

**ANALYSIS 7**  
THE LINES ARE  
BLURRED

**MONEY 8**  
'ANTIVIRALS, HYPERLOOPS AMONG 20  
MARKETS TO TRANSFORM ECONOMIES'

**SPORTS 11**  
RCB TOTALLY  
OUTGUN KKR

VIJAYAWADA, THURSDAY OCTOBER 22, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



# the pioneer



PAWAN KALYAN  
ANNOUNCES RS 1CR  
FOR TSCMRP

Page 12

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**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**

**Month & Paksham:**  
Ashwin & Shukla Paksha  
Panchangam

**Tithi:** Shashthi: 07:39 am

**Nakshatram:** Punv/Ashadha: 12:58 am  
(Next Day)

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

**Rahukalam:** 01:26 pm - 02:53 pm

**Yamagandam:** 06:14 am - 07:41 am

**Variyam:** 10:43 am - 12:18 pm

**Gulika:** 09:07 am - 10:33 am

**Good Time:** (to start any important work)

**Amritakalam:** 08:13 pm - 09:48 pm

**Abhijit Muhurtham:** 11:37 am - 12:23 pm

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**VIJAYAWADA WEATHER**

**Forecast:** Scattered thunderstorms

**Temp:** 32/24

**Humidity:** 76%

**Sunrise:** 06:11 am

**Sunset:** 05:49 pm

Current Weather Conditions  
Updated October 21, 2020 5:00 PM

## Experts seek more info on Bhavanapadu Port works

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

An Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Union Environment Ministry has deferred Andhra Pradesh government's proposal seeking clearance to prepare Terms of Reference (ToR) for its proposed Rs 3,670 crore greenfield seaport, seeking more information.

According to the minutes of meeting of the EAC, the AP government was planning to develop the all-weather, deep water, multipurpose port to be built at an estimated cost of Rs 3,670 crore at Bhavanapadu in Srikakulam district.

## AP to give Rs 10K instant aid in accidental deaths

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

The Andhra Pradesh government will disburse Rs 10,000 as immediate financial assistance to the kin of people succumbing to accidents.

"Immediate financial assistance of Rs 10,000 to families of those who die in accidents," Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy said, while launching the 'YSR Bima' insurance scheme on Wednesday.

To claim the accidental death financial assistance, the bereaved family can reach out to the village secretariat, a grassroots level governance system aimed at decentralisation.

Jagan officially launched the

**To claim the accidental death financial assistance, the bereaved family can reach out to the village secretariat, a grassroots level governance system aimed at decentralisation.**

Chief Minister personally handed over insurance cover to a few beneficiaries.

Under the YSR Bima, eligible people in the age bracket of 18 to 50 years will receive Rs 5 lakh in the event of accidental death or permanent disability. Likewise, eligible people in the age bracket of 51 to 70 years will receive Rs 3 lakh for similar losses.

In case of a breadwinner's natural death in the age group of 18 to 50 years, the insurance scheme will offer Rs 2 lakh.

Likewise, eligible people between 18 and 70 years will receive Rs 1.5 lakh in the event of partial permanent disability due to an accident.



## Landslide on temple path ahead of CM visit

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

Boulders came crashing down the Indrakeeladri hill in Vijayawada in a landslide on Wednesday causing minor injuries to three people, police said. A possible tragedy was averted as the ghat road leading to the historic

Kanakadurga temple was closed for pilgrims in view of the official visit of Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy in the afternoon.

Police said the landslide happened about an hour before the Chief Minister's arrival.

## Govt releases funds to poll panel after SEC moves HC

**C PRADEEP KUMAR ■ VIJAYAWADA**

The State government on Wednesday released the budgeted Rs 39 lakh to the State Election Commission, hours after State Election Commissioner N Ramesh Kumar filed a writ petition in the High Court over the issue.

In his petition, Ramesh Kumar had accused the State government of not cooperating with him in the conduct of the elections to local bodies. In the petition submitted through his lawyers Sitarama Murty and Aswini Kumar, Ramesh Kumar said: "There is absolutely no cooperation from the government in the conduct of elections."

## Gang uses Kallam's name to cheat jobless

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

Ajeya Kallam, the Principal Adviser to the Chief Minister, on Wednesday lodged a complaint with DGP Gautam D Sawang that a gang was misusing his name to deceive job aspirants. In his complaint, Kallam said that he has received many viral messages on WhatsApp stating a gang of few persons from Mangalagiri had collected money from unemployed youth promising Junior Lineman jobs.

"These messages also say that the gang has used my name to give credence to

their activities," Kallam's complaint said.

He said that he was not aware of the truth behind these allegations and if the allegations were proven to be true on inquiry, there was an urgent need to take action against the culprits involved.

"If the messages are fake, obviously, the source of origin of these messages need to be identified and those concerned have to be brought to book," Kallam said.

He asked the DGP to ensure an inquiry is ordered immediately and necessary action as required by law taken.

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**Leaving no scope for corruption...**  
**With utmost transparency...**  
**At reasonable prices...**

Jagananna Government solicits suggestions from the general public to formulate...

## AN EVEN BETTER SAND POLICY

This is a responsive Government which gives top priority to needs and aspirations of people

Towards a transparent and effective sand policy...

EXISTING POLICY	ISSUES THAT HAVE COME TO THE NOTICE OF GOVERNMENT	PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE AFTER THOROUGH STUDY OF EXISTING SAND POLICY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sand can be booked only through online system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of access to online booking facility to each and everyone</li> <li>People with vested interests conspiring to render online booking system ineffective, thereby tarnishing the image of the Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumers should have the option to directly transport required quantity of sand in their own vehicles after collecting receipt against payment of money, at the ramps itself...</li> <li>There should be no scope for recommendations...</li> <li>Consumers need not have to submit applications online...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Door delivery of sand in vehicle arranged by the Government</li> <li>Sand to be obtained from stock points allotted by Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in cost of sand as even small quantities of sand has to be lifted in big sized vehicles. As transportation cost is included in sand price, consumers feel that they are paying more per consignment... Anomalies in quantity of sand delivered and difficulty in tracing address of consumers... With this, consumers facing difficulties in receiving consignment...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restriction, on transportation of sand only by vehicles arranged by transport contractors, should be withdrawn...</li> <li>Provision should be made for consumers who do not have their own vehicles to lift sand in vehicles arranged by transport contractors if they so desire... Contractors should arrange standby vehicles...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumers to accept sand delivered by Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No option for consumers to choose the reach providing appropriate quality of sand...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People residing in villages along river should be allowed to lift sand free of cost in bullock-carts...</li> <li>Subsidised sand should be made available for construction of houses for weaker sections, R&amp;B colonies and for those residing close to the reaches... Coupon system should be implemented for giving rebate...</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instances of local leaders exerting pressure on officials at some places came to the notice of the Government...</li> <li>Transport contractors found collecting higher charges at some places...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumers should have the option to check the quality of sand and place orders to lift sand from the reach of their choice as per their requirement...</li> <li>Uniform price should be fixed for sand at all reaches across the State... Distance based upper ceiling price system should be implemented in all regions... Awareness should be created among consumers on designated toll-free number to complain against anyone collecting prices higher than officially notified one... A mechanism should be set up to ensure that local leaders do not exert pressure using their influence at reaches... This will deter unscrupulous elements from selling sand at high prices by creating artificial scarcity and prevent them from bringing pressure on officials... If possible, the responsibility of managing reaches should be entrusted to experienced Central Government agency or companies...</li> <li>Sand should be sold only at stockyards set up at the reaches... Price should not exceed the existing price in neighbouring States...</li> <li>Sand reaches can be managed, in a transparent and corruption free manner by entrusting reaches to large companies with impeccable record, selected through tendering process or Central Government agency...</li> <li>Sand mining in private lands should be stopped... Quality of sand will improve, if sand mining is done only at riverbanks...</li> </ul>

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

**If you have any suggestions to make in addition to the preliminary recommendations made by Cabinet Sub-Committee, you may mail your suggestions on mail id [dmgap@ap.gov.in](mailto:dmgap@ap.gov.in) or at Director, Mines & Geology, 5th Floor, B-Block, Anjaneya Towers, Ibrahimpatnam, Krishna District - 521456 or on Toll Free No. 14500 on or before 28th October, 2020.**

**Your valuable suggestions will certainly be taken into consideration...**

**SRI PEDDIREDDY RAMACHANDRA REDDY**  
Hon'ble Minister for Panchayat Raj, Rural Development, Mines & Geology

Agriculture & Allied Services - 1907 | Tele Medicine Services - 14410 | Complaints against Corruption - 14400 | Disha - 181 | Complaints against illegal manufacture, sale and transport of liquor & sand - 14500

## Break traffic rules, pay through the nose

**PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA**

The AP Transport Department on Wednesday issued a GO - GO No 21 - under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 revising the compounding fee for better enforcement of the provisions of the enactment.

As per the new rules, allowing an unauthorised person or an underage person to drive vehicles would attract a fine of Rs 5,000 for any vehicle.

Likewise, driving a motor vehicle by a person disqualified to hold a driving licence or obtaining a driving licence by such person would attract a fine of Rs 10,000.

The penalty on the persons who alter vehicles in contravention to the rules and regulations would be Rs 1 lakh per motor vehicle.

Driving dangerously or using hand held communication devices would attract a penalty of Rs 1,500 for the first offence and Rs 10,000 for the subsequent offences. Not only driving dangerously, if anybody causes any person to drive at excessive speed, Rs 2,000 would be fined.

Racing or trials of speed would attract a fine of Rs 5,000 and Rs 10,000 for subsequent offences.

Rs 2,000 fine for playing a vehicle without insurance

- Rs 1,000 fine for needlessly sounding horn
- Rs 10,000 for not giving way to emergency vehicles
- Rs 5,000 penalty for underage driving
- Dangerous driving, including use of mobile phone, will now carry a penalty of Rs 1,500 for the first offence and Rs 10,000 for the subsequent offences.

for the first offence and Rs 4,000 for subsequent offences. Driving vehicles exceeding permissible weight attracts a fine of Rs 20,000 plus Rs 2,000 per every tonne of excess load. Rs 40,000 would be fined on a driver who refuses to stop to weigh the load.

The GO empowers officers of the Transport Department not below the rank of the assistant motor vehicle inspector and the police officers not below the rank of inspector of police and also Traffic S-Is to levy the revised compounding fee on the violators of transport rules.

Visible violations include non-wearing of helmets, non-wearing of seat belts, over speeding, using cell phones while driving among others which attract heavy penalties.

# Aryan civilisation led to the World civilisation

In Valmiki Ramayana, as translated by 'Andhra Valmiki' Vavilikolanu Subbaravu alias Vasudasa, it is mentioned that Emperor Sagara, on coming to know of the misdeeds of his son Asamanja excommunicated and exiled him.

It is believed that Asamanja headed towards Egypt, took control and ruled it. In support of this argument, there are a couple of pages in the Indo-Egyptian History book penned by B Das.

Every Hindu believed in the superiority of the Aryan civilisation till the impact of the West on the East. Great sages and savants of the East left no dates of events chronicled in these epics and shastras. Even two to three centuries ago, English and other European traders and travellers could not conceive the thought of human civilisation dating

back ages ago. Naturally, they questioned the authenticity of epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata and also the Puranas. With the spread of Western culture, Indians themselves began to doubt the authenticity of these epics and a school of thought emerged that followed the Westerner's mentality whereby Greek and Roman civilisations were given precedence over the Aryan civilisation. However, scholars like Max Weber and Max Muller recognised the antiquity of the Rig Veda and ancient civilisation of the Hindus.

Egyptologists, mostly Europeans and Americans, who tried to interpret the pictographic and hieroglyphic writings found in the tombs and pyramids of sovereigns of Egypt, traced an ancient civilisation to the Hellenic and Roman civilisation (Aryan)

## Research shows that the Aryans founded their Empire in Babylonia that embraced the West and Sind (India) on the East. These Sumerians or Aryans conquered Egypt and founded the Egyptian Empire under Pharaoh Menes or Asamanja

and supposed it to be the father of the world civilisation. Other scholars and philosophers worked independently to trace the origin of all civilised languages to the Aryan tongue -- the Sanskrit of the Vedas. Laurence Austin Waddell proved conclusively that the ancient Egyptian language was radically Aryan in origin.

The key to the Sumerian civilisation (earliest known

civilisation in the historical region of Mesopotamia) and to Sumerian hieroglyphs was found at Mohenjo-Daro by Indian archaeologists in same style of tablets, potteries, seals as were found at Babylon. Research shows that the Aryans founded their Empire in Babylonia that embraced the West and Sind (India) on the East. These Sumerians or Aryans conquered Egypt and founded the Egyptian Empire



**VANAM JWALA NARASIMHA RAO**  
CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER OF CHIEF MINISTER OF TELANGANA

under Pharaoh Menes or Asamanja. It is mentioned in the Puranas that Sagar's son crossed the sea to found the Egyptian empire and Asamanja became the first Pharaoh of Egypt. The most wonderful result of all these

researches is the linking of the dynasties in Aryan Puranas, Sumerian symbols and Egyptian symbols.

One can find identities of countries mentioned in Mahabharata. Waddell's book 'Egyptian: Civilisation its Sumerian Origin', names such as Kur (Suria or Syria-the land of Kurus, Misor Gopta (Egypt), Maruts of Asia Minor (the land of Maruts or Amorites) and lastly Kuru-Panch (Kuru-Panchala-Syria being known as the land of Kuru Panchala) will rouse curiosity to locate the ancestral empire of the Aryans as depicted in the Mahabharata and the Puranas.

Phoenicians were the Panch (Panchala) of the Vedas. Aryans spread their civilisation to the Mediterranean coasts and even carried it to the British shores on the West and helped spread it not only

to Malay Peninsula, Chins, Korea and Japan but crossed the Pacific Ocean. The alphabets and writings of all old civilisations and all old countries - Egypt, Babylonia, Asia Minor, China, Japan, Korea and even ancient America - were derived from the Aryan alphabet.

The older Egyptologists wanted to prove Egyptian civilisation originated around 4000 BC and that would lead us to conclude that the Aryan civilisation is much older. Waddell and European antiquarians are eager to prove that the Sumerian-Aryan civilisation dates only back to 3000 BC. They base it on the arguments that the dynasties of kings of all ancient civilisations are the same as the dynasties mentioned in the Mahabharata. They calculate from circumstantial evidence in Egyptian records of pic-

tographs that Asamanja ruled Egypt about 2704 BC-2641 BC.

Astronomy plays a great part in the interpretation of age of the Aryan civilisation. If European scholars now concede the authenticity of the genealogy of the kings of India as chronicled in Mahabharata and as verified from pictographs in tablets, and seals of three different civilisations -- the Sumerian, the Assyrian and Egyptian -- they must have to forget their pre-conceived notions about date of origin and re-study Hindu Shastras in the light of science and astronomy to fix the dates of these kings and to trace the period of the dawn human civilization: the Aryan civilisation.

(Source: Andhra Valmiki Ramayana, Bala Kanda Mandaram by Vavilikolanu Subbaravu Elias Vasudasa)

# ASW 'Kavaratti' all set to be commissioned today

Corvette is a small warship equipped to fight in nuclear, chemical and biological warfare conditions

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The last of four indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) stealth corvettes "INS Kavaratti" under Project 28 (Kamorta class) is scheduled to be commissioned into the Indian Navy by Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Mukund Naravane, at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam on October 22.

Touted as a potent Stealth ASW Corvette, Kavaratti is indigenously designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organisation, Directorate of Naval Design (DND), and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, and portrays the growing capability of the Indian Navy, GRSE and the nation in becoming self-reliant



through indigenisation, thus, accentuating the objective of "Atmanirbhar Bharat". The ship has up to 90 per cent indigenous content and the use of carbon composites for the superstructure, an achievement in Indian shipbuilding. The ship's weapons and sensors suite is predominantly

indigenous and showcases India's growing capability in this niche area. Kavaratti has state-of-the-art weapons and sensor suite capable of detecting and prosecuting submarines. In addition to its anti-submarine warfare capability, the ship also has a credible self defence capability and good endurance for

long-range deployments.

It is noteworthy that the ship will be commissioned into the Navy as a combat-ready platform as the ship has completed sea trials of all the systems fitted onboard.

It's a praiseworthy achievement in itself, taking into consideration the restrictions imposed due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic during which she was delivered to the Navy. With the induction of Kavaratti into its fold, the Indian Navy's preparedness will be enhanced.

Kavaratti takes her name from erstwhile INS Kavaratti which was an Arna class missile corvette. The older Kavaratti distinguished herself by operating in support of liberation of Bangladesh in 1971.

## 3,746 fresh cases, 27 more deaths in AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The cumulative confirmed cases of coronavirus increased to 7,93,299 in Andhra Pradesh as 3,746 were added afresh on Wednesday.

