chaudhary said on Friday.

Chaudhary, who is also the chairman of CII PSE Council, made the remarks while addressing a PSE Summit organised by the industry chamber. "He has emphasized on strengthening the cost competitiveness, internal decision making and the project implementation capabilities of the PSEs for their improved performance," a statement issued by SAIL quoted Chaudhary as saying. He also said there are ample opportunities for CPSEs to create a synergy among themselves to improve their performance and contribute towards Atmanirbhar Bharat, the statement added.



# Sri Lanka willing to meet its debt obligations: Govt

PNS ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka remains willing and able to meet all its debt obligations as it has done in the past, the government said on Saturday, a day after Fitch downgraded the country's sovereign credit rating to "CCC".

Fitch Ratings said on Friday it was downgrading Sri Lanka from "B-" to "CCC", barely above default, after the government's 2021 budget showed too steep revenue projections, following earlier tax cuts and a higher deficit for 2021 than 2020.

The ratings agency said the budget was lacking a credible fiscal consolidation strategy and provides only limited details on the potential revenue impact of some of the measures announced, raising

uncertainty about the government's planned reduction in government debt and budget deficit.

"The Government has repeatedly expressed its ability and willingness to meet all its debt obligations falling due in the period ahead," the finance ministry said in a statement.

The government wishes to reaffirm to foreign investors that have put faith in Sri Lanka continuously over the past several years that the country remains willing and able to meet its debt obligations, as it has done impeccably in the past, the statement said. It said the assessment had ignored several key proposals presented in the 2021 Budget regarding deficit financing in the period ahead.

### ‘65 per cent of domestic air travel back to pre virus level’

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Nearly 65 per cent of the domestic air travel has returned to the pre-COVID-19 level and now there is a need to evolve a strategy to bring back the tourism industry on its feet, Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola said on Saturday.

He was addressing a webinar on 'Aviation and Tourism-the Road Ahead' hosted by the Federation of Association of Indian Tourism & Hospitality.

Kharola also said in the times of COVID-19 air travel has become a preferred mode of travel for being a safe means of transportation.

"On the first day of resumption of domestic air services (May 25) there were 79,000 people who would travel and we were worried. But gradually it started improving," he said.

# Farmkart to raise Rs 90 cr from VCs for pan-India expansion

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Madhya Pradesh-based agritech startup Farmkart, which offers a wide range of agricultural products and services to farmers through its e-commerce platform, is planning to raise Rs 90 crore in Series A funding from venture capitalists for expansion across the country.

"At present we are functioning at 1,240 locations in Madhya Pradesh. We plan to begin our immediate expansion to 8,000 locations in Maharashtra, Gujarat, southern region and reach one lakh (locations) by December 2021, across the country in next one year. Initially, we had invested Rs 15 crore in this venture and are looking to raise Rs 90 crore in Series A funding through venture capitalists," Farmkart founder Atul Patidar told PTI.

Recently in one of the episodes of 'Mann Ki Baat', Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the efforts of Patidar to digitally connect farmers and deliver farming items to their doorsteps.



Farmkart's tech solutions are designed for non-tech savvy farmers providing them with fertilisers, pesticides, fungicides, seeds, farm equipment, among others at their doorsteps with no delivery cost. Besides, farmers can also rent modern farm equipment

from Farmkart's e-commerce platform.

Patidar said the company has tie-ups with top brands, both domestic as well as international, for its e-commerce platform. "We have tied-up with almost all major international and domestic brands for seeds, fertilisers, fungicides and pesticides. We have tie-ups for farm equipment and are looking to add more in this category," he added.

# NDTV shares: Sebi bars two promoters

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Regulator Sebi has barred NDTV promoters, Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy, from the securities market for two years and also directed them to disgorge illegal gains of more than Rs 16.97 crore for indulging in insider trading more than 12 years ago.

Besides, the watchdog has barred seven individuals and entities for insider trading in the shares of the company for a period varying from one to two years. Also, some of them have been asked to disgorge illegal gains made from trading in the shares when they were in possession of Unpublished Price Sensitive Information (UPSI).

The directions follow a probe conducted by the markets regulator between September 2006 and June 2008 wherein various violations of insider trading regulations were found.

The amount has to be paid jointly or severally by them



along with 6 per cent interest from April 17, 2008 till the date of actual payment.

All the entities have violated Prohibition of Insider Trading (PIT) Regulations, Sebi said in three separate orders passed late on Friday.

Sebi noted that Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy together made a gain of Rs 16.97 crore while indulging in insider trading in the shares of New Delhi Television Ltd (NDTV) while in possession of UPSI

relating to the proposed reorganisation of the company.

Prannoy Roy was the chairman and whole time director and Radhika Roy was the managing director during period under investigation and were part of the decision making chain that had led to crystallization of the UPSI.

Discussions pertaining to reorganisation of the company started on September 7, 2007 and the disclosure was made on April 16, 2008.

**The directions follow a probe by markets regulator between September 2006 and June 2008 wherein various violations of insider trading regulations were found**

Hence, September 7, 2007 to April 16, 2008 was UPSI period.

Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy sold shares on April 17, 2008, when the trading window for them was closed and made a profit of Rs 16,97,38,335.

By doing so, they violated PIT norms and also acted in contravention of NDTV's code of conduct for prevention of insider trading which prohibited them from trading at least till 24 hours after the information was disclosed to the stock exchanges.

# EPFO extends date to submit life certificate

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Retirement fund body EPFO has extended the deadline for submission of life certificates by pensioners till February 28, a move which would benefit over 35 lakh persons who could not submit the document by November due to coronavirus pandemic.

The pensioners who could not submit their life certificates till November 30 deadline, would get pension every month till February.

"In view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the vulnerability of elderly population to coronavirus, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has extended the time limit up to 28th February 2021 for submission of Life Certificate (Jeevan Pramaan Patra-JPP) in respect of the Pensioners drawing pension under EPS 1995 (Employees' Pension Scheme-1995) and whose

Life certificate is due in any month till February 28, 2021," a labour ministry statement said.

Presently, a pensioner can submit JPP anytime during the year up to 30th November, which is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue.

All such pensioners can submit life certificates till February 28, 2021.

During this extended period, pension will not be stopped in respect of 35 lakh pensioners who could not submit JPP during November 2020, the ministry added.

Multiple modes for submission of JPPs including 3.65 lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs), branches of pension disbursing banks, 1.36 lakh post offices, postal network of 1.90 lakh postmen and Grameen Dak Sevaks under the Department of Post can be availed by pensioners.

# ADB approves \$300 mn loan to cash-strapped Pakistan

PNS ■ ISLAMABAD

The Asian Development Bank has approved a USD 300 million policy-based loan to Pakistan to help promote macroeconomic stability in the cash-strapped country.

The announcement by the Philippines-headquartered lender came a week after Pakistan secured USD 800 million worth of debt freeze deals from 14 members of the G20. As of August this year, the country owes USD 25.4 billion to the group of 20 rich nations.

The USD 300 million loan would improve trade competitiveness and export diversification, said Hiranya Mukhopadhyay, Principal Public Management Specialist at the Asian Development Bank (ADB). "While COVID-19 hit



Pakistan at a critical point in its macroeconomic recovery, the government's ongoing efforts to ensure stability have started showing encouraging results this fiscal year," Mukhopadhyay said in a statement.

The ADB's programme will support Pakistan's efforts to improve its export competitiveness which was more important than ever given the impacts of the pandemic, he said, adding that it is expected

**Pakistan has been facing the dilemma of rise and fall in the export growth showing underperformance of its export industry. It was further compounded by the coronavirus. International financial institutions like the ADB provide help to address such issues and the latest loan facility was its manifestation**

to enable Pakistan in recovering current account deficit in a sustained manner as well as facilitate export diversification.

It will introduce important tariff- and tax-related policy reforms to help improve Pakistan's international competitiveness and further strengthen key institutions, including accreditation bodies, the Export-Import Bank of

Pakistan, and the Pakistan Single Window.

The bank said that several steps were also taken to introduce e-commerce, strengthen key institutions involved in facilitating trade, and enhance the export certification process.

The new financing falls under Subprogram 2 of the Trade and Competitiveness Programme.

Under the first phase, the ADB helped the government usher in key reforms, including reducing or abolishing tariffs and ad hoc duties on a large number of raw materials and intermediate goods.

Pakistan has been facing the dilemma of rise and fall in the export growth showing underperformance of its export industry. It was further compounded by the coronavirus. International financial institutions like the ADB provide help to address such issues and the latest loan facility was its manifestation.

Pakistan along with 76 other poor African countries had qualified for the G-20 debt relief initiative, announced in April this year for May-December 2020 period, to combat the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.





Amid soaring COVID-19 cases and deaths in the Capital, MUSBA HASHMI speaks with doctors and experts to bring you a report on why Delhi is struggling in navigating the third wave

# DELHI SURGE: ALL TO BLAME

On Thursday, the Delhi Government informed the High Court that it is considering lockdown, night curfew in order to curb the virus. The fact that Delhi is one of the worst-hit States obviously leave the Government with no second choice.

But, what has led Delhi to this troublesome zone? Is it irresponsible public behaviour, festooning of throats with masks to escape penalty? Or is it the decision to relax the lockdown in the face of crashing economy, joblessness and societal depression?

Whatever the reason, fatalities have rocketed. Alarming, experts fear this is just the tip of the iceberg.

With 5,000 fresh cases daily and deaths peaking to over a 100, in the Capital a whopping 6 lakh have been impacted by coronavirus infection.

"The increasing death toll is a matter of worry for everyone. No one specific reason can be attributed for this surge. The causes are diverse and need to be dealt with accordingly. The toll is proportionate to the infected cases. Due to the rising number of cases, the hospitals are overburdened, hence providing timely treatment to all the patients is a big challenge. This can be one of the reasons for the deaths," Dr Shiba Kalyan Biswal, Consultant, Pulmonary and Sleep Medicine, Narayana Hospital, Gurugram, tells you.

Another reason can be that although COVID is a respiratory disease, it affects the immune system and the blood vessels as well. Such conditions aggravate co-morbidities that a person may have. Hence, if a person is suffering from some underlying disease, he is more prone to suffer from a serious condition after he contracts COVID infection. Such patients are also unfortunately adding to the toll," he said.

The ongoing festive and wedding season has added to the danger.

"Many people attended gatherings and social meetings. This also added to the problem. Also the fall in temperature can propagate any flu or infection. Dense population is also another factor in big cities and often people fail to follow social distancing norms. The lockdown was lifted because of economic constraints but as a result, the careless attitude of people in public places is reflected. It is time people avoid stepping out if unnecessary," he said.

Hans Raj Hans, Member of Parliament, North-West Delhi, said that Government laxity along with several other factors has led to high number of cases in the Capital.

"Poor mask discipline, the decision to open all the markets, more than 50 people at weddings and other related functions, social gatherings during festivities, the deteriorating air quality index and rising respiratory disorders are reasons for the rise of COVID-19 in the National Capital. Besides, the casual approach of Delhiites is also one of the reasons for this rise. The Central Government is working with the State Government to control the situation in Delhi, but the residents should cooperate by taking all possible care. Without this cooperation, the situation will not abate anytime soon," Hans said.

It's been only nine days since the Delhi Government implemented a fine of ₹2,000 for not wearing a mask in public and within four days of the rule, the Delhi Police collected nearly ₹1.5 crore as challans. According to the data shared by the Delhi Police, a total 7,655 challans have been issued from November 20 to November 24. The figure, which then started to see a dip, is sufficient to explain how masks is not at all an option worth considering for Delhiites, who seemingly don't fear the deadly virus.

Varun Gupta, a social activist and environmentalist, agrees with Hans and says that Delhiites are extensively responsible for the current situation.

"To a great extent, Delhiites are responsible for the increase of COVID in the Capital. People should consider their mask as the only vaccine at present. During the festival time, what I analysed was that people almost forgot that the world is fighting a pandemic. The markets and some of the public places were crowded just like it used to be in the pre-COVID time. Adding to that, maximum people were not wearing masks or the same was and is below their nostrils. Such cases were seen in the metro too. Not only this, even vegetable sellers, shopkeepers, food stall owners, rickshaw man were seen without masks. Government, doctors, academics, social organisations, police, media and others keep telling peoples to take precautions, but people are living in oblivion. I would just say to everyone that there is still time to protect yourself," Gupta said.

Dr Shuchin Bajaj, Founder Director, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals, tells you that the intensity of the second and third wave of a disease is always much widespread and it is the time when people need to take more precautions.



Photos: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer



## STEPS TAKEN BY DELHI GOVERNMENT

- Challan of ₹2,000 for not wearing a mask in public
- Not more than 50 people allowed in marriages
- Aggressive testing. Daily RT-PCR tests limit has been increased to 37,200
- Atleast 205 ICU beds added in hospitals run by the Central and Delhi Governments
- 120 ventilators arrived from Bharat Electronics Limited, Bangalore, given to hospitals

"Historically, the intensity of second and third waves are always much widespread in case of any pandemic. People are now tired of the guidelines and are coming out in large numbers this leads to a much extensive viral load and more chances of getting exposed to the virus. If you remember, in the beginning of the pandemic the deaths of doctors were much higher because they had the higher viral load and they didn't know much about the virus. They didn't know the exact way of donning and doffing the PPE kits. But doctors have learnt rapidly and are following all the precautions. But the general public doesn't know the etiquette of wearing a mask. They keep taking it off just to speak and never shy away from touching the outer surface of the mask. So doing all these things proves to be very dangerous especially in crowded settings like markets and offices," he said.

He tells you that Delhi is now open to people accessing healthcare from the nearby cities which was not the case earlier. "People were not allowed to cross State boundaries during the first wave. Usually people come to Delhi when their case is critical and that's why the mortality in Delhi is higher," Bajaj added.

Bajaj feels that the guidelines of marriages should have been made permanent instead. "I feel that the limited crowd in weddings help us as a community also. It prevents poor people from getting exploited and also curtails the unnecessary expenditure. Undoubtedly, during COVID it prevents marriages from acting as super spreaders of infection," he said.

He points out that aggressive testing is necessary in any pandemic. "We can't keep chasing the virus all the time. We have to test and identify the people upfront those who are symptomatic. That's the reason South Korea got a handle on the pandemic very quickly because of the massive aggressive testing policy that they implemented," Bajaj said.

Even when Maharashtra and other States of India saw a surge in cases, Delhi managed to keep the case count as low as 2,000. Dr Sandeep Nayar, Senior Director, Centre of Chest and Respiratory Disease, BLK Super Speciality Hospital, tells you why things have gotten worse now.

"There are many factors, one of which is overcrowding. Now that all the markets are opened, people are out there and not following any social distancing norms or proper hygiene. If you see the scenario outside, people are climbing on each other. Not even 10 per cent of the people are wearing their mask properly. It is something that has troubled us. It goes without saying that this has contributed in the rising cases," Nayar explains.

The second reason is that because of the pollution the symptoms are getting worse. Earlier patients with mild symptoms were opting for home quarantine, but now COVID along with pollution is resulting in worsening of the symptoms and patients are rushing towards the hospital.

He believes that the high cases are not only a result of aggressive testing in the State. "States like UP have also increased the testing rate. Our positivity rate has gone up to 13 per cent. Aggressive testing is happening but then about 25 days back, the occupancy had come down to 70-80 per cent. Now things have gone from bad to worse and we had to add more beds. It is not only because people have tested positive, but because they are in a bad shape and have to be rushed to the hospital," Nayar tells you.

He adds the increasing mortality rate in Delhi can be attributed to the severity of the COVID-19 symptoms. "We are witnessing about 100 deaths

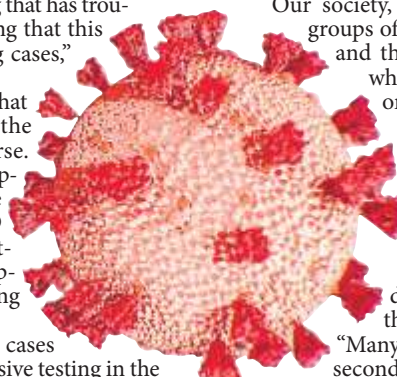
everyday. This is not acceptable by any means. The severity of symptoms have increased and people are not getting beds easily. The patient is moving from one hospital to another in search of a bed, this too and fro will surely make their symptoms worse. We are worried about this situation," he said.

The new rules implemented by the Delhi Government should help in curbing the cases. "These regulations should help. Initially, there were a limit of only 50 people in marriages. But then they removed it and now they have come back to it again. They have realised their mistake," he said.

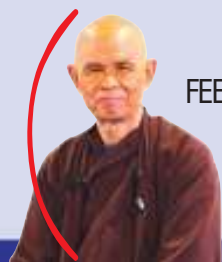
Our society, Nayar says, is divided in two groups of people. One, who wears masks and the others who don't. "The ones who wear masks think that the later ones are fools and vice versa. They think that just because of one disease they will not wear a mask. It is only when they suffer from it they realise its severity. It is just that they learn the hard way," he said.

When can Delhi expect a decrease in the cases, Nayar says, that we can only hope for it. "Many European countries went for a second lockdown. Who knows we too have to take some stern steps. I am not saying we should go for a lockdown, it is purely the Government's call. But some strict steps should be taken to tackle this situation. Though, the Government has recently revised some rules, they have to be very strict and make sure that they are also implementing it. Just announcing won't make a difference," he said.

Lastly, he has a request to make to the general public. "Masks are a must. Take care of yourselves. Keep your body hydrated. Eat fresh fruits and vegetables. Avoid junk food," he said.