As 27 more patients died, the gross toll rose to 6,508 while the number of those who recovered went up to 7,54,415 after 4,739 got cured in 24 hours ending 9 am on Wednesday.

The latest bulletin said the state now had 32,376 active cases of Covid-19.

The overall infection positivity rate decreased further to 10.91 per cent, though it is still higher than the national average of 7.87 per cent.

Seven out of 13 districts reported fresh cases less than 200 each, with Kurnool adding just 65 to its tally.

East Godavari reported 677 fresh cases.

## Active cases remain below 7.5-lakh mark, says Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Active cases of Covid-19 in India settled below the 7.5-lakh mark for the second successive day, while the national case fatality rate (CFR) has dropped to 1.51 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said on Wednesday.

Presently 14 states and UTs including Chhattisgarh (0.96 pc), Jharkhand (0.87 pc), Andhra Pradesh (0.82 pc), Telangana (0.57 pc), Bihar (0.49 pc), Assam (0.44 pc), Odisha (0.43 pc) and Kerala (0.34 pc) are reporting case fatality rate of less than 1 per cent.

The Centre has advised states and UTs to aim at bring down the CFR below 1 per cent.

There are 7,40,090 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 9.67 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

With a high number of



Covid-19 patients recovering every day, India's steady trend of posting high levels of daily recoveries also continues.

A total of 61,775 recoveries have been registered in a span of 24 hours in the country whereas 54,044 new infections were reported during the same period, the ministry said.

This is when 10,83,608 tests have been conducted in a span of 24 hours in the country, it underlined.

"Successful implementation of test, track and treat strategy along with timely and appropriate treatment has led to the consistent slide in the fatality rate. The national CFR has fallen to 1.51 per cent

today," the ministry said. A total of 67,95,103 people have recuperated from the disease so far in the country. Higher number of single day recoveries has resulted in a continuous increase in the national recovery rate, which is fast approaching 89 per cent (88.81 percent).

The ministry said that 77 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 states and UTs.

Karnataka outnumbered Maharashtra in new recovered cases with more than 8,500 new recoveries. Maharashtra and Kerala both contribute more than 7,000 to the new recoveries.

Also, 78 per cent of the 54,044 new cases of Covid-19 registered in a span of 24 hours are concentrated in ten states and UTs. Maharashtra contributed more than 8,000 to the new cases. Karnataka and Kerala, both contributed more than 6,000.

## Now, pay through the...

Continued from Page 1

The penalties would be relatively less for motorcycles, auto-rickshaws and motor cabs, and light motor vehicles.

Obstruction to the checking officer in the discharge of duties and refusal to give information would attract Rs 750 penalty for motorcycles and light motorcycles and Rs 1,000 for the heavy vehicles.

## Third Kisan Rail leaves AP for New Delhi

PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

The third Kisan Rail, an exclusive freight train shipping farm produce to markets in various states, left for New Delhi from Mulakalacheruvu Railway Station in Chittoor district on Wednesday.

The train is carrying over 242 tonnes of fresh fruits and vegetables from Rayalaseema region.

The first Kisan Rail from the South was launched from Anantapur on September 9, according to the SCR.

This was the first Kisan Rail in which the farmers and traders availed themselves of a 50 per cent concession on freight charge under Operation Greens, he said in a press release here.

## Heavy to very heavy rainfall likely in north coastal Andhra

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Met department on Wednesday forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts of north coastal Andhra Pradesh and Yanam for Thursday.

However, there is no rain forecast for the next three days after Thursday. Meanwhile, the low pressure area over the central parts of the Bay of Bengal and its neighbourhood has now become a well-marked low pressure area over west central part of the sea on the east coast of India.

"It is very likely to move northwards during the next 24 hours and move northeastwards thereafter



towards West Bengal-Bangladesh coasts across northwest Bay of Bengal off Odisha coast during the subsequent 48 hours," said a Met official. Likewise, the east west trough now runs roughly

along 15 degrees north across peninsular India, and a cyclonic circulation associated with the well marked low pressure area is over west central Bay of Bengal and its neighbourhood.

## AP to give Rs 10K instant aid...

Continued from Page 1

"The government assures that the claim amount will be deposited into the linked bank account within 15 days of the claim being made," read an official government statement.

The state government will fund the YSR Bima, the pre-

mium of which is estimated to be Rs 510 crore currently.

The CM said the amount is expected to go up further as the number of beneficiaries is expected to increase within a few days, once the bank accounts of some of the eligible people are operationalised.

## Experts seek more info on Bhavanapadu Port works

Continued from Page 1

The EAC said the AP Maritime Board (APMB), the project proponent which submitted the application for the grant of ToR, however, made no description about an alternate site.

The meeting of the EAC, under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, was held during the last week of September.

A fishing harbour was located in the close proximity of the proposed site and details regarding the distance between the two, the site's capacity and other techno-economical details have not been provided, it observed.

"The site is falling in the zone of high erosion, therefore, before grant of ToR, a study should be conducted on the suitability of the site w.r.t. (with respect to) high erosion zone" the EAC said.

"Accordingly, the EAC deferred the proposal for want of above mentioned information," it added.

AP contends the project will have a positive impact.

## Govt releases funds to poll panel...

Continued from Page 1

He had named Principal Secretary (finance) and Principal Secretary (panchayat raj) as respondents.

He pointed out that the stoppage of funds to the SEC was against the law under Article 243 (k) of the Constitution, and requested that the court to issue directions to the State government to release the funds immediately.

Earlier in March, Ramesh Kumar, without consulting the State government, postponed the local body elections citing

Covid pandemic, provoking the Jagannathan Reddy government.

Following this, the state government removed Ramesh Kumar as the SEC through an ordinance by reducing his tenure and replacing him with a retired judge of the Tamil Nadu High Court.

However, Ramesh Kumar was reinstated after a long legal battle against the state government.

The SEC wants to conduct the elections when the pandemic is at its peak, while the government expressed its reluctance citing the same

reason. It is very clear that the Jagannathan Reddy government is not interested in the local body elections under Ramesh Kumar's watch.

In an affidavit filed in the High Court last month, counsel for the government said since the Coronavirus pandemic had gained alarming proportions across the country, it might not be the right time to conduct the elections now.

The High Court, however, told the state government that the decision to conduct the local body elections lies in the hands of the SEC.

## AP plans virtual tours of tourist destinations

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh is looking at popularising virtual tours of various important tourist destinations in the state keeping with the trends in virtual tourism, Special Chief Secretary (Tourism and Culture) Rajat Bhargava said here on Wednesday.

Development of rural tourism, given the perception of being safe and experiential in nature was also being explored, he said.

Addressing a virtual interactive session with members of the national tourism committee of FICCI, Rajat Bhargava said though hotels and other tourism establishments have reopened after the coronavirus-



induced lockdown, the footfall of tourists was not yet encouraging.

He said an aggressive marketing push was required for quick revival of tourism.

"The path to revival (of tourism) will involve building a perception of safe tourism in

the minds of the tourists. Adjoining states will have to work together to ensure free flow of tourists across borders," the Special Chief Secretary said.

A coordinated effort between the different stakeholders, including the Central

government, state governments, tourism bodies, travel and tour operators and hospitality industry was essential for this, he added.

Rajat Bhargava said AP has the potential to develop coastline and position itself as a high-end luxury beach tourism destination.

He said the state was preparing a new tourism policy that would not only be flexible and aggressive but also would also address several issues like according industry status to mega tourism projects.

The tourism department has identified certain high potential locations for development of hotels and luxury resorts in the state, he said.

It also plans to develop amusement parks and adventure sports in the state while ensuring a seamless connectivity of the destinations from all major airports.

The FICCI officials said development of required infrastructure was vital to capture the emerging opportunities in the tourism sector.

They also wanted tax benefits and infrastructure subsidies apart from congenial regulations for development of beach shacks, MICE and other tourist facilities to facilitate greater participation of the private sector.

AP Tourism Development Corporation Managing Director Pravin Kumar and other officials attended.

## Landslide on temple path ahead of CM visit

Continued from Page 1

A temporary tin shed erected on the hill for the ongoing Dasara Navaratri festival crashed under the impact of the landslide and three persons in the vicinity suffered injuries as stone pebbles fell on them, police said.

The incident happened close to the Media Point on the hill temple.

On the auspicious Moola Nakshatram day, when the Goddess is decorated as Saraswati Devi during the Dasara festival, the Chief Minister was supposed to present silk clothes to the deity on behalf of the state government.

Police sources said he was supposed to take the ghat road to reach the temple around 4 pm and the landslide happened about an hour before his arrival.

As the temple has an alternative entrance, it was used for the Chief Minister's visit.

Jagan arrived late following the incident and completed the formalities. He then inspected the spot where the boulders fell and directed the officials to take immediate steps for the safety of the pilgrims. Endowments Minister Velampalli Srinivas later said the chief minister promised to release Rs 70 crore for the temple development works.

# Lord dons Kodanda Ramudu avatar

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On Wednesday, the sixth day of Srivari Navaratri Brahmotsavam, Sri Malayappaswami donned the Avatara Kodandaramudu and blessed devotees on Hanumanta Vahanam.



stands for pure devotion, complete surrender and absence of ego.

His character tells us what we can do in our lives by becoming pure. Hanuman represents the tenets of devotion and Sharanagathi in its both physical mans intellectual form.

Sri Malayappa Swamy by riding Hanumantha Vahana

sent message to His devotees that he is always blessed people who were humble and surrendered to him.

Tirumala pontiffs Sri Sri Pedda Jeeyar Swamy and Sri Sri Sri Chinnna Jeeyar Swamy, TTD EO KS Jawahar Reddy, Additional EO AV Dharma Reddy, Board members Chavireddy Bhaskar Reddy, Prashanti Reddy, Dr Nischitha, Chippagiri Prasad, Govind Hari, DP Ananth, CVSO Gopinath Jatti, Chief Engineer Ramesh Reddy, Temple DyEO Harindranath, Peishkar Jagannathan Charyulu and others were present.

Early in the morning, Chief Justice of AP High Court Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheswari had darshan and blessings of Sri Venkateswara. The CJ was received by Jawahar Reddy and Dharma Reddy and taken for darshan and blessings.

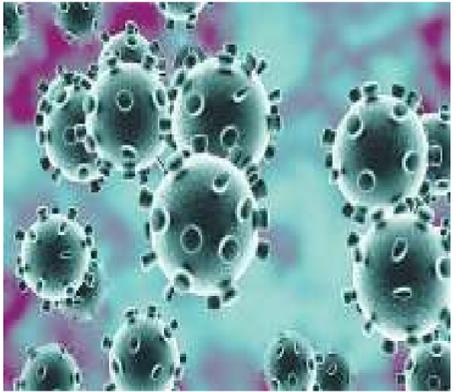
Thereafter TTD priests at Ranganayakula Mandapams rendered the Chief Justice Veda ashirvachanam.

Jawahar Reddy presented Tirtha Prasadam and a portrait of Sri Venkateswara to the Chief Justice. District Judge Ravindra Babu and others were present.

# CS launches 10-day Covid awareness programmes

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney on Wednesday said that the AP Government would be conducting Covid awareness programmes across the state from October 21 to 31.



On Wednesday, Sawhney, accompanied by district Collector A Md Intiaz flagged off one such rally from the PWD Grounds where she said that it was a positive development that Covid positive cases in the state are on the decline.

The CS said people should take all precautions and cooperate with the authorities to prevent the Coronavirus from spreading.

As per the instruction of Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, the district administration would be conducting a special drive for the next 10 days starting from October 21 to 30 to create awareness on the deadly pandemic, she said.

The CS said that everyone should be made aware of what to do when a person is affected with Coronavirus. She suggested that people call 104 for any information of Coronavirus, people should wear masks, maintain physical distance and wash their hands frequently to prevent coronavirus from spreading.

District collector Intiaz said that for the past six months, healthcare workers led by doctors, and also police, village /ward volunteers / secretariats and sanitation workers were serving people selflessly during the pandemic.

He appealed to the authorities to extend their services till the pandemic is eradicated from the district.

People should feel the responsibility to follow the guidelines and wear mask and maintain social distance.

# Jagan out to malign Amaravati, says TDP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Telugu Desam Party politburo member Varla Ramaiah on Wednesday accused Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy of resorting to extreme and baseless propaganda against Amaravati capital city only out of political vengeance against his predecessor N Chandrababu Naidu.

"The Chief Minister has stooped so low that he has used the caste factor to defame Amaravati in front of the country's top leaders during his recent visit to Delhi, Ramaiah said.

Addressing a press conference here, he said that the real fact was any attack on Amaravati would be an attack on Dalits, BCs and minority farmers who have given their lands for the capital city construction.

"As many as 20,490 of the 34,323 farmers who gave lands for Amaravati had less than one acre and most of them are Dalits," Ramaiah said.

He stated that backward classes farmers are mostly



among those who gave one to two acres who were 5,227 in capital city. He claimed that the one caste referred to often by Jaganmohan Reddy falls group that gave 10 to above 25 acres who were just 157 in number and it is clear how the YSRC was spreading a vilification campaign.

Ramaiah said that Thursday would be the fifth anniversary of Prime Minister Narendra Modi laying the foundation stone for Amaravati at Uddandarunipalem.

He recalled that at the time of foundation, Modi had said Amaravati would be developed into a Capital far greater than even Delhi but now, his promise turned out to be false just because of the regressive policies of Jaganmohan Reddy.



# Devotion hits a new peak atop Indrakeeladri Hill

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Goddess Kanakadurga was decorated as Saraswathi Devi on Wednesday, the fifth day of the Dasara Navaratri celebrations atop Indrakeeladri.

Saraswathi Devi is the goddess of knowledge, music and arts; she is regarded as Vagdevi, the goddess of sound, speech, consciousness and wisdom.

Goddess Saraswathi appears in a white saree, seated on a white lotus and with four hands; in one hand holding a book, one playing the veena, another holding a rosary (representing the power of meditation and spirituality) and in one hand Kamandalam (pot with sacred water) representing creative and purificatory powers.

Saraswathi Devi is also referred as Sharda Devi. A white swan is her vahanam (vehicle) so that she is known as Hamsa vahini.

On the fifth day of the Navaratri festivities,

Saraswathi Devi is worshipped and all students are traditionally required to study on this day and also start study of something new on the same day. Children under five years are made to start writing their first alphabet which is called Vidyarambham. Teachers are worshipped as embodiments of Saraswathi. Offering honey is very important in Saraswathi puja, as honey represents perfect knowledge. Payasam is offered as parasadam on this day.

It is usually Moola Nakshatram which is Mahasaraswathi Nakshatram and Devi is decorated as Mahasaraswathi, it is with the help of Saraswathi the Yudha tantra was designed and planned and Devi won the war against Mahishasura.

Chintamani Saraswathi, Gnyana Saraswathi, Neela Saraswathi, Ghata Saraswathi, Kinni Saraswathi, Antariksha Saraswathi, Maha Saraswathi

are the seven forms in which Saraswathi is spread in the universe.

Saraswathi Devi killed Sumbha and Nishumba with her Gnyana and so Devi is decorated as saraswathi.

According to the Durga temple officials, there was a huge rush of devotees for darshan of the goddess on the auspicious Moola Nakshatram day.

More than 13,000 devotees who obtained online tickets visited the temple for darshan of goddess Saraswathi Devi from 6 am to 9 pm with a break to enable the Chief Minister have darshan.

The officials said that there was a good collection of funds from the devotees through purchase of ticket sale of Rs 500, Rs 300 and Rs 100.

A few devotees who obtained tickets participated in Lakshakumarchana, Chandhoman and Srichakranavarnarchana.

# Enforcement Directorate attaches 27 properties in bank loan fraud case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate has attached 27 immovable properties located at Hyderabad and Vijayawada worth around Rs 11.05 crore belonging to Nimmagadda Ramakrishna, Nimmagadda Venugopal, VVNK Viswanath and their family members in a bank loan fraud case.

The market value of the properties seized is estimated to be around Rs 33.39 crore.

The assets were attached under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The probe revealed that siphoned off amount of Rs 1.72 crore was allegedly diverted in the production of a Telugu movie "Aakasame Haddu".

According to the anti-money laundering probe agency, loans were taken on the pretext of pisciculture, but instead the money was diverted to the main accused who in turn used it to introduce share capital in M/s Venus Aqua Foods Limited (VAFL) with help the company to borrow more.

The ED took up investigation based on an FIR filed by CBI, BS & FC, Bengaluru, against Nimmagadda Ramakrishna, Managing Director of M/s Venus Aqua Foods Limited and other Directors of the company for defrauding Union Bank of India (erstwhile Andhra Bank), Gudivada branch to the tune of Rs 36.97 crore.

ED in a statement said the investigation revealed that Venus Aqua Foods Limited had availed Rs 19.44 crore fish tank loans from Union Bank of India by furnishing forged

and fabricated documents including fake lease documents for 470 acres of fish farms.

The loan funds were diverted and not repaid causing a loss of Rs 36.97 crore.