FEELINGS COME AND GO LIKE CLOUDS  
IN A WINDY SKY. CONSCIOUS  
BREATHING IS MY ANCHOR  
— THICH NHAT HANH



**YOUR  
WEEK  
AHEAD**

MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

This week you card foresees healing and rejuvenation. Those suffering from an injury or other physical ailments will find quick recovery. There are times in our lives when we must accept change and allow things to come to a natural end. Every negative note has its positive end too. On the career front, a comeback of your old and trusted employee who was supposed to be the backbone of your profession is indicated. Venues will open for those who wish to expand their business or start a new venture. Time spent on the academic pursuits will pay good results now. On the relationship front, love is difficult and confusing this week. Sticking to old beliefs may spoil your relations. It is advised to avoid the intervention of the third party.

**Lucky number** 19  
**Lucky colour** Sky Blue  
**Lucky day** Friday



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

Those putting on weight must put their health on priority. You will finally understand the value of money and good health, and work out a plan to be in harmony with nature to maintain good health. Focus on walking, breathing and prayers for mental and physical healing. On the career front, unrelated issues would occupy mind space. You either have little time or are feeling lethargic about work. Hard work and efforts put in the last week are not so rewarding. This is a temporary phase. On the personal front, something special is likely to be celebrated this week. You feel emotionally contended and find a healthy relationship. You have full faith in your partner. This is the time when mutual understanding between the two is great and strengthening of relationship is indicated.

**Lucky number** 13  
**Lucky colour** Blue  
**Lucky day** Thursday



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

You will feel healthy and free and may experience a change of perspective. Negativity replaces optimism. New possibilities are foreseen. You will learn the importance of solving your problems with rational and thorough thinking. This is also a time to utilise your creative energies. Professionally, a promotion is indicated which will make you confident and secure. You are self-disciplined and energetic. Those in business, your ideas and views are being respected and followed. This is the time when your intelligence, wisdom and experience will pay you rich dividends. On the personal front, your relationship will grow. You are romantic and love is in the air. Other relationships too are nurturing, and meaningful in your life.

**Lucky number** 9  
**Lucky colour** Green  
**Lucky day** Friday



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week your inner and outer conflicts may bring upon negative effects to your healthy lifestyle and routine. Challenges are foreseen on the career front. This is a perfect time to clear the fog. This is also a good time to set your goals and targets and work towards them in the system. The win will come after a struggle. Your great insight may work in your favour. A break-through success is on the cards. On the relationship front, you will follow tradition instead of your heart. The conventions and traditions are overpowering you and you will try and seek answers from a *guru* or a senior person with regard to your emotions. This week you may be more inclined spiritually and worldly pleasures, love and emotions would take a back seat.

**Lucky number** 10  
**Lucky colour** Brown  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

There is a balance between mind, body and soul this week. You will be energetic, enthusiastic and full of life. Your farsightedness will pay you rich dividends. This is the time to enjoy good food and live a healthy life, both mentally and physically. On the career front, new job offers and opportunities in business will help you broaden your horizon. If expansion in the business is the plan, this is the right time. Go for it! Good finances, income and gains through the ancestral property are indicated. On the relationship front, those contemplating marriage may start browsing the market for a suitable bride or groom. Guard against temptations and addictions. A step towards spirituality may prove to be the saviour.

**Lucky number** 3  
**Lucky colour** Peach  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you may enjoy the nature's bounty and blessings of the Almighty. Cure of a very old or prolonged illness is on the cards. Those in urgent need of motivation and inspiration to lead a healthy and meaningful life will find a mentor. You feel empowered and embark on a new journey which is progressive and makes you feel comfortable. On the work front, this is the time to keep counting the blessings. You may be busy organising an auspicious ceremony at home/office. The career will boom and so will be your interaction with the outside world. On the personal front, confusion, misunderstanding with the partner is likely. You need to guard yourself against selfish motives, aggression and any haste decisions in this period. Patience is the key.

**Lucky number** 4  
**Lucky colour** Red  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

This week you will possess the power and energy to create a fresh lifecycle for yourself. You will have control over your desires and temptations that may harm your health. You realise the importance of the balancing factor in your life and your body is in tune with the five elements of nature. On the career front, you may have experienced setbacks that make you suspicious of the others. The turning point will come when you can leave the past behind you and develop a more open mind about the future. This is the time to think positive and move ahead. On the personal front, confrontation is likely between lovers. Do not let emotion get in the way. Rather, use fact and logic to make your decisions.

**Lucky number** 6  
**Lucky colour** Pink  
**Lucky day** Friday



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week cards indicate excessive fear, phobia, and worry. Mental tension will remain, and this may reflect on your health. Headache, insomnia, and sleeplessness may cause unrest. Be careful of cold, cough and seasonal ailments too. This is the time to meditate, join yoga and take a break from the hectic schedule. On the career front, a little indiscretion may put your reputation in the firing line so be careful. At the work area, you may go unnoticed and feel neglected. This may cause tension and hamper your growth. Do not run away from responsibilities and commitments. Do not disclose your working plans till you accomplish them. On the personal front, your partner will be filled with an abundance of energy and enthusiasm while you feel demoralised, or hold low self-esteem.

**Lucky number** 12  
**Lucky colour** Golden  
**Lucky day** Sunday



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week your satisfaction and contentment will play an important role for you to be in good health. You will enjoy worldly pleasures and relax. 'All is well' feeling gives you cool mind, contentment, positive aura and a glow on the face. On the work front, there is generosity in your temperament and ability to convince others with your communication. You care for the emotional wellbeing of others and respect your colleagues and juniors. They follow you, admire you, and respect your magnanimity. On the relationship front, there is love, fun and entertainment. You spend time together and present an expensive gift to your beloved and partner. Time is right to bring your romantic relationships out in the open, the family will accept your choice.

**Lucky number** 18  
**Lucky colour** Orange  
**Lucky day** Saturday



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

This week you will adopt a moderate approach to life and be true to your commitments. You have understood that you need a routine and a careful regime if you want to achieve your goals. It is not necessarily a very interesting or exciting period. You are not hesitant to spend money in a gym, meditation, following nutritive diets etc to be in good health and fitness. These efforts will pay you well. On the work front, you will feel stability in your profession. Use experience and skills to achieve your desired goals. Advice from a senior person in job/business will be very helpful. On the personal front, you may get too emotional or possessive in your relationship, and that may become the cause of irritation and separation. You will be compassionate towards those dear to you.

**Lucky number** 21  
**Lucky colour** Magenta  
**Lucky day** Wednesday



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

In keeping with the ongoing festive spirit, you will be active and vibrant. Self-knowledge and mastery are the keys to success. You possess the inner light and consciousness, and sheer faith and experience from the past would help you become self-reliant. Through meditation, you are on the path to attain spiritual fulfilment and share this light with others. On the professional front, your wisdom and leadership will help you establish a niche for yourself. Your plans are now well underway and you are beginning to consider more opportunities to expand your current plans. On the personal front, you will find your relationships growing and developing to a satisfactory level. There is faith, understanding with each other.

**Lucky number** 2  
**Lucky colour** Indigo  
**Lucky day** Tuesday



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

Fatigue may take a toll this week. Issues — domestic or professional — will leave you disturbed. Restlessness or problem related to Blood Pressure may bother. Consult a doctor. You may require proper sleep and support of near and dear ones. A positive approach will help put life into you. On the career front, there is nothing new happening. Things are moving as usual. Fear of stagnating career or profession may bother you. This is a temporary phase. As the week progresses, you will find the positive results. With your wisdom and experience, you keep moving ahead and achieve the desired results. On the relationship front, you will enjoy the quiet powers inherent in you. You will be able to influence your partner by diplomatic conversation.

**Lucky number** 11  
**Lucky colour** White  
**Lucky day** Monday

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**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

# Mind balance is the key

Someone concerned about not being able to contain his wavering mind and habit tendencies, despite serious efforts towards that end, connected with me for necessary guidance. "Sir, for almost a decade now, I have been religiously pursuing Yoga-*asana* and meditation as guided by two acclaimed teachers in the field. So far, I have been able to just identify my fault lines. I have been trying to address them, with no sign of tangible success in immediate future. My monkey like mind keeps randomly flirting with varying thoughts and ideas, and so I fail to do justice to my priority preferences. I don't know how to go about further. Kindly guide."

"Well, the purpose of spirituality is to understand the living realities of life, which when absorbed in the deep realms of mind help in making reasoned choices in life and conduct with ease and comfort. What is the fun in pursuing spiritual process, if it has not helped reform your thought process?" I asked. "Remember, all actions on your part, be it pursuing spiritual process or targeting material desires are conducted by mind. Better, give me an account of how you are pursuing the process so that the

missing link in the process could be figured out," I said. Looking at the account he shared, it appears that he keeps chanting *mantra* with focus on his energy centres. So, he has been mechanically working on energy plane. He, however, has cared the least to work upon his thought process. He has been reading many books written by realised people for necessary guidance, which makes him academically aware. But his mind, intensely engaged in wanton thoughts that don't allow him the mind-space and time necessary to absorb the educative inputs, but for which it will not find reflection in his conduct.

Here I recall the saying of a realised spiritual master: "You may enjoy the grace of the God, the holy men and teachers. But if you lack the grace of mind, you may go to rack and ruins". That makes it incumbent upon us to work upon our mind-state before pursuing spiritual process, otherwise it will not offer desired result. It may not be out of place to mention that there are five states of mind — Darkening, Scattering, Gathering up, One pointed and Concentrated. Ignorant minds are the darkening type. Minds flirting with



random thoughts are the scattering type. Those who realise that only a focused mind can lead to success, try to contain their wavering mind, which comes under gathering up type. As you graduate in the process further, you may become one pointed. They still remain subject to pushes and pulls. But relatively they are able to remain focused to their priority preferences for long. Those who are able to effortlessly remain focused for long is the call of a concentrated mind.

Those who wish to evolve spiritually, and even grow materially, preparatory to that, at least they should try to graduate to the stage of one pointedness, if not concentrated. I then suggested him to follow the three stage meditation process as suggested in my book titled: "*God or No God: Awareness enriches life*".

The man then asked: "Sir, I will purchase your book and follow the method you have suggested. But tell me, is my present mental predicament reflected in my chart? Do I have the potential to evolve spiritually?"

Look at the astrological pointers. You are born in an airy sign Libra with fiery planet Mars conjunct headless *Ketu* there in the *lagna*. Mars is also adversely

placed with respect to the two luminaries — the Sun and Moon. Moon is ill-disposed to Venus, which makes you too touchy and sensitive. You may get overexercised even on trivial issues and blow it out of proportion as would fiery Mars flaring up the air element mean. Read together with the implications of the ill-disposed luminaries, it speaks of a temperamental, moody, irritable, impulsive, and rash character, having a disoriented mind.

Now coming to spiritual potential, benevolent Jupiter over the head in the birth chart speaks high of your spiritual quotient. Seen at subtle level, *lagna* sub-lord *Rahu*, happens to be the lord of 5th cusp identified with merits accrued from the past. 9th sub-lord identified translation of acquired merits into fruits happens to be Moon, which occupies the sub-lordship of *Rahu*. All put together indicates seed of spiritually deeply ingrained in your mind. Positioning of Moon, however, calls for concerted efforts to organise your mind before expecting the desired results.

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Connect with him at Tel: 91-11-9818037273/9871037272 Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com





# the pioneer agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

## Pebbles of a dead sea

Few know that Goa has a past that dates back to the saga of Parshuram in Hindu mythology and India's pre-Islamic era

10



11

## Only for kiddies

If an adult is watching this, it will be difficult to get past the strange language the elves speak or the near bizarreness...

You go through spells where you feel that maybe you're too sensitive for this world. I certainly felt that  
— Winona Ryder



As the world got busy battling the effects and impact of the virus, hackers saw this as an opportunity to exploit new vulnerabilities that emerged from a large numbers working from home, writes **AJAY SINGH**, as he explains various cyber risks faced by individuals and groups and suggests ways to tackle them

The Covid-19 pandemic has led to lockdowns across the world and made working from home an inevitable necessity. While this allows businesses to remain operational, it has exposed organisations to several new risks, particularly for those who fail to take the proper precautions. Even as the world got busy battling the effects and impact of the virus, hackers saw this as an opportunity to exploit new vulnerabilities that emerged from a large work force working from home.

Various reports around the world indicate a sharp increase in cybercrime even as Covid-19 has caused major disruptions and forced changes in the way we work. During this crisis, there has been a sudden surge in cybercrime in many countries with cybercriminals preying on new factors and vulnerabilities related to information systems that have come into play.

Scams, phishing websites, maps loaded with malware, and spam messages linked to the Coronavirus have been reported the world over. Dominic Raab, the British Foreign Secretary observed in early May that 'There will always be some who seek to exploit a crisis for their own criminal and hostile ends. We know that cyber criminals, and other malicious groups are targeting individuals, businesses, and other organisations by deploying Covid-19 related scams and phishing emails.' Since then cyber threats and attacks have only increased.

The lockdowns have not only made us work from home, but also shop-from-home, study-from-home, bank-from-home, attend meetings from home and so on. Studies have also shown a dramatic increase in the amount of time people are spending on-line. Fortunately, technologies like video conferencing, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), VPN (Virtual Private Network), and collaborative platforms exist today that enable working from home. However, the exposure to cyber risk has grown exponentially and rather suddenly and existing security standards have been compromised. Cybercriminals have been quick to discover that employees working from home have weaker cybersecurity than when they operate from their offices. They have exploited new weaknesses in the various technologies used and have incessantly launched attacks.

Given that we are spending (and will continue to spend) a major part of our lives on-line, a comprehensive assessment of the cyber risks that we are exposed to as individuals, families, and businesses, is key to survive and thrive.

A large number of organisations have already announced that some office-based employees will be working from home in some form for the foreseeable future and perhaps even permanently. This shift to a work from home environment which initially was

considered as a temporary solution may become a regular practice. This necessitates a complete rethink on cyber risks and involves moving away from traditional cybersecurity approaches. Any policies and protocols related to cybersecurity which were introduced when companies switched to work-from-home may have served them in the short-term, but when it comes to long-term measures, a thorough re-evaluation needs to be conducted. With the easing of lockdown restrictions, when employees will no longer be confined to working from home, the larger questions of dealing with cyber risks of working-from-anywhere will become more relevant. The top of the cybersecurity agenda for individuals, businesses, and governments in the aftermath of coronavirus should therefore be to mitigate cyber risks and build a safer and more resilient cyber environment.

### INDIVIDUALS AND CYBER RISKS

We have all been a target of cyber-attacks in some form or the other, for instance phishing attacks, phone calls or SMSs from cybercriminals, among others. They are after your personal data, passwords, social ids, bank information and social contacts... basically anything that can either fetch them a price for your data or can help them launch bigger attacks. Escaping a cyber-attack means that you have been vigilant, prepared or simply lucky enough to avoid one.

There are fortunately many things we can do as individuals to make our online existence safer while working from home or for that matter working from anywhere. Before looking at what we can do, consider the findings of the latest Norton Cyber Security Insights Report which suggests that:

- 30% of people cannot detect a phishing attack and another 13 percent cannot tell the difference between a real message and a phishing email. This implies that four in 10 are vulnerable.
  - Eighty-six percent of people said they may have been a target of a phishing incident.
  - 70% of consumers wish that their home Wi-Fi network could be made more secure. However, a mere 27% consider it likely that their home Wi-Fi network could be susceptible to attack.
- This goes to show that cyber threats are greatly enhanced by the fact people are largely unaware of the cyber risks that they have to contend with and the counter measures they must adopt to mitigate the risks. Some of the basic things that contribute to maintain better cyber hygiene while working from home are:
- Instead of using personal devices, company-provided computers and laptops should be used
  - A VPN software can be utilised to connect the organisation network
  - Using different devices for work and leisure



THE LOCKDOWNS HAVE NOT ONLY MADE US WORK FROM HOME, BUT ALSO SHOP-FROM-HOME, STUDY-FROM-HOME, BANK-FROM-HOME, ATTEND MEETINGS FROM HOME AND SO ON. STUDIES HAVE ALSO SHOWN A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF TIME PEOPLE ARE SPENDING ON-LINE. FORTUNATELY, TECHNOLOGIES LIKE VIDEO CONFERENCING, BYOD (BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE), VPN (VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK), AND COLLABORATIVE PLATFORMS EXIST TODAY THAT ENABLE WORKING FROM HOME. HOWEVER, THE EXPOSURE TO CYBER RISK HAS GROWN EXPONENTIALLY

- Stopping remote access unless it is a necessity
- Default passwords should be changed
- Devices and online accounts should have strong passwords. For both personal and business accounts multi-factor authentication wherever available, should be utilised
- Meeting links should strictly not be shared publicly or through social media platforms
- Trusted apps or those recommended by one's employer should be used for work involving collaboration
- Regularly updating operating systems, antiviruses and other applications on computers and other devices
- Home Wi-Fi and admin passwords should be changed regularly, while avoiding open/free Wi-Fi networks
- Cyber-hygiene guidelines as laid out by one's employer should be strictly followed