"Investigation further revealed that the accused also availed fish tank loans in the name of 54 individuals including themselves, their family members, their friends or relatives or associates and their family members to the tune of Rs 22.64 crore," the ED said.

**Loans were taken on the pretext of pisciculture, but instead the money was diverted to the main accused who in turn used it to introduce share capital in M/s Venus Aqua Foods Limited.**

Part of the loan funds were also used to acquire immovable properties in the names of Nimmagadda Ramakrishna, Nimmagadda Venugopal, VVNK Viswanath, their family members and associates to disguise their origin and were projecting them as untainted properties added ED in statement.

# Fraudster arrested for cheating man of Rs 1 crore

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A fraudster who cheated a customer to a tune of Rs1.7 crore under the guise supplying gold at low price was arrested by Hyderabad Central Crime Station Police on Wednesday.

The accused identified as Kota Rakesh cheated Koteswara Rao Guptha, a resident of Ameerpet. Based on the complaint from Guptha, police booked a case and investigated it. After a year of manhunt, police arrested Rakesh at Bassettyhalli village, Dibbur-ahalli Mandal, Chikb-allapur District, Karnataka State and brought him under transit warrant and sent him to judicial custody on Wednesday.

"During interrogation accused disclosed that he used to lure innocent public in the name of gold business, assure them to supply the gold for low market price. After gaining the trust he will collect the amounts from the customers on pretext of providing the gold in a low market price and escape," said Sub-Inspector Laxminarayana.

# Balineni lays foundation stone for APPCB office

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Energy, Forest, Environment, Science and Technology Balineni Srinivasa Reddy on Wednesday participated in the foundation stone laying ceremony for the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB) zonal office to be constructed in Vijayawada.

The 20,000 sq ft zonal office will be completed in 18 months with an estimated cost of Rs 22.47 crore.

Addressing the gathering, Balineni said that APPCB has constructed its own office buildings in Visakhapatnam and Kakinada while work was in progress at Tirupati and Kurnool towns.

He said that as per the instructions of Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, the APPCB now proposed to construct office building to accommodate Zonal and Regional Offices with Zonal Laboratory for extending better services to the people.

The construction works are to be executed by AP Police Housing Corporation Limited, Mangalagiri,



Guntur District.

The Minister said that responsibilities of the Board have increased multi-fold in protecting the environment as State Pollution Control Boards are implementation authorities of water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act.

There is a need for permanent infrastructure and sufficient man-power for the Board to perform the functions enunciated in the Acts successfully.

To perform the duties effectively in safe-guarding the environment the Board has established Regional Offices in each district of the State.

# Eight arrested for murder of history-sheeter

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Pahadishareef police on Wednesday arrested eight-member gang in connection with the murder of a history-sheeter, occurred 10 days ago in Balapur. Ali was allegedly murdered on suspicion that he had turned into a police tipper, police said.

The victim was identified as Syed Waheed Ali and the victims were identified as Shaik Ismail, the main conspirator, Syed Zaheeruddin, Syed Abid, Mohammad, Khaja Shahbaz, Mohammad Shabaz, Mohammad Omer, and Mohammad Ameer.

According to the police, Syed Waheed Ali met Shaik Ismail three years ago while they were lodged in prison and friendship developed between them. Shaik Ismail grew suspicious that Syed Waheed Ali was passing information to the police about his criminal activities and movements due to which the police was continuously keeping a watch on him. Subsequently Shaik Ismail planned to eliminate Syed Waheed Ali and roped in his associates to implement his plan," said,

# Vacancies in police dept to be filled by January

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Asserting that vacancies in the police force would be filled by the start of next year, Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Wednesday said that his government was committed to maintaining law and order besides ensuring safety and security of women, children and the elderly.

Participating in the Police Commemoration Day parade at the Municipal Stadium here, the Chief Minister said that a notification would be issued to fill the vacancies in the Police Department. He asked DGP Gautam Sawang to issue the schedule by this January to fill 6,500 posts annually in four years.

"Funds pending funds for the past three years for the police welfare will be cleared soon," the Chief Minister said.

He had earlier paid homage to the martyrs at the Police Memorial and took the guard



of honour.

The Chief Minister said maintaining law and order was the priority for the government and no one would be spared on that count. "Special focus would be laid on the security of children, women and the aged

and there would be no compromise in ensuring safety of the weaker sections. Severe action would be taken against terrorists and anti-social elements and crime in the name of caste, creed and against women would not be tolerated," Jagan

asserted.

Recalling the sacrifices made by the police personnel, the Chief Minister said that the department was in the forefront during Corona, and bracing to meet the challenges being thrown by modern technology

besides working hard to curb illegal activities like smuggling of sand and liquor.

The government has taken a bold step in curbing crime against women by bringing in the Disha Act, Jagan said, and expressed hope that the Centre would soon give it clearance.

He said 18 Disha police stations were set up in the state by appointing women police officers and special public prosecutors to deal with cases of crime against women. Steps were also being taken to set up special courts for women.

Reduced crime rate is also an indicator of development as is in the case in Finland, Norway and Switzerland. We cannot achieve that overnight, but our police force is working hard to bring down the crime rate, he said.

Home Minister M Sucharita, Chief Secretary Nilam Sawhney and other officials were among those present and contributed to the Police Welfare Fund.

# Sacrifice of cops won't go waste, vow police officers

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The police in North Andhra districts and Vizag city observed the Police Commemoration Day on Wednesday.

Vizag city and Rural police organised a commemoration parade near the Police Martyrs Memorial, Beach Road in the city on Wednesday morning.

Police personnel, their families, senior officials from the district administration and others paid tribute to the police martyrs on the occasion.

City police chief Manish Kumar Sinha said that the sacrifices of police personnel won't go waste and the police personnel who have been working in the frontline since the outbreak of Covid-19 have performed bravely.

He asked the police personnel to discharge the duties with dedication, courage and honesty to win the hearts of the people. He expressed that the biggest tribute police personnel can pay to the police martyrs would be to discharge the duties with dedication.

DIG (Visakha Range) LKV Ranga Rao and Superintendent of Police (Visakha Rural) B Krishna Rao and other police officers paid tribute to the police personnel who sacrificed their lives. They recalled the services of the police personnel, especially during the pandemic.

The police have urged the people to recognise the services of police. As many as 12 police personnel had died

while on duty during the pandemic from three districts — Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam. The police said that a series of programmes will be conducted from October 21 to

November 1, marking the day, following the safety norms.

Similarly in Vizianagaram and Srikakulam, martyrs' day was observed with all solemnity. The police said that the day is observed every year in remembrance of the 10 CRPF men who had laid down their lives fighting Chinese aggression at Hot Springs in Ladakh on October 21, 1959.



# Oppn misleading people: Harish

PNS ■ DUBBAK

Finance Minister T Harish Rao dared BJP president Bandi Sanjay to prove his allegation that beedi workers are being paid a reduced pension of Rs 1,600 with evidence or quit and offered to step down as Minister and MLA post if Bandi Sanjay were to prove his allegations. The Minister was addressing a women's rally in the town on Wednesday in support of TRS candidate.

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, who was born in Chintamadaka and did his schooling in Dubbak, has love for the constituency, but who else will love to develop the constituency, Harish Rao questioned. In Modi's own state of Gujarat, Rs 500 is being paid as social welfare pension, while KCR gives Rs 2,000 as pension to various categories of beneficiaries per month, he compared and said that the people would not believe the lies being spread by Congress and BJP. He objected to Bandi's statement that the Centre is funding the welfare and development schemes of the state government and denied it as totally false.



Finance Minister T Harish Rao addressing the gathering in Dubbak on Wednesday

He appealed to the people whether the BJP government has been giving free power to agriculture sector or giving pensions to beedi workers or extending input subsidy scheme under Rythu Bandhu to benefit farmers or implementing the schemes like Kalyana Lakshmi in any of its rural states. He observed that the BJP has no issue to campaign against the TRS. On

what basis the BJP would seek votes from people of Dubbak constituency, he wondered. Will the BJP seek votes promising to fix metres to the water consumed by farmers? Will it seek votes for jeopardising the interests of the maize farmers by allowing import of maize by the country? Harish sought to know who will benefit from allowing import of the maize by the country? He said that the

people of Dubbak seek welfare and development of the constituency and told the electorate that the people would get duped if they give their vote to the Congress or the BJP. He said that Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy, whose death forced by-election in Dubbak, served the people of the constituency till he breathed his last. Dubbak TRS candidate Sujata said that K Chandrasekhar Rao, blessed

**Minister Harish Rao asked why the BJP ruled govts including Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state Gujarat is not giving Rs 2,000 pensions?**

her as his daughter and asked her to contest the by-election to serve the people. Sujata said that she would follow the footsteps of Ramalinga Reddy and fulfil his ideals. Earlier, women of the constituency took out a huge rally in support of Sujata. The rally commenced at Dubbak RTC bus depot and made its way via Ambedkar Circle in the town and culminated in a meeting at TelanganaTalli Statue. MP KottaPrabhakar Reddy, MLA Padma DevenderReddy, former minister SunitaLakshma Reddy, several TRS leaders and others took part in the meeting.

# Manickam tries to bring peace to T-Cong factions

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Congress Affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore is making all efforts to end factions in the state Congress. Tagore came to the state with prior information about the state leaders. He made it clear to the leaders and cadre to stop criticising each other on social media platforms. He also directed the leaders to work unitedly.

He exuded confidence that the party will win 2023 elections if the leaders work hard. He described the party leaders as cricket team and himself as the manager. "The team will have different kinds of players, however, the team will win only if it plays as a team," he said indirectly hinting the party leaders that 'individualism' will not help the party.

Without naming the leader, Manickam Tagore asked of the person concerned not to make their followers raise slogans in support of them and directed them to raise slogans saying 'Jai Congress' and 'Jai Sonia Gandhi'. He asked the leaders to leave the meeting, who were not invited. He also sought explanation from the party leaders who skipped the meetings.

On the other hand,



**Telangana Congress Affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore exuded confidence that Congress party will win 2023 Assembly polls if the leaders work hard**

Manickam Tagore is also utilising the Dubbak by-elections to nullify the factions within the party leaders with his firm strategies. He assigned all the leaders-- from TPCC Chief to mandal level leaders to participate in election campaign by allotting mandals, villages and booths. Tagore also gave targets to the leaders to ensure the victory of the party candidate. Surprisingly, the party leaders are working in their allotted places similar to 'never before ever after' manner as the election is not that easy to win as the ruling TRS party and BJP are striving hard to win the election.

He also asked the party leaders to work hard by thinking that every leader is a party candidate. He stressed on the

fact that party is important than leaders. One of the party leaders told to The Pioneer that Manickam Tagore had conducted review meetings similar to head master.

"I don't know what will be the result in Dubbak. However, the atmosphere in the party has changed. It's a good sign for the Telangana Congress as Maickam Tagore is trying to treat the root cause," he said on condition of anonymity. It's common in Telangana Congress that the leaders try to expose others using party platforms leading to factions and infighting. However, this attitude among the leaders might change with Manickam Tagore's style of working, another leader opined.

# More facilities at Basar temple soon: Minister

PNS ■ PNS/NIRMAL

Minister for Forest Allola Indrakaran Reddy on Wednesday said that steps were being taken for developing the famous Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devasthanam-Basar. The Minister along with his wife performed special prayers at the temple of goddess of learning on Wednesday.

Indrakaran stated that an action plan was chalked out for creating basic amenities and to improve existing facilities for the convenience of devotees belonging to several parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. He informed that Rs 50 crore was earmarked for developing the shrine.

# Hyd floods a national calamity: Cong

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president N Uttam Kumar Reddy on Wednesday said that the State Government should increase the amount for flood relief from Rs 500 crore to Rs 5,000 crore. Uttam, in a statement informed that the TPCC Core Committee, which met at Pragapur in Gajwel constituency on Tuesday night, held detailed discussions on various issues including the flood situation in Telangana, agriculture and Kalwakurthy Lift Irrigation Scheme.

The meeting was attended by AICC Incharge Manickam Tagore, CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and other senior leaders. After having detailed discussions, the Core Committee passed several unanimous resolutions.

"A number of issues such as huge misery and loss of life, property and agricultural crops and the inadequate response of



**Congress Core committee meet discussed number of issues such as huge misery and loss of life, property and agricultural crops and others**

state and central governments were discussed. The Core Committee unanimously passed resolutions on various issues," Uttam said. It was decided to write to the Prime Minister and demand that the present situation in Telangana state be declared as a national calamity. The Congress party condemned the incompetent and inefficient handling of the excess rains cum flood situation in Hyderabad and other parts of the state by TRS government. It also condemned the negligent attitude of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is not touring the flood affected areas of Hyderabad city or

the extensive crop damage areas in rural Telangana and describes the situation akin to "Nero fiddles while Rome burns".

The party demanded the state government to immediately take up enumeration of crop damage due to rains/floods. "For all farmers where extensive crop damage has occurred, an amount of Rs 20,000 per acre should be given immediately. Cotton, paddy and maize crops damaged due to rains should be purchased with relaxed conditions and higher moisture content be accepted. Due to the heavy rains, whatever the crop

left that damaged crop to be purchased by government agencies by relaxing the quality norms such as shading of colour, moisture percentage and damaged cotton," it said.

The Congress condemned the negligent and unscientific approach of the TRS government which has led to the collapse of the Kalwakurthy lift irrigation scheme in Mahbubnagar district.

## SPLASHING SLOGANS



Spreading awareness on wearing masks, youngsters along with the officials concerned painted the walls in Shamshabad Municipality.



# As inflows rise, 18 gates of NSP lifted

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The inflows into Nagarjuna Sagar Project from upper reaches is put at 3.42 lakh cusecs forcing authorities to lift 18 crest gates of the project to discharge downstream. As the water level reached the maximum level in the project, the officials are discharging the flood water in its entirety.

The water level in the project reached 310.55 TMC as against the FRL of 312 TMC. Water stored in the project is measured at 590 feet. Meanwhile, the MET office predicted rains in the state for three or four days. If the rains were to continue, the flood level in the Nagarjuna Sagar Project is likely to increase further.

# 'Karimnagar police role model for TS'

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

BC Welfare Minister Gangula Kamalakar on Wednesday opined that it was impossible to think about the society without police. Peaceful atmosphere prevailed in the society only because of relentless service by the police of all cadres, he said.

As part of police flag-day (police martyrs commemoration day), a commemoration parade was held in commissionerate headquarters here on Wednesday, wherein Kamalakar participated as chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, Minister said people were able to lead peaceful lives only because of the police discharging their duties with a great responsibility by sacrificing their freedom.

# BJP to rope in Smriti Irani for campaign?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP is planning to rope in Union Minister for Women and Child development Smriti Irani for campaign in Dubbak. According to sources, the party leaders have approached the Union Minister in this regard. However, she is yet to respond. According to rumours making rounds in political circles, Jana Sena president Pawan Kalyan may participate in Dubbak by-poll campaign in support of BJP candidate Raghunandan Rao. Clarifying on the issue, BJP sources said there are no such plans as of now.

"There may not be big impact with Pawan Kalyan because it is a by-election. Though Pawan Kalyan has great fan following among



youth, by-poll equations will be different when compared with normal elections," BJP sources said. Another argument is that it is not the right time for PK to enter Telangana politics, as the by-election was by-election was necessitated by the death of Solipeta Ramalinga Reddy. Political analysts opine that Dubbak by election may not be good platform for PK. It will do more harm than good.

# 'Govt creating obstacles in campaign'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharatiya Janata Party on Wednesday strongly condemned the undemocratic, unethical an illegal methods being allegedly used by the ruling TRS government to create obstacles to its party MLA contestant M.Raghunandan Rao in the Dubbaka bypoll campaign.

BJP will lodge a complaint with Telangana State Election Commission (SEC) and it will also explore all legal options against the government, party Telangana Unit Chief Spokesperson K Krishna Saagar Rao said in a release here. The low-level tactics being used by the TRS exploiting police and administrative machinery is exposing fear of their defeat in the election, he alleged.

# Kishan talks tough on encroachments

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy on Wednesday claimed that Telangana Ministers had been making unwarranted criticism against the Centre. Referring to their criticism that the Centre had not yet extended any help to the state for flood relief efforts, Kishan pointed out to media persons that the money belonged to people in the first place.

The Centre had suggested to the state government to initially spend money for the sake of flood victims from the State Disaster Fund and that this amount would be reimbursed later. There was no question of giving funds before assessing the losses.

Kishan alleged that the state government officials never cared about encroachments along the Musi river. He suggested that the Telangana government should remove these encroachments immediately. He attributed the flood situation to encroachments on tanks and nalas. One could understand the extent of encroachments by looking at satellite pictures of the situation before and after 2014 (after TRS came to power). The encroachments that had taken place during the erstwhile Congress regime continued even under the TRS government regime, he said.

Stating that the flood canals and drainage systems were in a bad state, Kishan Reddy alleged that the KCR government was not removing even the silt in flood canals.