### ORGANISATIONS AND CYBER RISKS

Today, almost all businesses regardless of the industry they are in and their size are vulnerable to cyber-attacks which can happen at any time, without warning. This is true across sectors and geographies. The pandemic has only accelerated the need to implement comprehensive cybersecurity programs after a thorough assessment of existing, new, and emerging cyber risks. The concept of a cyber 'perimeter' which was once confined to the walls of an organisation or a data centre has completely eroded. Security professionals have been forced to abandon the traditional castle-and-moat strategy used so effectively in the past due to the arrival of cloud computing and the use of portable devices by organisations coupled with the integration of personal devices into organisational systems. The cyber perimeter has interminably moved from the walls of the enterprise to what is today a flexible and extended virtual perimeter. This calls for a reassessment of cyber risks and requirements across the following four dimensions:

- Technology dimension:** securing IT systems, applications, networks, data, and devices
- People:** employees and others who are users and have access an organisation's system
- Policies, Procedures and Processes** that are used to run business operations
- Laws, regulations, and compliance**

In the near future as the pandemic continues, there are a few types of cyber-threats companies must specifically be prepared for and safeguard against:

**Ransomware:** Ransomware is a type of malware that is used to deny access to a computer system or data by encrypting the information and keeping it hostage until the ransom is paid. There has been an alarming rise

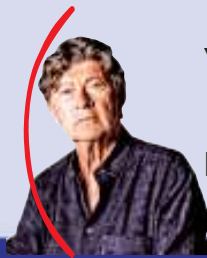
in Ransomware attacks in recent months. The deployment methods include socially engineered emails packed with malware, or a weblink that triggers a drive-by download. Some of the ways to protect your systems from Ransomware attacks include changing default passwords at all access points, training employees in identifying suspicious email links, keeping air-gapped up-to-date data back-ups, prohibiting the use of USB drives, and updating all operating systems and software in time.

**Phishing:** This is a type of social engineering attack where hackers attempt to steal login credentials such as passwords or deceive people in multiple ways into installing malware. Employee training to recognise phishing emails and the use of multi-factor authentication can help to prevent or mitigate damage from a cyber-attack which may result from a phishing exploit.

**Business email compromise:** During this pandemic, a large number of cases of business email compromise instances have been reported. Here, cybercriminals spoof emails (usually making them look like they are from legitimate sources) to redirect a payment intended for one of the company's suppliers to their own bank accounts. In a work from home scenario, where employees are not in front of each other to seek clarifications, these kinds of cyber-attacks are on the rise. Preventing such attacks calls for a high degree of vigilance and situational awareness among employees (especially those processing payments). Employees must be advised to be careful and alert to such attempts and double check before they initiate action. Organisations must also implement additional controls to prevent any mistakes in this regard.

**Bring Your Own Device (BYOD):** The use of personal devices like phones, laptops and tablets for office work has become common nowadays. As employees switched to working from home, there are many who also started to use their home devices for day to day work. While companies may have policies for onboarding these devices into the corporate network, there is often laxity and carelessness in observing the protocols. More so, during the pandemic. The absence of specific organisational cybersecurity protocols makes them a cyber risk. If any of these devices are compromised, they can provide hackers with an opening into a corporate's network and data which can be accessed and exploited. If employees continue to work from home and rely on personal devices for the foreseeable future, then a more robust protocol must be established which mandates the installation and updating of security software on personal devices that are used for office work.

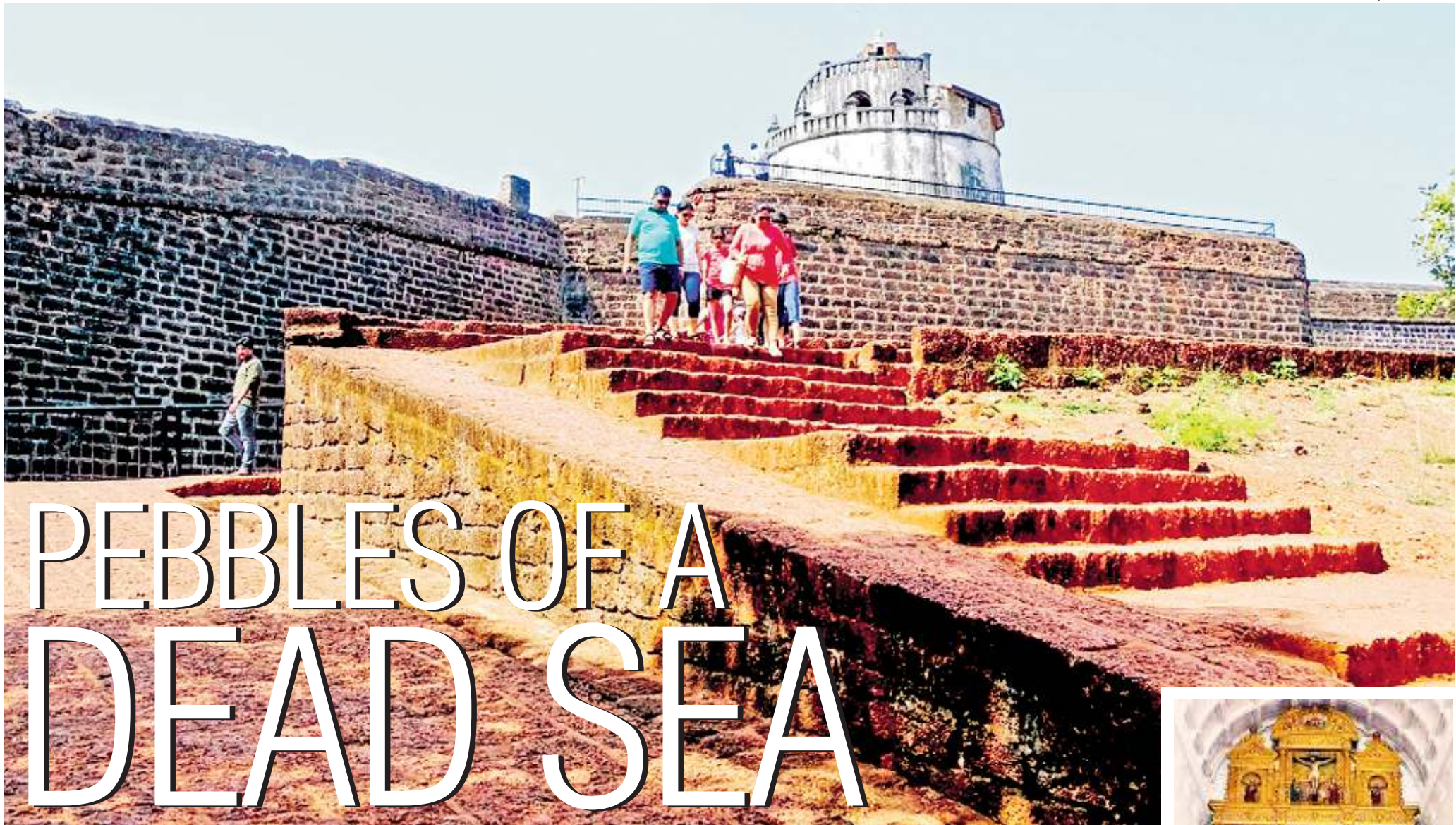




YOU DON'T STUMBLE UPON  
YOUR HERITAGE. IT'S  
THERE, JUST WAITING TO  
BE EXPLORED AND SHARED  
— ROBBIE ROBERTSON

Photos: Worrel Kumar Bain and Reynold Machado

Goa and Portuguese colonisation of India are almost synonymous. Few know that Goa has a past that dates back to the saga of Parshuram in Hindu mythology and India's pre-Islamic era, writes SOMEN SENGUPTA. UNESCO World Heritage Week was recently celebrated in India from November 19 to November 25



# PEBBLES OF A DEAD SEA

Nestled between the Western Ghats and Sahayadri Hills, and watered by two beautiful rivers named Mandovi and Zuari, this land was long isolated from the Indians. It was isolated not because of any physical feature or inaccessibility, but for its distinctive history and heritage that was seemingly "foreign" for British-ruled Indians. Goa, the coastal territory of Konkani heartland, was always a hidden pearl and a prized colonial nest for Portugal, a country that traded and ruled at many parts of the globe for several centuries.

Goa and Portuguese colonisation of India are almost synonymous. Few know Goa has a past that dates back to the saga of Parshuram in Hindu mythology and India's pre-Islamic era.

Hindu mythology says that this land was created from sea by Parashuram the 6th incarnation of Vishnu. Parashuram, according to mythology, excavated this surface from sea with his arrow and gifted it to the Brahmins. In the ancient times, it was known as Govapuri and later Gomantak.

In 3rd century BC, it was a part of Maurya Empire and after that till the end of 750 AD almost all Hindu dynasties of Western India like Satavahanas, Chalukya and Rashtrakuta ruled this land. It fell into the hands of Muslims in 1312 and again in 1370, Hindu king of Vijaynagar conquered it. Hindu rule ended in 1470 when Adil Shah of Bijapur gained Goa.

This was the time when the fragrance of Goa's exotic spices began to attract the Portuguese, who had already arrived in Kerala in 1498, like a magnet. In 1510, 12 years after Vasco Da Gama arrived in Kerala as a trader, another Portuguese named Alfonso De Albuquerque showed his military might and became the ruler of Goa.

Soon after, they took over Diu in 1534 and Daman in 1559. A large part of Bengal was already under the Portuguese and with the new territory, they cemented a foundation of India's Portuguese colonisation. This prevailed till 1961, following which India reclaimed it after a soft military operation.

The conquest of Goa was perhaps the beginning of Portuguese dream to imprint their colonial stamp upon India. As a tyrannical race they soon got into conflict with local Indians, resulting in demolition of temples and forceful religious conversions. This was also the time when they tried to stop the practice of *sati* cult but failed. Soon the need was felt to protect Goa from other European powers, like British and Dutch East India Company, and even from the Maratha warrior, Shivaji, who attacked the Portuguese of Goa.

The need for military competence pushed the Portuguese to go for massive fortification. They got direct sup-

port from Lisbon to expand their activities in India, such as expansion of Christianity, through the missionaries landing from Europe. Soon there was a visible change in the entire demography of Goa and tangible changes in architecture, language, food, dress, music and sports Goa came about. Goa gradually became a unique place within India.

This little Portugal of India gradually boomed in its own style and pace. Majestic churches, forts, printing press and above all a legend named "St Francis Xavier" turned Goa into an unparalleled place to which no other Portuguese colonies of India (be it those in Bengal or Gujarat) came a close match.

Towering among the past relic of that fascinating time is Fort Aguada that was built from 1609 to 1612 and still stands a living testimony at north Goa. This is one of the few forts of India, that was never conquered by enemies.

Built in sturdy brown laterite stone for the sake of combating the British, Dutch and Marathas, this is perhaps the best sample of Portuguese military architecture in India. *Aguada* means water, and this fort once had several sweet water streams flowing inside it, offering a great provision of drinking water both for its inhabitants and sailing ships that used to anchor near it. The fort strategically faces Candolim beach near river Mandovi. The upper part of the fort was used as water station and fort where as the lower part was used to berth Portuguese war ships. The huge water reservoir is assumed to store not less than 23,76,000 gallons of water.

The 1.3 metre thick fortification wall skirts the seashore and ascends the edge of bare rocky island. The massive grand stand of Fort Aguada once had 79 canons in place. A 13 mt high light house built in 1864 is the most iconic landmark of the fort. It o f t e n

THIS LITTLE PORTUGAL OF INDIA GRADUALLY BOOMED IN ITS OWN STYLE AND PACE. MAJESTIC CHURCHES, FORTS, PRINTING PRESS AND ABOVE ALL, A LEGEND NAMED "ST FRANCIS XAVIER" TURNED GOA INTO AN UNPARALLELED PLACE TO WHICH NO OTHER PORTUGUESE COLONIES OF INDIA (BE IT THOSE IN BENGAL OR GUJARAT) CAME A CLOSE MATCH



appears in many movies. St Lawrence church built in 1630 is situated inside the fort.

Though a large part of the fort is now dilapidated and submerged in water, its remains give enough idea of typical Portuguese style of fortification. Its well planned moats, gunpowder room, bastions, light house and escape passage all are still visible and very clearly mirror mystic timeline of the history.

Goa witnessed a silent revolution when India's first printing press was set up there, though accidentally. It is interesting to note that the first book printed in India was not in Bombay or Bengal Presidency, where historically almost all modern wonders landed from Europe.

It was in September 1556 when a printing press machine, which was originally meant to be delivered at Abyssinia or Ethiopia, arrived in Goa and placed in St Paul's college. From that machine, for the first time, a Spanish technologist named Juan De Bustamante printed a book of Theology named *Conclusions Philosophic*.

This machine was actually shipped from Portugal to Abyssinia of Africa. When the ship anchored at Goa on its way to Abyssinia, the relations between the two countries had declined as the king of Abyssinia detested the fact that Christian missionary had come to his country. So the machine was abandoned at Goa and it was sheer luck that India, as the first country of Asia, got to see the magic of printing machine. Unfortunately, after 1660, the machine went traceless. Today, a printing museum in Goa tells the story without showing any tangible relics.

Portuguese touch is palpable in every corner of old Goa, especially in its massive churches and cathedrals. Two most significant of those are Se Cathedral de Santa Catarina and Basilica de Bom Jesus. Both are UNESCO world heritage monuments and both are filled with stories of exciting history of Portuguese conquest of Goa and its religious history.

Se Cathedral is perhaps the most celebrated religious building of Goa. This is the largest church of India and even bigger than any in Portugal.

A classical example of Gothic Portuguese Manueline style of architec-



ture, this massive church of 250 ft in length and 187 ft wide was built between 1562 to 1619 during the golden era of Portuguese.

Dedicated to the feast of St Catherine of Alexandria, it was built to commemorate the victory of Portuguese over Muslims in 1510. The church exterior bears a Tuscan touch while the interiors are much of Corinthian. Its extraordinary Iberian façade, colourful mosaic floors, typical European ceiling and exotic wood carvings, all put together, create an outstanding piece of European architecture which is matchless on many counts. The laterite plinth and lime plaster of the church have survived the test of time.

Earlier, the church had two towers. One of which was grounded in 1776. The church has a bell called the Golden bell and a chapel known as Cross of Miracles. It is believed that in 1619, the vision of Christ had fallen there. This legend attracts a huge crowd all across the globe. It is the Cathedral of Arch Bishop of Goa. A convent adjacent to it houses a small yet good archaeological museum.

If Se Cathedral is famous for Cross of Miracle then Basilica de Bom Jesus (a smaller monument) is a bigger crowd puller as it holds the legend of St Francis Xavier, the man who is considered the "greatest figure in Asia after St Thomas the Apostle".

Goa's emergence as one of the holiest place in the Christian world is largely because of its association with a holy relic



of a man who died in 1552 in China.

Born in Spain and sent to India in 1542 by both the King of Portugal and Pope the third, Francis Xavier, spent 10 years in Goa serving leprosy cursed people and spreading the message of Christ. From 1510 to 1540, when Portuguese brutality over Indian masses was at its apex, he landed there as an apostle of peace and first gained confidence of local people by serving them. It was he who attracted a huge mass to Christianity that finally changed Goa to a very different demographic marquee in India.

After his death in China, his body which was still intact after many months of his demise, was brought back to Goa on March 14, 1554 and kept in a casket gifted by Queen of Portugal Maria Sophia in 1560 at Basilica de Bom Jesus. The relic is placed on the right wall of the church and can be seen from a distance.

This attracts thousands of pilgrims across the world. Every 10 years the casket is taken down and people are allowed to get a closer look of the relic.

Over a period of time, however, several distortions have taken place. One finger of its feet was vandalised by a lady in 1554 and the right hand of the body was sent to Vatican in 1914, as demanded by Pope himself. This was a year after Xavier was crowned as Saint.

Basilica De Bom Jesus is a gem of architecture and perhaps, the most famous Portuguese footprint in Goa. Its bare exterior, made of brown laterite, offers an irresistible charm to mingle with history. Built between 1594 and 1605 in late Rene structure, it blends Doric, Ionic, Roman and Corinthian style of architecture. The façade contains Jesuit motif embalm "HIS" an abbreviation of Latin "*Iesus Hominum Salvator*" meaning "Jesus. Saviour of Men". The monument enshrines statue of St Ignatius Loyala and infant Jesus.

Cathedral, fort, lighthouse and old colonial buildings are now open to public and Government alike. The general panorama of old Goa runs like a motion picture visualising a saga much different from India's general history. Even though Portuguese are long gone the profound footprints are alive in every edifice of Parashuram's land.

FROM PAGE 1

## Working From Home? Beware of that cyber attack

**F**ocussing on the softer aspects of cybersecurity: Thus far, discussions around cyber security have largely focused on IT infrastructure, and the risks that software and hardware can pose to businesses. However, the pervasiveness of cyber threats like Ransomware, stealing of passwords, social engineering attacks like phishing

and Business Email, Compromise among others are forcing businesses to consider the softer and less tangible aspects of cyber security such as awareness, training and a security first culture. A heightened level of situational awareness in the context of responsible online behaviour, maintaining basic cybersecurity standards and

training is also necessary to ensure both new and existing employees are well versed in cyber risks.

### GOVERNMENT AND CYBER RISKS

Governments around the world have taken note of the alarming rise in cybercrime in recent months which coincide with the spread of the pandemic.

Indian citizens, commercial and legal entities faced nearly seven lakh cyber-attacks till August in the current year according to Government data. Recognising the rapidly increasing cyber risks, the Government of India issued guidelines for Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) relating to their key roles and responsibilities for securing

applications/infrastructure and compliance. All Ministries/ Departments of the Central Government, State Governments (and their organisations) and all critical sectors are implementing a 'Cyber Crisis Management Plan for countering cyber-attacks and cyber terrorism'. Mumbai suffered a major power outage on October 12 which lasted several hours.