# Telangana's Coronavirus recovery rate crosses 90%

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a remarkable development, Telangana's Covid-19 recovery rate has crossed 90 per cent as the state continued to see more recoveries than new infections. Health officials on Wednesday said 1,811 people recovered during 24 last hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 2,04,388. The state's recovery rate climbed to 90.38 per cent as against the national average of 88.8 per cent.

The state reported 1,579 new cases, taking the cumulative tally to 2,26,124. Of this only 20,449 cases are active. Out of the total active cases, 17,071 are in home or institutional isolation. Five more

**The state reported 1,579 new cases, taking the cumulative tally to 2,26,124. Of this only 20,449 cases are active. Out of the total active cases, 17,071 are in home or institutional isolation**

people succumbed to the infection during the last 24 hours, ending 8 p.m. on Tuesday. The fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 1,287. The fatality rate dropped to 0.56 per cent against the national average of 1.5 per cent.

Officials said the percentage of deaths due to Covid-19 was 44.96 while the remaining 55.04 had co-morbidities.

Greater Hyderabad and districts continue to show declining trends in the number of new cases. According to the media bulletin issued by the office of the director of public health, Greater Hyderabad reported 256 new cases. Medchal Malkajgiri t recorded second highest number of cases at 135 followed by Khammam (106).

# 'Horse power' to fore in rescue of flood victims

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Horses turned out to be saviours helping a group of good samaritans in taking relief materials, including food and rescuing marooned people in narrow streets and by-lanes, where boats could not venture during recent floods in the city.

Members of the Hyderabad Horse Riding School banded together and lent a helping hand to the personnel of Army, NDRF and police in reaching out to residents, whose houses were inundated following incessant rains last week. The horse-riders waded through chest-deep water, navigating obstructions such as electric poles, trees, to deliver essentials like milk and medicines to people.

Our horses came in handy at places where boats were unable to reach in view of electricity



poles, parked vehicles, trees, and others, Md Abdul Wahab, President of Hyderabad Horse



Horse riders waded through chest-deep water, navigating obstructions such as electric poles, trees to deliver essentials like milk and medicines to people

Riding School (HHRS) said on Wednesday. Relief activities were carried out at Nadeem colony, Virasat nagar, Balreddy nagar and others in Tolichowki for four days starting October 15.

The team deployed around 15 equines besides relief workers on the ground to carry out

rescue and relief work, Wahab said. The relief work involved a big team and required a lot of planning. Our team rescued citizens who were reluctant to move out of their homes, by convincing them, he added.

The horse riding school, established a decade ago, is run with a service motive and has

**The team deployed around 15 equines besides relief workers on the ground to carry out rescue and relief work, said Md Abdul Wahab, President of HHRS**

also taken up Swachh Bharat work earlier. The heavy rains have left 70 people dead in the state in the last one week and caused damage to properties with the state government pegging losses at over Rs 5,000 crore as per preliminary estimates.

INDIA CORNER

Gold trader attacked, robbed of valuables worth lakhs

Two unidentified men attacked a gold trader and robbed him of valuables worth Rs 37 lakh in Jetpur town of Rajkot district on Wednesday, police said. Chiman Vekaria was attacked by two robbers, who allegedly threw chilli powder on his face and snatched a bag containing 700 gm of gold worth Rs 35 lakh and Rs 2 lakh cash, sub-inspector P B Vaghela of Jetpur police station said. The attack took place when the victim, a trader from neighbouring Dhoraji town, was passing through a narrow lane connecting Nana Chowk and Soni Baazar, the official said. When the Vekaria fought back, the robbers attacked him with a knife and injured his leg before escaping the scene, he said. The victim is undergoing treatment at a hospital and further probe is underway, the official added.



Rs 3,737 cr bonus for 30.67 lakh non-gazetted employees

The central government on Wednesday decided to give Rs 3,737 crore as bonus to 30.67 lakh non-gazetted employees with a view to encourage spending during the festival season. The decision to give productivity-linked bonus and non-productivity-linked bonus for 2019-2020 was taken at the meeting of the Union Cabinet, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar told reporters. The bonus, to be given in a week's time, will encourage the middle-class to spend and thus add to the demand in the economy, the minister said.



Senior BJP leader Eknath Khadse to join NCP: Minister

Disgruntled Maharashtra BJP leader Eknath Khadse will join the NCP on Friday, state minister Jayant Patil said on Wednesday, ending speculations about the senior saffron party leader jumping the ship. Khadse was sulking since he was made to resign as minister in 2016 in the then Devendra Fadnis-led BJP government over corruption allegations. Speaking to reporters here, Patil, who is the state NCP chief, said with the joining of a seasoned leader like Khadse, who is a former minister and ex-leader of opposition in the state Assembly, the Sharad Pawar-led party will be strengthened, particularly in the Khandesh region. Khadse, who is believed to have strained ties with Fadnis, comes from Jalgaon district of the Khandesh region. Once seen as No.2 in the then Fadnis cabinet, Khadse resigned as revenue minister in 2016 over land grab allegations, and since then he has been largely sidelined in the saffron party. Patil claimed "a lot of people" want to join the NCP, but said there is no need to hold bypolls amid the COVID-19 crisis. "Eknathrao Khadse saheb, who worked hard along with (late) Gopinath Munde saheb to expand and strengthen the BJP in Maharashtra for several years, told me some time back that he has quit his party," Patil said.



'Doubt whether HC order will be enforced in letter & spirit'

West Bengal Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury on Wednesday expressed doubt if the Calcutta High Court order making all community puja pandals as 'no-entry zone' will be enforced in letter and spirit by the state administration. He said the state government had "failed to give a convincing roadmap during the hearing at the high court about ways to contain group transmission of COVID-19 virus if puja revellers hit the streets. Chowdhury, who is also the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha described the Mamata Banerjee government as an "inept, inefficient regime". "The CM herself has confirmed community transmission already started in West Bengal and COVID-19 cases are on the rise in the state. Keeping that situation in mind the state has failed to convince the hon'ble high court that it will be able to check that graph if crowds are allowed on puja days," the West Bengal Congress president said. "I have doubt if the administration will succeed in enforcing the order of the high court barring entry of visitors into the pandals. There are thousands of pujas across the state, small and big," he said. Chowdhury alleged the CM has taken hasty decisions "which had only caused confusion in people's mind." The senior Congress leader further said decisions like providing Rs 50,000 as a grant to every puja committee has been taken keeping an eye on vote bank politics while many people are dying every day due to lack of proper healthcare facilities.



BJP-JD(U) alliance 'superhit' like Sachin-Sehwag in cricket: Rajnath

PNS ■ KHALGAON (BIHAR)

Calling the BJP-JD(U) partnership as "superhit" as the opening pair of Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag in cricket, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday said one can debate on the quantum of development done by the alliance government in Bihar, but no one can point a finger at Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on corruption.



Attacking the opposition RJD, Singh said the people had witnessed its 15-year tenure and can see the difference between its "misrule" and the good governance of the Nitish Kumar-led alliance government.

Addressing a rally here in Bhagalpur district ahead of the Assembly polls beginning October 28, Singh said, "The

alliance of the BJP and the JD(U) is as superhit as the opening pair of Sachin and Sehwag of Indian cricket team."

He said the alliance government has provided basic facilities of electricity, road and water, which Bihar lacked for decades. "People have seen the

15-year rule of 'lalten' (RJD's poll symbol lantern) and they have also seen the development of Bihar during the BJP-JD(U) alliance government. The performance of these two governments cannot be compared. The state transformed under the NDA government," Singh

Attacking the opposition RJD, Singh said people had witnessed its 15-year tenure and can see the difference between its "misrule" and the good governance of the Nitish Kumar-led alliance govt

said. Praising Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his deputy and BJP leader Sushil Modi, Singh said there are no charges of corruption against them.

"I am not making this claim that Nitish Kumar has done everything for Bihar. It could be debated whether he has done enough work or less work or more was required to be done, but there can be no debate on their integrity," Singh said.

Singh said no one can point

a finger at Kumar on the issue of corruption.

Taking potshots at the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Singh, speaking in local Bhojpuri language, said 'lalten' has cracked and its oil has leaked and nothing will work now.

He also spoke at length about various welfare schemes of the Modi government such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana.

Over 3K held for flouting Covid norms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Kolkata Police has arrested over 3,000 people in the last 10 days for flouting COVID-19 protocol and not wearing masks, a senior officer said on Wednesday.

Besides, intensifying vigil in and around the city, Kolkata Police between October 11 to 20 has arrested at least 3,418 people for not wearing face masks to check the spread of coronavirus, the officer said.

"... We are trying to raise the awareness level of the people about wearing masks during this ongoing pandemic. But some people have taken this thing very casually and violating the norms. And now with the Durga Puja around and with doctors cautioning we have enhanced the vigil and started being strict with

such violators," the senior Kolkata Police officer said.

The maximum number of 734 arrests were made on October 18, while on Tuesday there were 495 arrests.

Apart from the Naka checkings, police were arresting people from places in and around the market and shopping malls which have been witnessing people gathering in large numbers for Durga Puja shopping.

"We are keeping a tight vigil on areas like New Market, Gariahat, Lake Market and areas which have markets and shopping malls and arresting people for not wearing masks," the officer said, adding that the drive will continue.

West Bengal has reported 3,29,057 COVID-19 cases and 6,180 deaths from the viral disease so far.

Priyanka slams govt over farm bills

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday attacked the BJP-led government at the Centre over the new farm laws and alleged that farmers in Uttar Pradesh were forced to sell paddy at a rate lower than the minimum support price.

Taking to Twitter, she also posted a video of a farmer alleging corruption in crop procurement at the Mohammadi Khiri mandi. "The BJP government is holding a government Khat Sammelan over the bills which are against the interest of the farmers, but is not listening to the pain of the farmers," Priyanka Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi.

"In almost all the places in UP, farmers are forced to sell their paddy crops at Rs 1,000 to 1,100 per quintal, about Rs 800 less than the Rs 1,868 per quintal MSP," she said.



This is when there is a guarantee for MSP, think what will happen when this guarantee is not there, she added.

Her attack on the government comes a day after the Punjab Assembly adopted a resolution rejecting the Centre's new farm laws and passed four bills that it said will counter the contentious legislation enacted by Parliament. The three farm bills -- the

Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020 -- were passed by Parliament recently. Subsequently, President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the bills.

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The Congress, many other opposition parties and several farmers organisations have been protesting against these legislations, claiming that these will harm the interests of farmers and benefit corporates, a claim denied by the government.

The Centre has asserted that these new laws will be beneficial for farmers and will increase their income.

Opposition leaders condemn Stan Swamy's arrest, urge people to break silence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders on Wednesday expressed solidarity with activist Stan Swamy, who has been booked under the UAPA, and demanded that the stringent law be repealed.

They also urged the public to break their silence on the government's efforts to "chip away the rights of the people".

The NIA arrested 83-year-old Swamy on October 8 in the Bhima Koregaon case. Activists and political leaders have been condemning Swamy's arrest, saying that despite him being a patient of Parkinson's disease and suffering from other health problems, he is now in jail.

Speaking at a press conference organised by People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUC), Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren claimed that the government was trying to silence the voices of marginalised communities.

In a video message, he alleged that under the present government, the unity, integrity and democratic structures were under attack.



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"The NDA government sitting in the centre today - it is silencing the voices of those speaking for the adivasis, Dalits and other marginalised groups, the non-BJP ruled states are being harassed, the various constitutional mechanisms of

today when someone like Stan Swamy was arrested. He is someone who has been working in Jharkhand for years, in the remote faraway villages, wandering in the jungles, just so that the adivasis, Dalits and minority populations here could be reached. This is extremely disappointing. Stan Swamy is also suffering from many diseases," Soren said.

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury as well as the DMK's Kanimozhi urged civil society groups and the public to break their silence over the "government's attacks on the rights of the people".

"Today we have to make a decision as political parties, as the whole society whether to accept what is happening in silence or say this is enough and fight them together. If we accept this, then in a few years we will not see a democratic India that we know. Every law that this government has passed has chipped away the rights of the people. It's time to break the silence," Kanimozhi said in the video conference.

'Ready to protest alongside AIADMK'

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The DMK on Wednesday said it is ready to join forces with the AIADMK government and protest for getting the 7.5 per cent quota in medical admissions for state-run school students, a day after the ruling dispensation sought early clearance by the Governor for a bill envisaging the reservation. Chief Minister K Palaniswami should come forward and announce a protest on the matter after consulting the opposition parties, DMK president M K Stalin said in a tweet.

In this matter, "DMK is ready to protest/talk together with the AIADMK government. @CMOTamilNadu should come forward to announce protest (demonstration) by talking with parties," the leader of the opposition in the state assembly said. Stalin also wrote to Governor Banwarilal Purohit seeking his immediate approval to the bill, passed by the assembly on September 15 for providing the horizon-



EPS should come forward and announce a protest on the matter after consulting the opposition parties, said M K Stalin

tal reservation to students of government schools who clear the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET).

"I urge you to immediately give assent to the bill and help fulfillment of the dream of government school students to an extent to pursue medicine as their profession," he said in the letter, a copy of which he shared with his tweet.

'Thorough measures needed to deal with radicalisation in J&K'

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha advocated comprehensive measures on Wednesday to deal with radicalisation of youngsters in the Union Territory, saying terror elements from thousands of miles away are trying to infiltrate a large section of the society with the help of rabid propaganda.

Addressing policemen on the occasion of the Police Commemoration Day at Zewan on the city outskirts, Sinha hailed the Jammu and Kashmir Police for maintaining law and order and dealing

with terrorism in the Union Territory. "Indoctrination is not limited to an individual taking up a gun after brainwashing by terror outfits, but with the help of rabid online and offline propaganda, terror elements sitting thousands of miles away are trying to infiltrate a large section of the society," the LG said in his address.

He said as a part of comprehensive counter-radicalisation measures, there must be a well-coordinated, community-supported platform to publicise and propagate the sensible voices against terrorist ideology. "Our strategy on counter-radicalisation and de-radicalisation must be inclusive and

should involve community elders to promote the message of peace, prosperity and harmony," Sinha said.

He called for a regular change in strategy to deal with terror-funding from across the border. "To deal with terror-funding, there is a need to change our strategy regularly so that we tackle it with a comprehensive response," the LG said. He said cyber-patrolling and round-the-clock monitoring of malicious content on the dark web is another challenge, but asserted that the police and other security forces are capable of formulating an effective mechanism to deal with it.

In poll battle for Bihar, a war of songs erupts

PNS ■ PATNA

Amid the hustle and bustle of the Bihar assembly elections, the BJP on Wednesday got its Delhi MP and Bhojpuri singer Manoj Tiwari to reprise one of his chartbusters, appealing to voters to retain their trust in the states ruling dispensation.

Suna ho Bihar ke bhैया, launched by the party as its new election song, is a straight lift off jiya ho Bihar ke lala the foot-tapping number from Manoj Bajpayee-starrer Gangs of Wasseypur, which had acquired a cult status upon its release a decade ago.

Incidentally, the composer of the original song, Sneha Khanwalkar, had been roped in by the campaign team of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in the 2015 assembly polls when she



came out with the catchy phir se Nitish Kumar ho.

The JD(U) chief had then comfortably returned to power belying naysayers who were skeptical about his coalition with arch rival Lalu Prasad RJD finding resonance with the voters.

Back in the NDA, Kumar is now the coalitions chief ministerial candidate, and in the new song Tiwari, who has

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retained the tune as well as the background score of the original number, reminds the voters that he wants them to support the JD(U) chief even as the larger than life persona of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his benevolence towards Bihar seems to be the central theme of the parody.

In the song that lasts nearly eight minutes, Tiwari dwells at length on the progress made by the state under the NDA rule

badi mushkil se (against various odds). He goes on to add that if someone says in spite of so many accomplishments Bihar mein ka ba (what does Bihar have to offer) then the person needs to get eyeglasses checked.

For the politically aware people of Bihar the insinuation is hard to miss.

Neha Singh Rathore, a bespectacled 20 something from Kaimur district, to which

Tiwari also belongs, has become an internet sensation with her rap song Bihar mein kaa ba where she takes a grim, sardonic view of her home state. She says a lot remains to be done despite a decade-and-a-half of sushasan (good governance).

Manoj Bajpayees rap number Mumbai mein kaa baa, released recently to much acclaim, had inspired Rathore, who keeps a low profile and reaches out to viewers and listeners through songs which she self-records on her smart phone and uploads on social media.

A self-styled cultural activist who wants to pull Bhojpuri music out of the slush of sleaze, Rathore likes to make a political point without caring much for party affiliations.