Today, authorities are investigating whether this was a cyber-attack.

Cyber risk is real, and it is potent. For all digital citizens and entities, it is a reality that will outlast the pandemic. The specific cybersecurity security challenges across industry sectors, governmental systems, public utilities are wide ranging. As cybersecurity experts say, you are never done as far as cybersecurity is concerned.

Cyber risks and threats keep evolving and so should cybersecurity measures and systems. This is one game you have to keep winning to survive and thrive in the digital world.

The writer is a Corporate Advisor and mentor. He has recently authored a book titled CyberStrong: A Primer on Cyber Risk Management for Business Managers, published by SAGE Publications India



**HOME THEATRE**

# Only for kiddies



**THE CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES: PART TWO**  
**Netflix**  
**\*ing: Kurt Russell, Goldie Hawn, Judah Lewis, Darby Camp, Kimberly Williams-Paisley, Julian Dennison, Tyrese Gibson**  
**Rated: 6/10**

If an adult is watching this, it will be difficult to get past the strange language the elves speak or the near bizarreness of the entire storyline. But first, they are Santa's elves; they can speak whatever they want as long as Santa Claus understands the same. Second, it is a Christmas movie. What else is one going to expect but a good Santa Claus and Mrs Claus. An evil elf who is hell bent on destroying Christmas forever. Imagine the catastrophe in the child's life if there was no Christmas, no gifts, no stocking to hang, no gingerbread house or cookies; it is akin to a Diwali with no crackers.

Having said that, the kids are going to love this movie. The elves are cute and you want to cuddle them even if one of them is evil. The entire Santa's village is a sight to behold – a giant Christmas tree

in the middle of the square with lights twinkling, guns firing snow at regular intervals (it is a secret village in the North Pole that no one is supposed to know about so it has a shield cover), hot chocolate you revive you instantly and most importantly the idea of a Christmas with healthy food – broccoli cake!

Santa's sleigh is another high point. It is like a high-speed sledge with reindeers managing to dodge the evil elf's hyenas or so they look like. Totally something out of a sci-fi film.

Then there is Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn, one of Hollywood's most enduring duos who have been together for 37 years. Goldie here has a much bigger part to play than the cameo she did in the original one. She maintains the holiday spirit and does magic at the span of her fingers. The film rests on their shoulders and while one can see the familiarity and ease, they have with each other, the plot doesn't really help them steer it to safety.

Over all it is a movie that the children will love; the adults can give this one a miss

— Shalini Sakseena

# Feel good family treat

**DOLLY PARTON'S CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE**  
**Netflix**  
**\*ing: Dolly Patron, Jenifer Lewis, Josh Segarra, Jeanine Mason, Treat William, Jenna Hathaway**  
**Rated: 5.5/10**

Those who don't know who Dolly Patron is, here is a bit about her. She is one of the most honoured female country performers of all time, achieving 25 RIAA certified Gold, Platinum, and Multi-Platinum awards. She has had 25 songs reach No 1 on the Billboard country music charts — a record for a female artist.

Not only this, she has nine Grammy Awards, two Academy Award nominations, ten Country Music Association Awards, seven Academy of Country Music Awards, three American Music Awards and hit films like Steel Magnolias and 9 to 5 to her credit.

This one, a musical, was bound to create a stir given it is the whole Scrooge thing. This time it is a rich woman who has inherited her father's property and is all set to evict everyone on Christmas Day! But it is a Christmas movie and hence the whole idea of giving rather than receiving. No surprises here how it ends.

The surprise is how beautifully this musical has been curated. The dancers are amazing, the set is beautifully done and how the dialogues have been woven into songs.

While there is nothing much in terms of the story, the fun is in watching the great choreography, a few toe-tapping tunes, creating a fantasy and that miracles happen.

— Shalini Sakseena



## TELLY TALE

### TUNE IN TO HERO MODE

Get ready for a wonder like never before as Sony SAB's announces its mega-launch of the year *Hero* — *Gayab Mode On*. With the power of invisibility as a distinctive element in the story, the show promises to be a pure visual delight for the audience blended with a gripping storyline that will leave you asking for more. The show is slated to launch on December 7, every Mon-Fri at 8 pm.

The show is an incredible journey of a common man, Veer (Abhishek Nigam) and his quest to find his father. His life gets fascinatingly exciting as Veer chances upon a miraculous ring, which upon wearing gives him the power of invisibility. The ring can only be worn and owned by someone who has the inherent virtues of kindness, courage, selflessness, nobility and empathy. At the same time, it also has the power to corrupt and degrade the weak hearted making them vicious. But Veer decides to



use this superpower for good, making him the Hero. However, Veer's prized possession is also desired by the evil aliens of the outer world and here begins Hero's real challenge to save humanity.

Introducing Abhishek Nigam in the lead role of Veer *aka* Hero who promises to liven up the screen along with the very talented Manish Wadhwa as Amal Nanda, Ajay Gehi as Shukracharya, the gorgeous Yesha Rughani as Zaara, Nitish Pandey as Mama and the super-cute twins Surabhi and Samridhni as sisters Sweetie & Meethi along with a host of other stars in the show's galaxy.

**WHAT'S IN A PROFESSION?**

Presenting a heartfelt romantic drama, Colors is set to launch *Namak Issk Ka*, a journey of a flamboyant Chamcham who is looked down upon for her profession but is married off into a reputable family in Mumbai.

Even though Chamcham is a dancer traditionally known as Nachaniya, she is a levelheaded and morally righteous person. Raised in an orphanage, Chamcham became a dancer in order to make ends meet and to take care of those dependent on her. To essay the character of Chamcham,



actor Shruti Sharma has been roped in Shruti Sharma says: "I am very excited to have landed this role. Chamcham is an incredible character, and playing her gives me a lot of scope for performance as an actor. The concept o-f the show is very strong and the background story of the character and her journey will definitely change social perceptions. I am also grateful to Colors for giving me this very special opportunity and I look forward to working on the show and giving it my all."

*Kya aap kareng ek nachaniya ko bahu ke roop mein sweekaar? Watch Namak Issk Ka coming soon only on Colors.*

### RAGHAV'S ENTRY IN RENUKA'S LIFE

Zee TV recently presented a heart-warming story that captures the essence of the ever-evolving dynamics of the saas-bahu relationship in Indian society. Titled *Hamariwali Good News*, it showcases a unique role reversal between the daughter-in-law Navya (Srishti Jain) and her mother-in-law Renuka (Juhi Parmar) to give their family the much awaited Good News. Versatile actress Juhi Parmar plays the role of Renuka in the show, who is the mother-in-law and the lifeline of the Tiwari family. Shakti Anand, on the other hand, is seen essaying the pivotal character of Mukund, who is Renuka's husband and Navya's father-in-law.

We've seen how Renuka and Mukund have been distant from each other and while we've seen the duo clash and argue like every couple, recently Renuka was trying to make an attempt to get closer to Mukund once again. However, it looks like a new character is all set to take their arguments to a whole new level. Manish Goel is all set to enter as Dr Raghav in *Hamariwali Good News* and it is his past equation with Renuka that will take the Tiwaris by storm.

Apparently, Raghav and Renuka were in love and he was going to ask for her hand in marriage. However, Mukund's *rishta* came in before he could make his move and the rest is history. While her husband was initially unaware, he came to know after seven-eight

years of marriage and since then his relationship with Renuka has never been the same. Mukund felt that he has been betrayed and has been suspicious of her ever since. When Raghav and Renuka bump into one another after so many years, how will Mukund react? And what will Raghav do after meeting Renuka? Well, the audience is in for a treat as a lot of twists and turns are set to play out in the next few episodes.

With Raghav all set to enter *Hamariwali Good News* and create chaos in Renuka and Mukund's life, the audience will surely want to know what will happen next in the Tiwari *parivaar*.

### GET READY TO MEET PHOOL KUMARI

Bhojpuri film icon and bold performer Rani Chatterjee has successfully made a mark in the entertainment industry. The daring actor is all set to make heads turn as she enters &TV's *Gudiya Humari Sabhi Pe Bhari*. Portraying the role of Nanhe's (Sudhir Neema) love interest Phool Kumari, Rani will create a spectacle amongst the men in the family whereas with the women, not so much.

When Gudiya (Sarika Bahroliya) finds out that Nanhe's medical reports show traces of cancer she is disheartened to learn that he has only a few days left to live. To make the most for Nanhe who longs for a companion, Phool Kumari enters the house, adding an extra dose of entertainment and



humour. Everyone in the house is astonished by her breathtaking looks and latke-jhatkes. They can't resist themselves and always seem to have an excuse to be around her and her kaatil adaaeyen.

Expressing her excitement, Rani Chatterjee says: "I am thrilled to portray the role of Phool Kumari. It is the first time I will be exploring this genre, and I believe that this show is the perfect fit for me to make a debut in it. As Phool Kumari now enters the show, viewers will be in for a treat. I am sure they will enjoy this new role of mine and continue to shower me with their love and support."

# 'Replacements come with challenges'

ASHI SINGH, who has recently replaced AVNEET KAUR to play Yasmine in Sony Sab's *Aladdin Naam Toh Suna Hoga*, speaks with MUSBA HASHMI about the challenges that she faced and reveals that she would love to be a part of *Jhalak Dikhhlaa Jaa*

### ■ What made you say yes to play Yasmine??

The character of course. Initially, I was apprehensive about taking up the role because it is a replacement, but when I got know about the storyline and the character brief, I liked it very much. It was something that I wanted to do. It is something that one doesn't get to do in daily life. I am fortunate to have got a chance to play this role.

### ■ Was it hard to get into the skin of the character? More so because you have replaced Avneet, and the character was already well-established?

Yes. It was extremely difficult to get into the skin of the character because if the audience has seen an actor play a character for two years, it becomes hard for them to accept another actor play the same role. Also, I didn't have the scope to play it purely my way, because Avneet portrayed it in her way and comparisons will be drawn. Initially, it took a lot of thoughts to play it differently from the previous actor and still maintain the essence. That was a double pressure. Also, it was out of my comfort zone, it required action that I haven't done earlier. There was so much to do.

### ■ Some memories from the sets.

It's been only a while since I am a part of this show, but having said that I have some great memories already. From eating lunch together with the cast to sharing our life experiences with each other, we already have created that rapport. Sometime, even I wonder *hamare paas itni baatein aati kaha se hain*. I share a very good bond with Ginu (played by Raashul Tandon), Sheefan (played by Amit Raghuvanshi), Koyal (played by Shivani Badoni) and Aladdin (played by Siddharth Nigam). We never shy away from pulling each other's leg. There is a very dark location at the sets where we shoot all the haunted scenes, so in our free time all five of us sit there and share ghost stories. It is fun.

■ **Your character Naina from Yeh Unn Dino Ki Baat Hai earned much love from the audience. How**



**I want to play a lot of varied roles in my life. I don't want to keep playing the same kind of roles for five-six years. I am always on a look out for different characters. With that being said, I don't think there will be a role which I will ever turn down**

### has life changed after the show?

A lot. When I started shooting the show, it was hard for me to accept that I have got the show and that I am living my dream of acting. During the show only, my life changed for the better. My personality was improved and I got to learn a lot. I went out of my bubble and experienced the world out there. There were instances when I was troubled with certain things but now they serve as a learning experience and help me tackle situations with much ease. It is hard for me to mention all the ways in which my life has changed after it, there's so much.

■ **Is there a role that you would say no to?**

Not really. I want to play a lot of varied roles in my life. I don't want to keep playing the same kind of roles for five-six years. I am always on a look out for different characters. With that being said, I don't think there will be a role which I will ever turn down.

■ **A reality show that you would like to be a part of?**

Yes. I would really want to be a part of *Jhalak Dikhhlaa Jaa*. I like the show since my childhood and would love to be a part of it.



# Dil Se... Sundeep Kishan Expressing A 1 of life



Young Sundeep with his father

**AMBITIOUS EVEN AS A KID...**

I was born in Chennai but most of my education was in Vizag and Guntur. Being a 90's kid, I must admit I had the best childhood. I got the best of everything. I was a very mischievous child, but I would describe myself as ambitious. I was never happy being a 'regular' child, I always wanted to do something different and try something new. There is no sport that I haven't tried. Also, I was always into dramatics. I was into elocution, debates and would take part in all cultural activities in school. This kept me active. As a kid, I was more or less always into trouble due to my mischief. If I wanted to bunk classes and go watch a movie, I would tell my parents. There was not single time that I bunked classes without informing them. There was never a time where I was not extraordinarily mischievous.



## LOVE FOR CINEMA...

I was always fascinated by cinema. Even as a child, I would watch three to four films a day. Also I would always prefer to act in school. Whenever you act, you are being someone else and that's the only chance for

you to get away from being who you are. It was always very exciting to me. From Sai Baba to superheroes, I donned every role and I always outperformed. Acting, elocution and debating speaking were the only two things that I was at my best and I won appreciation

every time I took part in them. I gradually gained confidence from my performances. I am blessed that I am good at a few things and I worked on them even more. And now, I have made a career out of my strengths, which is very satisfying for me.

## AUDITIONING FOR THREE YEARS...

My entry into the film industry was not easy; I had my share of struggle. I had to audition for three years before I bagged my first role. There were so many times that I was selected for a role and even got an offer, but was let go later. *Happy Days* was one such film. There was a film for which I shot for three days but it was shelved. Every role I got was after I auditioned. That three-year phase was the most challenging in my career. These films were all by small time filmmakers, trying to make it big. During the initial phase of my career, I worked with people like Deva Katta and Praveen Sattaru who come from a special school of thought. Later, I worked with a lot of new filmmakers and with them, one gets to learn something new every day. I had good hits and stunning lows. Now, my career has picked up again from scratch with *Ninu Veedani Nene*. This phase of my career is the most exciting one. It saw an all-time low and then zoomed up beautifully. For the first time in my life, I put my education to use. You will now see a completely different Sundeep Kishan.

## LIVING LIFE ON MY OWN TERMS...

For a major part of my life, I always wanted to be an actor, but for a brief period, I wanted to be an IPS officer. Perhaps the thought of becoming an IPS officer took root in my head because of all the films I have watched. I completed one semester in Engineering but began questioning myself if that was what I wanted to be really doing with my life; it did not make sense to me. Later, I did my BBA and MBA. In a way, I have lived my life on my own terms. For most, it might not sound to be rebellious, but coming from a typical Telugu family, particularly with the kind of upbringing I got, it was very rebellious of quitting engineering, choosing BBA, while simultaneously working as an assistant director and giving auditions.

## A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE...

One of the most memorable experiences of my life was after *Prasthanam*. At that time, I had a lot of meetings in Mumbai. For me, being in Mumbai itself was big deal. I was still living off my parents when I got a Bollywood film offer. But going to Mumbai even for the meetings was way too expensive for me. I would take an evening bus and reach Mumbai by the morning. I would then go to a dormitory that charged about Rs 250 to Rs 300 per day, get ready in the common washroom, later take a coffee and request the café guy to keep my luggage safe, then attend the meeting and return in the evening, take my luggage and return either to the dormitory or take the bus back home. All this was because staying in a hotel was too expensive for me. The process itself was very interesting and beautiful. I'm glad I could experience all of this.

## A SATISFYING FILM...

*A1 Express* is the most satisfying film I have done so far. The film is being shot with a bunch of youngsters. I'm the oldest one on set. It's an extremely ambitious film in terms of budget and the film is about sport — Hockey. Considering where my career dipped to a point and I and my team could rise again and pull this film off is highly satisfying. I've shed 14 kilos for the film and I'm enjoying the process. I don't want to talk about the struggles; I always want to talk about the good things. Most recent emotional moment was during *Ninu Veedani Nene*. With no fault of ours, we had to face a lot of hurdles. At some level my managers, Seetharam and Siva, could manage everything. The entire credit goes to them.

## THE THREE WOMEN WHO INFLUENCED ME...

The major part of childhood influence was my maternal grandmother Anantha Lakshmi garu, my mother, Kanakadurga, and her elder sister, Padmalatha. My biggest support system to even get my first photoshoot was the money given to me by my grandmother. When I had to get a better photoshoot done, my *pedhamma* gave me money without telling my mom. These three women very strongly influenced me in my life and my sister, Mounica Naidu, does so today.

**What do you do in your leisure time:** I'm either working too much or just lying down. If I want to get away from all this, I'll visit a new city.

**How do you describe yourself:** A typical Taurian

**Your favourite holiday destination:** Europe

**A city you wish to visit:** Paris

**Getaway with family:** The Himalayas or Goa

**How do you deal with anger:** If I'm angry, I'm angry. But I don't carry it for long time. I'm either of two extremities. Being with me is a pain and only people who know me really well will understand me.

**What are you most inspired by:** Life

**Person you admire the most:** My dad

**Favourite actor:** Chiranjeevi garu, Robert Downey Jr

**Your relationship status:** Very much single right now

**Something in your bucket list:** To open a restaurant, probably in every possible city in the two states and provide good food at affordable rates.

**Your biggest addiction:** Visual content

**A compliment people give you the most:** They really like my vibe.

RAPID FIRE:



Sundeep with his Pedhamma (extreme left), sister Mounica and mother Kanakadurga (extreme right)



With uncles Chota K. Naidu (extreme right) and Shyam K. Naidu (extreme left) and father Ravi Prakash Naidu (second right)



From left: Sister Mounica, father Ravi Prakash