## Crowdpuller Tejashwi

RJD leader Lalu Prasad's son has committed himself to the race rather late in the day. He may dent but can't demolish Nitish



One would have expected the pandemic to dull the campaign for the Bihar elections but Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav is certainly stealing the thunder in optics. The surging crowds at his rallies, in total violation of social distancing norms, the high decibel cheers and his promise of providing 10 lakh jobs show the despondency of the State's migrant workers, who are looking for a sliver of hope, if not the promised land. They say visuals shape perception, and though Bihar's wisened voter has seldom been swayed by spectacles and transferred votes, Tejashwi's appeal is certainly giving some anxious

moments to the Janata Dal (United) supremo and incumbent Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. But with popular sentiment favouring the BJP with which JD(U) is in a combine, can Tejashwi churn the political waters if not turn the tide? Perhaps, he has immersed himself rather late in the day but will this legitimise his claim to being the torchbearer of his father, Lalu Prasad Yadav, and his social justice movement? For now, Tejashwi, who has often been criticised for running away to Delhi at the slightest challenge and being arrogant, is seriously investing himself as a chief ministerial aspirant. And over the last six months, he has been grounded in his State, worked the grassroots and built a people connect. Most importantly, he has decided to step out of Lalu's shadow and recast the political dialogue to his specifications. He knows full well that he cannot fill his father's big shoes just yet and that RJD would still get the traditional caste-based loyalty and minority votes based on Lalu's goodwill. After all, the Yadav-Muslim combined votebase still makes for 30 per cent of the State population. So he wants to carve out a broader constituency for himself that is more contextual than historic and is keen to make the most of a time when the political stock of Bihar's one-time deliverer Nitish is at an all-time low. So instead of harping on the RJD's core plank of caste, he has made unemployment of the State's youth the pivot of his campaign, as economics is the only issue that matters in pandemic-hit times. This helps him on two counts. First, it helps him reel in the youth, who form about 24 per cent of the electorate and who, like the migrant workers, are thoroughly disenchanted with the way Nitish handled their return during the lockdown. They even idolised Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for rehabilitating them in transit, a fact that the BJP is likely to encash for itself. Second, though the RJD is seen as a scam-tainted party, a new generation hardly remembers the details and Tejashwi is hoping to contemporise the party's appeal among the young. In fact, his catchy slogans, like "Nayi Soch Naya Bihar" or "Abki Bar Yuva Sarkar," are in tune with his effort to recast himself as a development-oriented leader who can fill in where Nitish failed. Besides, he has also given tickets to some upper caste leaders but has been astute enough to not upset the backward castes and Dalits, considering that Nitish has systematically chipped away at the RJD's base over the years by creating sub-categories like the Extremely Backward Castes (EBCs) and Mahadalits. Tejashwi, is, therefore, trying to broaden the party's base to make up for this slide and wants to personify the Bihar that doesn't want Nitish. It is this that makes him engaging in what was thought to be a colourless election.

The question is if the reliability and people connect can work on the ground mathematically. Of course, this time both Lalu and Tejashwi have been careful about seat allocation to allies, preferring to keep the lion's share for the party. They have learnt the hard way, drawing a blank in the Lok Sabha elections last year after contesting only 19 seats on their own and apportioning the rest among allies, who couldn't ensure vote transfers to either the RJD or the Congress. So the party is contesting 144 Assembly seats, leaving 70 for the Congress and 29 for the three Left parties. On its own, its vote-catching potential goes up but right now with Nitish splitting its pie, what with Dalit leader Jitan Ram Manjhi and other splinters migrating to the JD(U), floating outfits or becoming Independents, the RJD still needs its old allies lest they, too, desert and split the anti-vote. Besides, RJD won 80 seats in the 2015 Assembly election together with Nitish and the JD(U) votebase. That's gone now. So RJD cannot risk disadvantage itself further. Besides, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) now has a broad caste arc with the support of dominant groups like the Kurmis, Koeris/Kushwahs and Mahadalits, who account for 60 per cent of Bihar's population. Tejashwi is banking on the Left parties for transplanting "caste" with "class" and hoping to make a breakthrough among the poor and underprivileged. By and large, the Left parties have limited but committed voters and can matter in the RJD-led alliance. Besides, Tejashwi visited flood-hit refugees at their homes and toured the really backward pockets of the State. And though politically and ideologically divergent, he backed rival claimant and Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) leader Chirag Paswan for pointing out Nitish's flaws, cleverly not antagonising himself among the Paswans, a dominant section of Dalits. Nitish needed a credible challenger much earlier for people to reconsider, a space quietly picked up by the BJP with its post-Ayodhya swell and the Modi aura. A fortnight of roaring success doesn't translate to votes. Will Tejashwi remain a talking point or indeed become a turning point?

## Keep Durga in our hearts

The PM is right, if India is to avoid a devastating second wave, our behaviour during the festive season will matter



In Kolkata and the rest of West Bengal, as well as in Bengali communities across the length and breadth of India, the coming of the festive season meant going to a Puja pandal, paying obeisance to the Mother and her children on their annual visit before indulging in food and mingling with friends and family. And not just in Bengal, where the arrival of Ma Durga meant a time of feasting and spending on new clothes and household goods, but across the country, across communities, these months meant exchanging gifts, sweets and what not. It was a time for togetherness, where children travelled back to be with their families and the

usual news stories of these times over the past few years were the exorbitant airfares across the country. However, in these coronavirus-infected months, whether in Kolkata or in Delhi's Chittaranjan Park area, the limited and scaled down pandals have become no-go areas. But while the pandemic has dampened enthusiasm in many sensible people, who are relying on digital feeds to address their spiritual quest, others are incorrigible. Festival romantics, for whom the joys of pandal-hopping cannot be denied, have compelled the Calcutta High Court to modify its ban on entering pandals, now allowing small groups inside. How on earth will this be monitored? While this can possibly be managed in cities like Kolkata, Howrah, Asansol and Siliguri, how will the rush be controlled in the hundreds of small towns that dot the South Bengal countryside, all of which have their own Puja pandals and where people invariably use India's densest suburban rail system to work in the city of Kolkata? The potential for a regional healthcare disaster is tremendous and one presumes that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech was to ensure that things do not get out of hand. In Delhi, puja organisers have been careful and no large pandals have been set up. The few pujas that are happening are taking place purely for religious purposes in temples.

One hopes that the citizens of India pay heed to the PM's request and understand that God will not be angry if we do not go and pay obeisance in person. This is a horrible aspect of today's reality and there will be an economic price as well, but if we are to stay safe and healthy during the winter, we do not have a choice.

# Welfarism and growth

We have to get past the obsessive compulsion to look at monthly outcomes and instead adopt a medium-to-long-term approach for a sustainable recovery



BINDU DALMIA

The Indian economy has been stress-tested many times before but never been dented as savagely as this time around. But 2020 will be remembered as the year that eroded a decade's worth of progress, the *annus horribilis* that bought humanity to its knees. Governments and businesses across the world are undergoing rapid recalibrations in order to adjust to the world of extreme volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). So, when the Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) states that "the world economy is not coming back to 2019 levels until 2022", it is a comforting statement of fact that economic contraction is a universal phenomenon and not a stand-alone, India-centric affliction.

So, how is the Government catalysing towards a sustainable growth momentum? The task has not been easy for a country with limited financial resources to secure lives and livelihoods of 130 crore people, who account for 18 per cent of the world's population. Given the constraints, the Narendra Modi-led Government has pursued a path of re-booting and rebuilding the economy by wrestling four pillars parallelly. First, by addressing interim and short-term solutions for sustaining livelihoods. Second, by identifying and spending on post-COVID sectors of growth that will lead to sustainable and a long-term recovery. Third, by using its mandate to push ahead with powerful reform agenda, passing in quick succession long-pending reforms in labour, agriculture and education. India is poised for a stronger and more robust comeback as compared to partial or cyclical rebounds. Fourth, in order to maintain a steady growth momentum, the Government has pursued balancing social sector spending with infrastructure spending. The Centre recognises the importance of infrastructure as the foremost engine of growth and the need to scale up outlays to at least eight per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on "next-generation infrastructure", for which an allocation of ₹111 trillion investment has been set aside from 2020 to 25.

Can the Government do more by way of welfarist measures, given the anticipated shortfalls in revenue? The World Bank, usually the paragon of caution, has this time



around advised emerging nations like India to set aside fiscal prudence and take on further debt, as "you first worry about fighting the war, then you figure out how to pay for it."

Interim solutions lie in first addressing livelihood issues by further extending the timelines of direct income support for the rural poor, as also offering urban migrants a similar package. The Centre has spent around two per cent of GDP on welfarist schemes like direct cash transfers for income support, free grains for the rural poor, increased spendings on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNRGA) and so on. As the crisis is far from over and the duration of the pandemic is uncertain, it is doubtful the Government will prematurely withdraw welfarist spending.

By lowering interest rates, providing credit guarantees for MSMEs, allowing for loan moratoriums and one-time restructuring of loans, the Government has deployed a sizeable fiscal package of around seven per cent of GDP towards increasing liquidity. This is much required to address the supply side needs of the industry, though funding has not adequately percolated down to SMEs, who are most severely impacted by the downturn.

While globally, Central Banks have continued with massive doses of Quantitative Easing (QE), there is room for more in

emerging markets like India as the effect of rate cuts and liquidity keeps waning due to the weak transmission. However, the policy of easing credit flows is not insulated from the downside risks of defaults that could impact the health of the already fragile banking sector. Because it is a given that the impact on the financial sector isn't usually immediately visible, so the true impact of defaults on loans will reflect only in the following quarters.

The phenomenon of "revenge" or "rebound" spending during the festive months is at best a temporary surge. As we enter the festive season, there is already an average uptick by 34 per cent to 40 per cent in sector-specific surges in the major propellers of growth like retail, consumer durables, automobiles and residential housing. However, socio-economic variables have contributed to worsening VUCA levels in the services sector, which contributes 54 per cent to the GDP but has seen irrecoverable demand-destruction.

Travel, tourism, shopping, hospitality, aviation, entertainment, leisure and fashion come under the discretionary-spend service sector, which is expected to see an improvement during the festive months. Viewed through the lens of behavioural science, the phenomenon of "revenge buying, or spending on indulgences" happens after a prolonged period of suppression

on lifestyle pleasures that creates the much needed "feel-good factor." Levels of discretionary spending are a vital marker of economic health, as people only spend on lifestyle expenses once they have disposable funds left after paying for taxes, housing, savings and other essential needs.

To gauge the downward or upward trends in these sectors, predictive insights can be gained from the data of the Google Community Mobility Report that uses anonymised data provided by Google Maps. The global Google Mobility Index trends show that travel and mobility levels had fallen to 44.7 per cent in April and risen to 82 per cent by mid-September. Here again, mobility and commuting will vary with the spread or decrease in regional COVID-loads.

The aviation and hospitality industries have been among the 26 most stressed sectors and recovery is not expected before 18 to 24 months. The tourism industry contributes nine per cent to the GDP, generates substantial revenues and accounted for 87 million jobs in 2019.

The festival season is expected to give a big boost to these closely aligned sectors and will hopefully fuel the wheels of the economy till the end of 2020. Optimism thereafter rests on the advent of the vaccine by early 2021. However, with the onset of winter and the negligence of maintaining distancing proto-

cols at festive gatherings, there is a risk of further waves of viral outbreaks. This in turn will deepen the negative impact on future earnings and impact consumer spending in the following quarter of 2020 to 21.

Ultimately, the volume of consumer spending is not being dictated by need-based buying, but by what I term as the "Index of Fear-Intensity." The quantum of "Fear-Intensity" in consumers wanes and rises in response to the local COVID-load, intermittent lockdowns and the visibility of each individual's anticipated earnings over the next six months, which are now dictating behavioural patterns of consumers.

Which sectors can ride the economy towards sustainable recovery? There is empirical evidence that increased spending in infrastructure during downturns has never failed to have trickle-down effects in rebooting the economy and creating millions of jobs. As most emerging nations are constrained for resources, the Indian Government would be looking to tap into concessionary finance facilities being extended by international development finance institutions. The World Bank, Asian Development Bank and IMF are fast-tracking generous assistance to member countries facing a COVID-crunch, with global interest rates being at historic lows.

Assessing sectoral bounce backs in recovery for the July to September quarter, it has been largely driven by agriculture, while IT, healthcare, fintech, educational technology, telecom and e-commerce sectors will remain the prime engines of post-COVID growth, as they come under the category of the new "Touchless and Homebody Economy."

Stock markets, long seen as a proxy for the real economy, are now being driven by ultra-lax monetary policies in the developed world. But stock market buoyancy in no way mirrors the actual economic pain at ground levels, even as the Sensex consolidates around the 40,000 mark.

However, unlike measuring the stock market performance on a quarterly basis, corporates and the Government will have to get past the obsessive compulsion to look at monthly outcomes, and instead adopt a medium-to-long-term approach for a sustainable recovery, while remaining resilient enough to calibrate policies to the VUCA factors.

(The writer is author, columnist and Chairperson of the National Committee for Financial Inclusion at the Niti Aayog)

## SOUNDBITE

Is the mic ready? I wonder who did that to our mic? I don't believe it was Joe (Biden). You know who it was? Crooked Hillary (Clinton). It must've been.



US President — Donald Trump

I have come back with great memories, a fabulous racing experience and valuable exposure to the sport.



Go Karting racer — Aashi Hanspal

Your generation can be the one that creates a new normal in America. One that's fairer, where the system treats everybody equally and gives everybody opportunity.



Former US President — Barack Obama

Social media content must be regularly monitored to prevent its misuse by the enemies. Militancy sponsored by the neighbour is being effectively dealt with by our police.



J&K Lt Governor — Manoj Sinha

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Malabar naval exercise

Sir — As a big strategic move, India has invited Australia to the annual Malabar naval exercises after a gap of 13 years. This proves the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) — which includes the US and Japan as the other two members — as being something more than a mere talking shop. This will be the Quad's first full military-level engagement and a step closer for the eventual formalisation of the grouping. New Delhi, overcoming its previous hesitation to invite Canberra, changed tack after China's growing belligerence and the ongoing border standoff in eastern Ladakh. With China flexing its muscle across the region, the need for a counterbalancing strategic-security platform was sorely felt. Beijing, that had compared the grouping to sea foam in 2018, now sees this move as a serious concern.

The Quad, through regular naval coordination, can now actualise the idea of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. An effective navy with advanced operational logistics gives India the ability to exploit China's Malacca dilemma and disrupt energy supplies to the latter,

### Lack of adherence to Corona guidelines

On October 20, during his seventh address to the nation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an earnest appeal to the citizens to not be careless during the pandemic, especially as the festival season is approaching. As we continue to live with the virus, "even a small negligence" on our behalf can dampen the festive spirit. He even announced that the Government is making all possible efforts to ensure that a vaccine, whenever it is launched, reaches every Indian. However, on the other hand, COVID protocols are being brazenly violated by political parties in Bihar and other State election rallies. One such incident was when Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister, Sushil Kumar Modi, addressed an election rally at Ramgarh in Kaimur district with an estimated 20,000 people gathered to listen to him. Throwing caution to the wind, the participants clustered together, ignoring social distancing, and most did not even wear a mask.

The Election Commission's guidelines for holding a physical rally mandate social distancing of at least



two metres and all attendees wearing masks. However, in the race to woo the electorate, the political leaders have forgotten that the pandemic is not over yet. So while the PM's address was informative, the Centre needs to practise what it preaches or else Bihar elections could turn into a mass virus-spreading event.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee  
Faridabad

### Hollow promises?

Sir — Campaigning for the Assembly elections in 243 constituencies of Bihar is heating up. And at one such rally, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav promised 10 lakh Government jobs if he comes to power. In response, the Chief Minister and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar asked Yadav

from where does he plan to get the money for the salaries? This isn't the first time. Rather the campaigning period is usually full of such tall promises that are forgotten once the polling is over. However, it is an absolute fact that the State needs comprehensive changes in numerous sectors: Employment, economy, education, healthcare, stringent measures to save flood-affected

areas and so on. The present CM, in spite of being in alliance with the BJP, which is in power at the Centre, has failed to deal with these issues and things have only changed for the worse. There needs to be a complete overhaul of the Government and people are aware of it. However, with so many players in the ring, only time will tell who comes out on the top.

N Kalam  
Maharashtra

### China over Taiwan

Sir — Beijing is enraged as India considers formal trade negotiations with Taiwan. China's territorial and economic imperialism has forced its neighbours to look for alternatives and a way to counter the dragon.

So, even though New Delhi has been reluctant to seek trade talks with Taiwan earlier, such a step would reduce our dependence on China for supplies and further the goal of seeking greater investments in technology.

KV Seetharamiah  
Hassan

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

**FIRST COLUMN**

**A sad epoch in human history**

Having planned Operation Gulmarg, Pakistan unleashed its tribal militia on Jammu and Kashmir on October 22, 1947



RAGHVENDRA SINGH

Today is a black day in history and India is observing it as such, to protest against Pakistan's role in instigating violence and terror in the Valley. Having planned Operation Gulmarg, Pakistan unleashed its tribal militia on Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) on October 22, 1947. Overrunning Muzaffarabad, Domel and Uri, the tribal *lashkars*, led by Pakistan Army personnel, reached Baramulla on October 26 and wreaked havoc. A November 10 despatch by Robert Trumbull of *The New York Times* relates vividly the death and destruction that was unleashed upon the town by the marauders. It had been stripped of its wealth and dignity before the tribesmen fled in the face of advancing Indian troops, who had rushed to the rescue of the hapless residents. Survivors of those events estimated that 3,000 of their fellow townsmen, including four Europeans and a retired British Army officer, Colonel Dykes, and his pregnant wife, were slain. When the raiders rushed into town on October 26, one party of Mahsud tribesmen scaled the walls of the Saint Joseph's Franciscan Convent compound and stormed the convent hospital and the church. Twenty-four hours later, when the Indian Army entered Baramulla, only 1,000 were left of the population of about 14,000.

Max Despott, an *Associated Press* photographer, described on November 2 that he saw more than 20 villages in flames while flying over a section of Kashmir Valley, extending within 20 miles of Srinagar. The villages had been set on fire by the invaders, who were scouring the Valley and moving in the direction of Srinagar.

Sydney Smith of *Daily Express* of London was in the Baramulla Hospital during those ten days and filed a first hand report of the attack on the convent. "The tribal *lashkars* had come shooting their way down from the hills on both sides of the town. They climbed over the hospital walls from all sides. The first group burst into a ward firing at the patients. A 20-year-old Indian nurse, Philomena, tried to protect a Muslim patient whose baby had just been born. She was shot dead first and the new mother was next. Mother Superior Aldetrude rushed into the ward, and as she knelt over Philomena, she was attacked and robbed. When the Assistant Mother, Teresalina, saw a tribesman point a rifle at Mother Aldetrude, she jumped in front of her and a bullet went through Teresalina's heart. At that moment, Colonel Dykes raced from his room to get the Mother Superior out of danger, shouting at the tribesman as he ran. But the Mother Superior was shot and Colonel Dykes collapsed beside her, with a bullet in his stomach. His wife ran from her husband's room to help the Colonel, but she too, was shot. While this went on, Gee Boretto, an Anglo-Indian, was killed in the garden in front of nine nuns. Then the nuns themselves were lined up before a firing squad. We did not find Mrs Dykes until the following day. She had been thrown down a well. Reports had come that the chief of another Evangelical Mission, Major Ronald Davis, a Welshman, and one of his two English women assistants, had been shot dead. The other assistant was said to have been taken to the hills," says Smith in his report.

Abdul Rahman of Baramulla, too, recorded his observations and said that the raiders looted the Hindus to begin with, burnt the houses of the Sikhs and killed them. "As a result of this arson and loot, the Sikhs and the Hindus fled Baramulla, leaving their houses burning, and most of their women were raped and kidnapped. The raiders did not touch the Muslims to begin with — perhaps they wanted to win their sympathy. After a few days when they found that they were about to be forced out of the Valley, they turned on everybody. They started wholesale loot, arson and rape. They killed whoever came in their way. The raiders also took all the valuable ornaments of silver and gold, shawls and so on when they left," he recalled.

According to the Wazir-i-Wazarat of Baramulla, Chaudury Faizullah, the tribal *lashkars* entered in groups of 30-40 men. Over 5,000 of them were concentrated in Baramulla at one time. They were mostly tribesmen with a few Punjabi Muslims, all well-armed and led by Pirs, Pakistan Army and Frontier Constabulary officers. The local Muslim Conference men joined the raiders and acted as guides. From the day the raiders entered the town, they started killing non-Muslims and looting and burning houses, irrespective of religion and raping women. They broke into houses in groups of 10-12, robbed them and carried away valuables, clothes and food. About 280 lorries were used to ferry this loot. The Pakistani raiders left on the night of November 7 when the Indian Army re-captured it. The *Times of London* reported on November 11 that residents seemed delighted to welcome the Indian troops. The Press despatch also bore testimony to the fact that the convent and hospital were not destroyed by the Indian aerial attacks as alleged by Pakistan wireless statements.

(The writer is Secretary, Ministry of Culture)

**POINTCOUNTERPOINT**

THIS (KAPIL'S) SHOW IS FULL OF DOUBLE MEANING WORDS, IN WHICH THE MEN WEAR WOMEN'S CLOTHES, DO CHEAP THINGS AND PEOPLE LAUGH.

—ACTOR

MUKESH KHANNA



IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE PEOPLE SMILE. I HAVE CHOSEN HAPPINESS AND PREFER TO FOCUS ON MY WORK AND CONTINUE TO KEEP DOING THAT IN FUTURE.

—ACTOR AND COMEDIAN

KAPIL SHARMA

**The lines are blurred**

The judgment in the Rhea Chakraborty case has virtually laid down a new norm with regard to police jurisdictions, one which may be misused by complainants



AMIT JAISWAL

One issue which has captured the imagination of India and occupied most of the space in the country's electronic and print news media in recent times, especially some television channels, is the untimely death by suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput (SSR). The young man, who was originally from Bihar, was found dead in his home in Bandra, Mumbai on June 14, where he had hung himself.

Going by the set procedures in such cases and given that this was a high-profile one involving a celebrity's death, the Mumbai Police went about its work diligently. It recorded the statements of 56 people, including the immediate family members, relatives, live-in partner, friends and staff of the deceased actor. At that point of the investigation, none of them alleged any foul play. Their statements, too, did not suggest a cognisable offence. Consequently, the Mumbai Police registered the matter as an accidental death and proceeded in terms of Section 174 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC). However, after about 40 days, on July 25, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered at the Rajiv Nagar police station in Patna, Bihar, at the instance of the actor's father, KK Singh, levelling allegations of breach of trust, misappropriation of property of his deceased son and abetment to suicide against his live-in partner Rhea Chakraborty and her family members.

A police team from Patna went to Mumbai to carry out the investigation. However, the Mumbai Police raised the issue of jurisdiction and there was a lot of acrimony over the issue. Finally, on the recommendation of the Bihar Government, the Central Government directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to carry out the probe in the matter. Meanwhile Rhea Chakraborty approached the Supreme Court under Section 406 of the CrPC for the transfer of the FIR from the jurisdiction of the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate III, Patna Sadar, to the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Bandra, Mumbai.

Now, the settled legal position is that the FIR has to be registered at the police station, which has jurisdiction over the area where the offence or any part of it is alleged to have been committed. *Prima facie* the Patna Police had no jurisdiction to register an FIR in the matter. Even if the complaint filed with the Bihar Police disclosed commission of some cognisable offence, the established procedure would be to register a "zero FIR" and transfer it to the police station empowered to do so. The Section which becomes relevant in this matter is Section 181(4) of the CrPC. It reads, "Any offence of criminal misappropriation or of criminal breach of trust may be inquired into or tried by a court within whose local jurisdiction the offence was committed. Or any part of the property, which is the subject of the offence, was received or retained, or was required to be returned or accounted for, by the accused person."

The Supreme Court, in its judgment, upheld the validity of registering the FIR in Patna, mainly on the ground that the allegations also related to criminal breach of trust and misappropriation of money, which were to be eventually accounted for in Patna (where the complainant resides) and that could *prima facie* indicate the

“THE APEX COURT HEAVILY RELIED UPON THE WORDS 'ACCOUNTED FOR' IN THE SECTION TO UPHOLD THE VALIDITY OF THE FIR. IT DID CITE A FEW JUDGMENTS TO SUBSTANTIATE ITS REASONING. IT CAN SAFELY BE SAID THAT IN NONE OF THE CITED JUDGMENTS, THE WORDS 'ACCOUNTED FOR' HAVE BEEN USED OR APPLIED BY THE COURTS. THEY DID NOT IMPLY THAT ONLY BECAUSE THE ACCUSED WOULD EVENTUALLY BE ACCOUNTABLE TO LEGAL HEIRS OF THE DECEASED, THE FIR COULD BE LODGED WHEREVER THE LEGAL HEIRS OF THE DECEASED RESIDE



lawful jurisdiction of the Patna Police.

The apex court heavily relied upon the words "accounted for" in the Section to uphold the validity of the FIR. It did cite a few judgments to substantiate its reasoning. Though it is not possible to discuss every single judgment here, it can safely be said that in none of the cited judgments, the words "accounted for" have been used or applied by the courts. They did not imply that only because the accused would eventually be accountable to legal heirs of the deceased, the FIR could be lodged wherever the legal heirs of the deceased reside, even though no part of the offence has ever taken place within the jurisdiction of that police station.

For argument's sake, let us take a hypothetical case of a businessman, who commits suicide in Mumbai due to alleged financial wrongdoing on the part of his business associate or agent or even a creditor. Now, let us say that one son of the deceased businessman resides in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh and another in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. By virtue of this judgment, the police forces of these two places would have the jurisdiction to register an FIR and investigate the matter only because the money was eventually to be accounted for to the satisfaction of the legal heirs in these two cities. Thus, they would have the option to choose the place/State which best suited their interests. An FIR sets criminal law into motion and, therefore, a probe by the police will follow. A police team from Lucknow or Ahmedabad, as the case may be, will have to travel all the way to Mumbai for

the investigation, collecting evidence and recording the statements of witnesses. Will any meaningful probe be possible in this manner? Will it not create a situation of political slugs and inter-State wrangling with regard to investigations by the police force of one State into a crime committed within the territorial jurisdiction of another State? Will every such case then be assigned to the CBI or some other Central agency?

Another aspect which needs to be noticed is that as per Supreme Court Rules notified on May 11, a single judge is competent to hear certain bail matters and transfer applications. The relevant apex court rule reads, "Provided that the following categories of matters may be heard and disposed of finally by a judge sitting singly nominated by the Chief Justice: Special leave petitions arising out of grant, dismissal or rejection of Bail Application or Anticipatory Bail Application in the matters filed against the order passed under Section 437, Section 438 or Section 439 of the CrPC 1973 (two of 1974) involving the offences punishable with sentence up to seven years imprisonment; applications for transfer of cases under Section 406 of the CrPC 1973 (two of 1974); application of an urgent nature for transfer of cases under Section 25 of the CrPC 1908 (five of 1908)."

Now Rhea Chakraborty filed a petition under Section 406 of the CrPC for transfer of investigation in the FIR registered at Patna, Bihar to Mumbai, which was dismissed by the single judge on the ground that Section 406 of the

CrPC does not grant the apex court any such power. Once the petition for transfer itself had been declined, there was no occasion to further decide the jurisdiction of the Patna Police to register an FIR, as it was neither a consequential matter, nor was the decision of transfer petition dependent on the adjudication of validity of the FIR. On the perusal of the Rules reproduced above, there was no occasion for the single judge to adjudicate upon these issues. In effect, the judgment says that in cases where a person commits suicide or is murdered and there are allegations of breach of trust or misappropriation of property, then the FIR can be registered by the legal heirs of the deceased at any police station in India, wherever they reside. The investigation then will have to be carried out by the officer in-charge of that police station, though no part of the offence has ever taken place within its jurisdiction.

The judgment in the Rhea Chakraborty case has virtually laid down a new jurisprudence with regard to police jurisdictions. It has blurred lines and has serious implications on the criminal justice system so far as the initiation of criminal proceedings is concerned. This will only result in confusion and is susceptible to misuse by complainants. The court has given an open-ended and wide interpretation to the words "accounted for" in Section 181(4) of the CrPC. This is bound to give birth to myriad and complicated issues in the near future.

(The writer is an advocate in the Punjab and Haryana High Court)

**New strategies for the new normal**

This outbreak serves as a reminder for retailers to be more proactive in planning and resilient in their response to future disruptions



SWAPNIL SONI

KOSHA JOSHI

The Indian retail industry is a highly competitive, \$800 billion market with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 12 per cent. Out of that, the share of online retail is \$32.7 billion with a CAGR of 31 per cent. Smartphone penetration, brand consciousness, demographics and policy support are the factors transforming and pushing this industry towards omnichannel retailing.

Omnichannel retailing is a fully-integrated approach to commerce, providing shoppers a unified experience across all channels or touchpoints, including online and offline. It offers consistent merchandise and seamless interaction between online and offline channels, thus combining the benefits

of both. However, the pandemic and subsequent national and local lockdowns have greatly impacted both supply and demand. The supply side was hit by administrative restrictions and limited resources while demand, too, remained subdued due to job-losses, salary cuts and restrictive spending. In such a situation, an agile response is needed for swift operations, customer satisfaction and surviving in the post-Corona era.

**Evolving consumer behaviour:** Though retail has undergone many significant disruptions in the past, perhaps none has shifted consumer behaviour as rapidly as this contagion has. The changes are happening due to factors like challenges in personal situations, preferences towards local products, precautionary measures against the virus and rising digital awareness — a by-product of promotion of contactless transaction.

Even in the unlock stage, consumers are hesitating to visit stores and while exercising social distancing measures, many uninitiated customers are moving towards online retailing. For example, many senior citizens are opting for online grocery shopping as a

precautionary measure. Use of services like contactless digital payments, social commerce and virtual consultation are also seeing a rise.

Many of these behavioural changes will continue even after the pandemic is over. McKinsey and Company cited this as "consumer behaviour shift." For example, people will get used to the comfort of home delivery, ease of digital payments, varieties offered by online markets and so on. Retailers need to draw insights from these changes and rebuild the consumer confidence as the new normal continues.

**Financial skills:** Revenue is sharply dropping for many categories. Even though store profit has gone down, retailers need to pay rents, salaries and so on. Hence, at this point it is necessary for them to optimise cost and curtail the offerings to profitable items. In the long-term, as demand picks up, it would be prudent to invest in omnichannel fulfillment as means to financial resilience.

**Accept the new normal:** Social distancing, safety and hygiene procedures will be here for a while. The best way to go forward is to accept the new normal and the complexity it will

bring to decision-making.

**Consumer connect:** Now more than ever, it is must for retailers to connect and communicate. Consumers will definitely like to know what a business is doing to ensure their safety, for delivery as well as in stores. Despite the pandemic, customers will need timely deliveries of their order. So, in case of item shortages or delayed fulfillment, it is necessary to explain the cause and convey the commitment.

**Extra activity:** First and foremost, retailers need to adapt to safety regulations, sanitisation procedures and regulatory directives at the country, State and municipal level in various phases of the unlocking. They need more dynamic inventory and logistics planning to meet the fluctuations both in demand and supply, plus a connect with employees regarding their health and financial well-being. This will prevent attrition and business continuity.

**Infrastructure:** The Indian online retail infrastructure is in an intermediate stage. The pandemic just exposed the flaws and inefficiency which were already there. Retailers should review the location of warehouses, delivery centres and their distributors to com-

pute the risk of supply chain disruptions. The partnership with local grocery stores will help retailers to ensure timely contactless last mile delivery even during a crisis. Retailers also need to re-imagine in-store experience, considering customers' safety and efficient operation with reduced staff while complying with social distancing norms.

**Technology skills:** Technology allows retailers to have relevant information and visibility throughout the supply chains, resulting in timely communication with all the stakeholders. Businesses will need secured, informative and intuitive shopping apps, which can balance for the lack of store visits. Also, Artificial Intelligence will continue to make a big impact in this sector to predict real-time consumer demand, optimise inventory and manage backorders, thus ensuring operational agility.

Also, Smart Mirrors and Augmented Reality can help build a store-like environment in the virtual world, ensuring safety. This way, retailers and associated stakeholders need to ramp up technological skills and infrastructure as they enter a post-pandem-

ic era. As of today, India is among the top countries with the highest number of COVID cases and there is no end to the contagion in sight. Even the countries, where the outbreak seemed to be in control initially, are experiencing a second wave. This has caused supply and demand disruption and jolted the market ecosystem.

Hence, it is certain that retailers, that are an integral part of the demand-driven economy, need to be financially prudent, fast in their response to the new dynamics and ready to collaborate through the value chain to thrive during this crisis and subsequent periods. As with many sectors, it is likely that retail will see a regime shift and consolidation. Smaller and financially-struggling businesses might face difficulty in surviving this crisis. At the same time, retailers with a unique value proposition will come out stronger. This outbreak serves as a reminder for retailers to be more proactive in planning and resilient in their response to unprecedented disruptions in future.

(The writers are Senior Research Scholars at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.)



**FOREIGN EYE**



**WORK, EDUCATION REVOLUTION AHEAD**

Because the pace of technological change, digitisation and globalisation just keeps accelerating, the world is being knit together more tightly than ever — sure, the globalisation of goods and people has been slowed by the pandemic and politics, but the globalisation of services has soared — and the half-life of skills is steadily shrinking, meaning that whatever skill you possess today is being made obsolete faster and faster. (The NYT editorial)

# 'Antivirals, hyperloops among 20 markets to transform economies'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The World Economic Forum on Wednesday released a list of 20 markets of tomorrow that will transform economies in an inclusive and sustainable way, and named India among the countries that present solid technological systems for such a transformation.

However, several countries, including India, will need development in the social and institutional fabric to deliver these markets, the Geneva-based organisation said in a white paper released at its 'Jobs Reset Summit 2020', which is being held online.

These 20 markets of tomorrow include broad-spectrum antivirals, spaceflights, skills capital, water rights and quality credits, genes and DNA sequences, precision medicines and orphan drugs, EdTech (education technology) and reskilling services, artificial intelligence, satellite services, greenhouse gas allowances, reforestation services, and hydrogen. Besides, electric vehicles, plastics recycling, care, data, digital financial services, hyperloop-based transport services, new antibiotics, and



unemployment insurance have also been included in this list.

The WEF said some of these new markets will rely particularly on advances in technology, while others will require radically new social and institutional set-ups. Some markets will emerge from a combination of both the elements.

These markets can help societies protect and empower people, advance knowledge and understanding, and protect the environment, among other benefits. The WEF said countries with advanced technological capabilities, strong social capital and future-oriented institutions are more likely to create a broader range of new markets needed for economic

transformation.

"As the world grapples with the socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is an increasing demand to shape a new economy that addresses broader societal and environmental challenges while generating economic growth," it said. To achieve this, the world needs to set an ambitious agenda of technological and socio-institutional innovations to pilot new markets that can help solve these challenges, the WEF added. It added that India, Spain and Japan are just below the bar in terms of socio-institutional innovation, while the economy of Taiwan, China, is just above.

## Half of working adults worried about jobs, says global survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than half of the working adults globally are concerned about losing their job in the next 12 months, including 57 per cent in India, but more than two-thirds are hopeful that their employers will help them retrain for new employment opportunities, a global survey showed on Wednesday.

The survey, released at the World Economic Forum's 'Jobs Reset Summit' being held online, also showed wide variations between countries, while an average of three in four workers in Russia feared job losses, it was just one in four in Germany.

In India, nearly 57 per cent of respondents said they are 'concerned' about their jobs -- over 25 per cent are 'very concerned' and 31 per cent are 'somewhat concerned'.

Globally, 54 per cent concerned about job losses in the next 12 months, the WEF-Ipsos global survey of more

than 12,000 working adults in 27 countries showed.

The prevalence of job-loss concern was highest at 75 per cent in Russia, followed by 73 per cent in Spain and 71 per cent in Malaysia. Germany scored the best with 26 per cent, while it was 30 per cent in Sweden, and 36 per cent in the Netherlands and the US.

However, 67 per cent of workers worldwide said they can learn skills needed for the jobs of the future through their current employer. Nearly nine in 10 workers in Spain think they can gain essential new skills on the job, whereas fewer than half in Japan, Sweden and Russia.

Across the 27 countries, perceived ability to learn and develop those skills on the job was found to be the most widespread in Spain (86 per cent), Peru (84 per cent), and Mexico (83 per cent) and the least common in Japan (45 per cent), Sweden (46 per cent), and Russia (48 per cent). India also scored very high at 80 per cent.

## Independent directors a 'puzzle', says Sebi chief

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Describing independent directors as a "puzzle", Sebi Chairman Ajay Tyagi on Wednesday urged such directors resigning from boards of companies to flag corporate governance concerns if they have any.

Independent directors have an important role to perform as they are a voice of the minority shareholders and added that in the last two-three years, Sebi has seen a rise in the number of resignations of such people.

"If any such resignation is on account of governance concern, considering the role of, and expectations from, independent directors, I urge the resigning independent directors to come forward and state the same clearly to the public at large," Tyagi said at an event organised by industry grouping CII.

He also said that the directors are mandated to give reasons for their resignations within seven days and go beyond "cryptic" writing to detail out an exact reason for their move.

Tyagi admitted that the independent directors are a "puzzle" which the Sebi is trying



Sebi Chairman Ajay Tyagi admitted that the independent directors are a "puzzle" which the Sebi is trying to deal with as it attempts to strengthen the overall systems

ing to deal with as it attempts to strengthen the overall systems.

India Inc has faced frauds over the last few years and regulators have been making efforts to strengthen the corporate governance standards.

"...the whole thing that they (independent directors) are the voice of the minority shareholders, to what extent should they be accountable and responsible, how they fit in into the board structure, which type of people should be taken" are among the issues Sebi is grappling with, Tyagi said.

According to him, industry groupings like CII, which is at

present headed by banker Uday Kotak who had drafted the code on corporate governance, will play an important role.

The industry bodies have to self-regulate, introspect more and set higher standards on corporate governance, Tyagi said. Investors, including institutional and retail, also have an important role to play and need to participate in the voting processes more actively, he added.

Similarly, auditors, credit rating agencies, debenture trustees and proxy advisors also have an important role to play in upping the overall standards and helping usher reforms, he noted.

## Sensex rises 163 points, Nifty 40

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Extending its gains for the fourth session, equity benchmark Sensex ended 163 points higher on Wednesday, led by index majors HDFC twins and ICICI Bank.

After gyrating 825.54 points in a highly volatile session, the 30-share BSE index ended 162.94 points or 0.40 per cent higher at 40,707.31.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty rose 40.85 points or 0.34 per cent to finish at 11,937.65.

PowerGrid was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging over 4 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel, NTPC, HDFC Bank, UltraTech Cement and Kotak Bank.



On the other hand, TCS, Nestle India, Reliance Industries and HCL Tech were among the laggards.

"Domestic indices managed to close in the green, but not without its share of hiccups over rumours on waiver of interest on loans," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Banks and metals provided support even as several stocks saw profit booking during afternoon trade, he added.

## PNC Infratech lowest bidder for Rs 1,001 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Infrastructure company PNC Infratech on Wednesday said it has emerged as the lowest bidder for a Rs 1,001 crore project in Andhra Pradesh.

The company has been declared the LI (lowest) bidder in an EPC Project for "Upgradation of Canal System from Pothreddypadu Head Regulator and BCR Complex from foreshore of Srisaillam Reservoir and improvements to existing SRBC/GNSS Canal up to berm level from Banakacherla Complex to Gorukallu Balancing Reservoir...with the Water Resources Department, Andhra Pradesh," PNC Infratech said in a statement.

## IEX sees 13.2 pc growth in electricity sales in Q2

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) on Wednesday said it has recorded a 13.2 per cent rise in electricity sales to 16,486 million units (MU) in the September quarter, as power demand accelerated and returned to pre-COVID levels.

The second quarter witnessed a sharp recovery in industrial activities and electricity consumption, owing to easing of the lockdown restrictions across the country, an IEX statement said.

"The electricity volumes on the exchange witnessed an increase of 13.2 per cent Y-o-Y (year-on-year) in Q2FY21 (July-September 2020) and stood at 16,486 MU as compared to 14,560 MU in



Q2FY20 (July-September 2019)," it added.

The second quarter initially saw a slump in manufacturing due to re-lockdowns in a few states, however, the industrial activity picked up momentum in August and September, it said.

With the rise in economic

and industrial activities, the power demand also accelerated and returned to the pre-COVID levels, IEX said.

The country witnessed a 2 per cent y-o-y growth in national peak demand and 4.6 per cent increase in energy consumption in September 2020.

## MONEY MATTERS

### DB Corp Q2 net profit falls 62 pc to Rs 28.52 crore

Media group DB Corp on Wednesday reported a 62.26 per cent fall in consolidated net profit at Rs 28.52 crore in the second quarter ended on September 30, 2020, on account of lower revenue from operations. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 75.57 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago. Revenue from operations during the quarter under review was down 34.82 per cent at Rs 346.36 crore as against Rs 531.39 crore in second quarter of 2019-20, DB Corp said in a regulatory filing. The company publishes newspapers such as Dainik Bhaskar, Divya Bhaskar, Divya Marathi and Saurashtra Samachar. Meanwhile, in a separate filing, DB Corp informed the BSE that its board approved the appointment of Santosh Desai as an additional director with effect from October 21, 2020 to hold the office as a non-executive independent director for a term of three years subject to the approval by the shareholders.



### BDR Pharma launches generic cancer drug in India

BDR Pharmaceuticals on Wednesday said it has launched the generic version of Lenvatinib drug for the treatment of various types of cancers in India. The generic version of the drug has been launched under the brand name 'Bdofoe' in the country. The capsules are used for the treatment of differentiated thyroid cancer, advanced liver cancer and advanced kidney cancer, BDR Pharma said in a statement. The results of clinical trials showed encouraging results with safety and efficacy on patients with aggressive tumours, it added. The drug is priced at Rs 1,620 (4 mg) and Rs 2,970 (10 mg) for a pack of 10 capsules, the statement said. "By launching cost-effective therapy options we want to mitigate the challenges faced by Indian patients in seeking access to treatment and finding a timely cure for life threatening diseases," BDR Pharmaceuticals CMD Dharmesh Shah said.



## Fitch affirms Kerala rating at 'BB' with stable outlook

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Rating agency Fitch on Wednesday affirmed its rating for Kerala at 'BB' with a stable outlook.

The BB rating is for the long-term foreign currency and local currency issuer default ratings of the state, the agency said in a statement.

"The BB rating affirmation with stable outlook" is based on a 'mid-range' assessment of

the state's risk profile and a moderate 'bbb' debt-sustainability assessment, Fitch said, adding that Kerala is a 'type A' government as it can incur structural deficits.

The agency has assessed the state's revenue robustness as 'stronger' and the standalone credit profile in 'BB' category, reflecting a combination of the mid-range risk profile.

The state's gross regional product (GRP) rose 11.4 per cent in FY19 at current prices to Rs 7.8 lakh crore, which is

compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.4 per cent in the immediate past four years (FY15-FY19).

"We estimate FY20 GRP at Rs 8.7 lakh crore. Kerala's total revenue increased at a four-year (FY15-FY19) CAGR of 12.5 per cent, faster than its GRP," it said.

The state has stable revenue sources, as its tax and non-tax revenue accounted for 67 per cent of operating revenue in FY19, higher than the all-state average of 55 per cent.

## Bajaj Finance Q2 net profit falls 36%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bajaj Finance Ltd (BFL) on Wednesday reported a 36 per cent drop in its consolidated net profit at Rs 965 crore for the second quarter of the 2020-21 fiscal year.

The non-banking finance company had posted a net profit of Rs 1,506 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago.

Its total consolidated income grew 3 per cent to Rs

6,523 crore during the July-September period of 2020-21 as against Rs 6,323 crore in the same quarter a year earlier, BFL said in a regulatory filing. Net interest income was up 4 per cent at Rs 4,165 crore as against Rs 4,000 crore.

The Pune-headquartered company said new loans booked during the second quarter of this fiscal dropped 44 per cent to 36.2 lakh as against 64.7 lakh in the corresponding period a year ago.

## Women taking to Data Science

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Gender positive workplace policies are attracting more women to the Data Science space, as a significant percentage of women believe that there are more opportunities for them in the AI and Analytics field now than five years ago, says a survey.

According to a survey by ed-tech company Great Learning, while 54 per cent women said there are more opportunities for them in AI than five years ago, 27 per cent believe that equal growth and pay for the same level of experience and education will encourage more women. The top five factors cited for this rise in opportunities include positive workplace policies, greater participation of women in the hiring process, favourable recruitment policies, lesser bias towards women and presence of more role-models for women than before, the survey added.

## Cathay Pacific to cut 8,500 jobs

PNS ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong airline Cathay Pacific Airways said Wednesday it would cut 8,500 jobs and shut a regional airline as it grapples with the plunge in air travel due to the pandemic.

About 5,300 employees based in Hong Kong and another 600 elsewhere will likely lose their jobs, and 2,600 unfilled positions will be cut. The cuts are about 24 per cent of the company's workforce, Cathay Pacific said in a statement. "The global pandemic continues to have a devastating impact on aviation and the hard truth is we must fundamentally restructure the group to survive," Cathay Pacific CEO Augustus Tang said in a statement. The company said it will also shut down Cathay Dragon, its regional airline unit, with operations ceasing from Wednesday. It will seek regulatory approval for most of the routes to be operated by Cathay Pacific and its budget airlines subsidiary HK Express.

## UK govt borrowing rises to record due to Covid

PNS ■ LONDON

The UK government's borrowing rose to the highest level on record in the first half of the financial year as tax revenue fell and authorities spent billions of pounds to prop up

an economy ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Office for National Statistics said Wednesday that the government borrowed a net 36.1 billion pounds (USD 47.1 billion) in September, pushing the total for the first six months of the

year to 208.5 billion pounds. That's the highest figure since records began in 1993.

Tax revenue dropped 11.6 per cent from a year earlier in the six months through September. At the same time, support for individuals and businesses to get

through the pandemic contributed to a 34 per cent increase in day-to-day spending.

Public sector net debt now stands at 103.5 per cent of the U.K.'s annual economic output, the highest level since 1960, the ONS said.

## Integrated terminal building at Pune airport by Mar '22

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The new integrated terminal building being constructed at Pune airport with an investment of Rs 475 crore to handle 2,300 passengers during the peak hours is expected to be completed by March 2022, AAI said on Wednesday.

A multi-level car park (ground plus three storeyed +2 basement floors) is also under construction at a cost of Rs 120 crore as part of the airport revamp plan, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) said in a release.

AAI has undertaken the construction work for the new integrated terminal building at



Pune Airport in order to cater to the continuous surge in passenger traffic and ease congestion at the airport.

More than 40 per cent of the work is completed and the

new building, which is spread in over 5 lakh sq ft area, is likely to be completed by March, 2022, AAI said.

The swanky new terminal building will be able to process

AAI has undertaken the construction work for the new integrated terminal building in order to cater to the continuous surge in passenger traffic and ease congestion

2,300 passengers (1,700 domestic and 600 international) during peak hours, it said, adding that it will be equipped with five boarding bridges, 34 check-in counters and in-line baggage handling

system. Besides, 32,000 sq ft space has been provisioned for food and beverages and retail outlets inside the airport, the release said.

The project also includes construction of a service yard of 3,800 sq metre, a 10-lakh litre capacity underground tank, 1,130 kilo litres per day capacity sewage treatment plant, among others, it said.

With a parking capacity of 1,024 cars, the facility will be connected to the departure area of the existing building with a sky bridge with provision of escalators and an elevator at the building side for dropping/going up.

### DLF pre-leases 7.7 lakh sq ft office space in Chennai

Realty major DLF's rental arm has given on lease 7.7 lakh sq ft office space to Standard Chartered GBS in an upcoming commercial tower in Chennai to be constructed at a cost of around Rs 450 crore, a senior company official said on Wednesday. DLF Cyber City Developers Ltd (DCCDL), which is a joint venture between DLF and Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC, has leased the space in its commercial project 'DLF Downtown' at Taramani in Chennai being developed with a total investment of Rs 5,000 crore. "We have signed an anchor leasing deal with Standard Chartered GBS for our upcoming office building at DLF Downtown," DLF's Managing Director (Rental Business) Sriram Khattar told PTI. Khattar said this is one of the largest office space leasing deals in recent times. "We will be developing a built-to-suit office building of 10 lakh sq ft leasable area in this project. We have pre-leased 7.7 lakh sq ft space to Standard Chartered GBS as an anchor tenant."



### Skoda Auto Volkswagen India exports over 25k cars

Skoda Auto Volkswagen India on Wednesday said it has exported over 25,000 cars in the current year so far and achieved the milestone of shipping out 5,00,00th domestically produced car, despite the challenging demand scenario globally. The 5,00,000th milestone car is a left hand-drive Vento sedan, which is part of a batch of 982 cars being shipped out to Mexico from Mumbai port, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Private Ltd (SAWVPL) said in a release. The European car major started exports of its vehicles from India in 2010 with 65 units of the India-built Volkswagen Vento for the South Africa market. Since then, the company has continued to grow incrementally to build the 'Made in India' presence to 61 countries across South America, Central America, Africa and others.



Imagine finding friends in people you never met? Imagine thousands of them helping pay for a crucial surgery without even knowing who you are, but doing it all in the name of humanity?

That's exactly what happened with Yona and his 10-year-old daughter Blessy. They talk to *The Pioneer's* RACHEL DAMMALA on how a community of people that cared for them, regardless of age, gender, and language

# LENDING A HELPING HAND



"I think everybody that shelled out every penny to make me see another day in my life. When I grow up to be a doctor, I'll treat the poor free of cost so they won't have to go through all that my father did to save me

BLESSY



## Applauses for Ankur Bhatia soaring high

Ankur Bhatia is playing the main antagonist in the series *Crackdown*, which has an ensemble cast. Clearly standing out as Tariq who is the head of the Pakistani army, he is as menacing as it can get and is a sight to behold with his portrayal of the character. Praises are pouring in from every nook and corner, with audiences loving the series. He worked in *Sarabjit*, *Haseena Parker*, and *Aarya* earlier and his graph as an actor has only been going up and he knows no limits now.

"It was a fantastic time shooting for *Crackdown*. We finished it just in the nick of time. I would like to thank Apoorva Lakhia sir for this wonderful opportunity. I hope I have been able to do pure justice to it. We wanted it to be a menacing character as well as a memorable one, seems we have managed to do just that. Acting is something that makes me feel alive and gives me a kick. It's my only passion as I quit a Wallstreet job for this. I am lucky to have been getting some great opportunities. We as a team put in our best from *Crackdown* and I think the results are very convincing," shares Ankur.

Fans are asking for Season 2 and it will be sometime before we hear about that. It's been some solid performances and we have clear standouts in them. Ankur definitely completes both.



**CLEARLY STANDING OUT AS TARIQ WHO IS THE HEAD OF THE PAKISTANI ARMY, HE IS AS MENACING AS IT CAN GET AND IS A SIGHT TO BEHOLD WITH HIS PORTRAYAL OF THE CHARACTER IN CRACKDOWN**

We often wonder "what can my contribution alone do?" The miraculous story of a 10-year-old girl who was able to beat a fatal disease will make you rethink how valuable every single contribution as a community is.

All of a decade old, Blessy, a happy-go-lucky girl was diagnosed with Wilson's Disease, which could potentially take her life if not operated upon. An immediate liver transplant was the only road to her recovery. Her father, Yona, an auto-driver couldn't afford the 26-lakh rupee surgery. But when somebody told him about seeking help from strangers could help to an extent, he didn't believe it at first. He decided to give it a try and the result if for us to see. Thousands of people,

across different states, languages, and religions came forward as one strong community to stand by Blessy as she battled the disease.

It all started when Blessy began losing weight all of a sudden and fell sick. A health check-up revealed she had jaundice, and months later, when medication didn't work, a proper scan showed it was Wilson's disease. "Soon, she was at end-stage liver damage and only an immediate liver transplant could help save our daughter. The treatment would cost us 26 lakhs, and I, an auto driver, could never be able to earn so much," Yona, Blessy's father tells us. That's when kind doctors like Dr Latha Prasad, Dr Dharmesh Kapur, Prashant Bachchan, Yona's pastor came to the family's rescue. While Dr Latha did all that she could do to treat the girl without charging a

penny aside from the bed cost, Dr Dharmesh led the surgery and Prashant Bachchan advised the family to go for crowdfunding via Milaap. "While we weren't so sure of receiving much, we thought we'd give a try. And that's how thousands of strangers blessed Blessy and our lives by giving their hard-earned money to afford the treatment. Today, her smile devoid of that pain, gives us joy like nothing else," shares the father.

There also were people who told Yona that he, who ran around hospitals and for money for more than a year, should let his daughter (eldest among three children) go since nobody could promise the operation, even if done, could help save Blessy's life. He shares, "They meant it in good stead, but I couldn't ever give up without trying till the last minute and

I'm glad I did, because it was this very struggle that melted people's hearts to come forward and help. I thought to myself, even if God intended to take my child, I will do all I can to keep her with us as long as I can, but God was gracious and sent this huge community of people who never knew me to help our daughter."

Today, the 6th grader smiles as a mark of complete recovery from the transplant that a community of completely unknown people has helped her afford. Blessy, not surprisingly, hopes to be a doctor when she grows up. "I thank everybody that shelled out every penny to make me see another day in my life. When I grow up to be a doctor, I'll treat the poor free of cost so they won't have to go through all that my father did to save me," she smiles.



## Through the looking glass

Hyderabad has officially gone virtual! In response to the pandemic, the event industry is shifting towards innovations in the form of a new socially distanced reality changing the way we interact rapidly. In the wake of this, Hyderabad's Goethe-Zentrum presents the first-of-its-kind virtual photo exhibition featuring works of 10 renowned artists based in Hyderabad on the emotions of unity, harmony, and non-violence. Wondering who these amazing photographers are and what do they do? SHIKHA DUGGAL writes about them

**Amita Talwar**  
Amita Talwar is a Hyderabad-based artist, photographer, documentary filmmaker, and social entrepreneur, who runs Art for Causes, which focus on providing education and introducing different art forms and creative inputs to children from economically underprivileged backgrounds. Her photographs, paintings are primarily utilised to generate funds for NGOs.

**Serish Naniseti**  
Serish Naniseti is the author of Golconda Bagnagar Hyderabad, which is a narrative chronicle of the city during the Qutb Shahi era. A journalist with a national English daily in Hyderabad, he has extensively researched, written, and photographed the city. He is busy climbing hills, forts, or tramping through graveyards to get some of his beautiful clicks.

**S. Harpal Singh**  
S. Harpal Singh is born and brought up in the Adilabad district in northern Telangana, which is known for its amazing range of biodiversity. He has also been the former Senior Assistant Editor with a national English daily, based out of his home district. For the last 17 years, he has travelled across the district as a part of his work and began clicking pictures in the rural areas.

**Sourav Nandi**  
Sourav Nandi is a blooming artist from Bengal. He was born and brought up in Birbhum district near Shantiniketan. Photography is his passion, he has participated in a number of group shows in Kolkata and across India. Some of his works have been selected in international exhibitions too!

**Namrata Rupani**  
"Photography can change lives. It's all about your perspective", says Dr Namrata Rupani who discovered photography as her passion while being a full-time dentist. She started 'Capture Life', a photo service company offering wedding and portrait photography services. She started conducting photography workshops which are now incredibly popular! She has shot multitudes of commercial projects for over 7 years now, which includes weddings, portraits, infrastructure, food, etc. The joy of her pictures made her expand into the fine art print business to make fine art prints, provide design and print solutions for various clients across India. She is also internationally recognised as the Fearless Photographer and has been named in the "Most Luxurious Wedding Photographer" by Wedding Vows magazine.

**Vijay S. Jodha**  
Vijay S. Jodha is a Gurgaon-based writer, filmmaker, and self-trained photographer. He has produced five books and his projects have been showcased in galleries, museums, and festivals worldwide. His films have been broadcasted on 75 channels in 195 countries including on BBC, CNN, and Discovery. His projects have received over 70 honours in 24 countries.

**Samar Jodha**  
Samar is a photographer and filmmaker who uses his practice to highlight the voices of the marginalised. He is keenly invested in YOUTH, a group that he believes has the power to lead and enable social impact. Samar owns Red Balloon, an organisation that has emanated from his long-held vision of using art to positively set a discourse in society. With this, he has given his vision a platform by creating a collaborative ecosystem that is critical, a large-scale mobilisation, and impactful. With art and design at its core, he builds partnerships with children of all ages and backgrounds, raises awareness on critical issues, and enables individual leadership towards a change.

**Swarat Ghosh**  
Swarat Ghosh is an Indian photographer based in Hyderabad. His photography has been published in several national and international magazines, including The Washington Post, Burn Magazine, National Geographic Traveller, and International Street Photographer. Furthermore, he was nominated for the Joop Swart Masterclass organized by World Press Photo. During that same year, he won awards under the "Series" categories of two major street photography festivals – the London Street Photography Festival and Brussels's Street Photography Festival and many more such accolades to his name.

**Saurabh Chatterjee**  
Saurabh is the Founder and Chief Educator at SIA Photography. His dream is to see India and to make every camera-owner a great photographer. He has written over 200 travel articles for various magazines and newspapers. His works have been published in several national and international publications including the National Geographic Traveller, Lonely Planet, Timeout Explorer (UK), The Times (London, UK).

**Sreesailam Pasupula**  
After completing his Master Craftsman Diploma in Professional Photography and Digital imaging from Mumbai, Sreesailam Pasupula undertook extensive traveling in India since to pursue his personal projects and experience the diverse cultures of the nation. He thus specialised in different genres of photography. He has received more than 25 International Awards at HPA-China, PX3-France, IPA-USA, B&W Spider-USA, The Colour Awards-USA, Alliance Francis-Paris, etc. He was also the Grand Prize winner at the Lonely Planet International Contest in 2010 and received the Xposure International Travel Photography Scholarship Award at Sharjah UAE in 2016.

Photographs can capture a moment in time that is gone forever or capture a moment in history for future generations. They can also change behaviour and stimulate understanding between people so don't let anything hold you back, surf Goethe-Zentrum across social media, and have a look at these amazing pieces of exhibits with a message lingering behind!

## DIGITAL DUSSEHRA: WHAT OTT PLATFORMS HAVE IN STORE

There is history, humour, lots of violence and a lot more drama in store, as OTT platforms lay out the spread for the festival weekend. IANS brings you a list of upcoming shows and films that you must shortlist for your definite Dussehra watch.

### MIRZAPUR 2

It's finally time for the second season to unfold. Starring Pankaj Tripathi, Ali Fazal, Rasika Duggal and Shweta Tripathi, the second season is expected to be more bloodsoaked and vengeful. It will be interesting to see how the story unfolds after the death of Vikram Massey's character, Bablu. The show drops on Amazon Prime Video, October 23.

### A SUITABLE BOY

Mira Nair's screen adaptation of the Vikram Seth novel *A Suitable Boy* features Tabu, Ishaan Khatter and newcomer Tanya Manikata. It is a story of two young lovers who dare to break tradition and stereotypes in newly independent India. The limited series has already been launched on BBC One in the UK. For Indian viewers, it will release on Netflix on October 23.

### LOCKDOWN RISHTEY

Shot in the lockdown, the episodic series will bring a melange of five stories about five relationships — a married couple on the verge of a divorce, an independent individual who gets stuck with 10 relatives, a loving couple who are almost about to elope, a girl who goes to her prospective in-laws to call off the marriage only to realise that she is stuck in their home, and lastly, a man who lives with his cute pets. It stars Rohit Roy, Gurdip Punj, Kaveta Chaudhry, Ashi Mahesh Joshi, Zia Ahmad Khan, Saad Bilgrami, Darshanaa Gahatraj, Dr. Smita Dongre, Abhishek Kapur, Indraneel Bhattacharya, Pallavi Rao,



### BORAT SUBSEQUENT MOVIE FILM

It is a follow-up to the 2006 comedy centering on the real-life adventures of a fictional Kazakh television journalist named Borat. The film stars Sacha Baron Cohen and Irina Nowak in the lead roles, and is directed by Jason Woliner. It will release on October 23 on Amazon Prime Video.

### COMEDY COUPLE

The film stars Saqib Saleem and Shweta Basu Prasad. Directed by Nachiket Samant, the com-rom is based in Gurgaon and set against the backdrop of the burgeoning stand-up comedy scene in the city. It will start streaming on October 21 on Zee5.

### CAPTIVE STATE

Set in a Chicago neighborhood nearly a decade after an occupation by an extraterrestrial force, *Captive State* explores the lives on both sides of the conflict — the collaborators and the dissidents. Starring John Goodman and Ashton Sanders, the film will stream on Amazon Prime Video from October 21.

### CRIBS INTERNATIONAL SEASON ONE

The show offers a sneak peek into the luxurious houses of celebrities. In the show, a host of international superstars give you an exclusive look inside their homes, from Caitlyn Jenner to Tom Allen. The eight episode show will stream on Voot Select from October 27.



Neena Cheema, Sunil Pushkarna, Shubhangi Latkar, Sumit Sharma,

amongst others. The series was released on MX Player on October 21.

## Shweta Tripathi 'flattered' on being compared to Ayushmann Khurrana

Actress Shweta Tripathi Sharma, who has carved her space in Hindi films and web shows with her slant at breaking taboos with her choices of roles, feels flattered when she is compared to Ayushmann Khurrana, who has won wide acclaim as well as a substantial fan base showing similar trait.

"Comparisons to Ayushmann in reviews are quite flattering. We live in an era when competition is healthy and our peers only inspire us to be better. Ayushmann has made this entire generation of actors proud with his ability to do films that most other actors wouldn't touch before. I am glad people are appreciating the work I have done so far. Challenging norms of society is an important facet of being an artist and my primary goal, over and above entertaining others, is to trigger a conversation each time," Shweta said.

Her tryst with breaking taboos and triggering conversations continues with her new short film, *Laghushanka*, where Shweta plays Shruti, a young woman all set to get married, who suffers from bed-wetting.

Fans have hailed Shweta's performance and

praised her for highlighting such an issue. Shweta says she will continue trying to be a part of such "unique content".

"Every actor has their own journey. Mine from the very start has followed a simple mantra — I will do stories that call out to me and back stories that need to be told. When I ask for people's time, I want to do justice to their investment. Over the years that's the kind of work I have been getting. People are willing to place their bets on a risk taker," she said. "This year when *The Gone Game* was being conceptualised and the makers thought of me to do a full fledged series shot at home, I was supremely excited with the concept and idea. Five years ago, I had shot a film called *Zoo*, which was shot entirely on

phone. I am glad that I am seen as someone who will back unique content. I really enjoy working with debutant directors because they have a fresh view of storytelling," added Shweta, who is gearing up for the release of the second season of *Mirzapur*.



## Mirzapur 2 casting made Amika Shail emotional

Singer-turned-actress Amika Shail plays a pivotal part in the upcoming web series, *Mirzapur 2*. She recalls being emotional when her casting in the show was confirmed.

"I became emotional when the news broke of my confirmation in *Mirzapur*. I had watched season one in 2018 and thoroughly enjoyed it, just like the millions of fans the world over. However, being a part of the show is magical. My pulse went ticking when on my first day on the sets I saw Kaleen Bhaiyya (Pankaj Tripathi), Guddu (Ali Fazal) and Munna (Divyendu)," she said.

Amika plays a singer in the show. "The character of a singer came naturally to me, it was a dream come true. I loved working with the stellar cast and crew. I learned a lot watching Pankaj ji acting as he has a very raw way of doing things. His perspective as an artist is amazing. I believe that the almighty has already planned a good Diwali for me this year!" she added. She started her journey as a singer in the reality show *Little Champs* at the age of nine. She stepped into acting and appeared in television series like *Madam Sir*, *Laal Ishq*, *Abhay*, *Balveer Returns*, and *Udaan*.

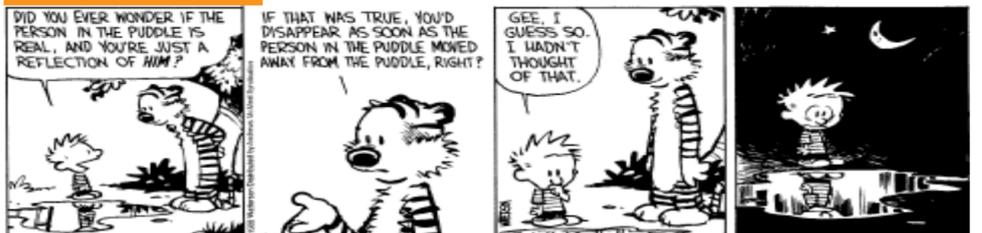
The actress says that this year she has been fortunate to get ample opportunities. "My two shows and a movie are premiering within a month. *Gandii Baat 5* (web series) has done well and now I am biting my nails as the release date of *Mirzapur 2* inches closer. This will be followed by *Laxmi Bomb*. *Mirzapur 2* is memorable for me as I essay the character of a singer in the series, who is kidnapped by Munna Bhaiya," she said.

## FUN

### ARCHIE



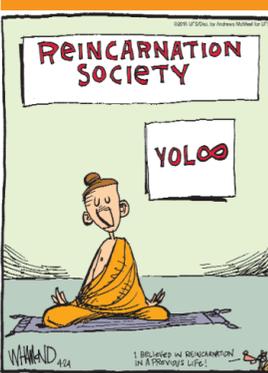
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



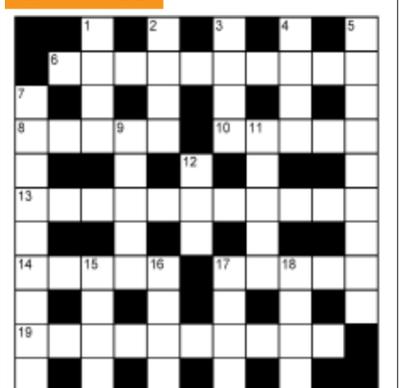
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### NANCY



### SUDOKU



### Yesterday's solution



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

### ACROSS

- A maker of horseshoes
- Wanders after a fire
- Office tables
- He wrote the play "Romeo and Juliet"
- Gets closer to
- Go by bike
- Somewhere to go out for a meal
- Manufacturer
- The other side in a war
- Something left after a fire
- As well
- Male deer
- Be concerned
- Metal containers for drink, food

### DOWN

- This bites a dog
- Divisions in a play
- Second-hand
- Comes first in a race
- Spoke very quietly
- People in jail



I keep my mindset quite positive. Just look to score runs, and don't think pitch is doing this or that. I play with courage. I am not afraid to get out

Deshpande is a confident lad and does his homework pretty well. He has been hit by Chris Gayle, who is a world-class batsman and it's a great learning experience for him

To have Maxi in form is a great thing and it has eased his nerves as well. He has played a lot of cricket for a long time and he knew what he needed to do

This wasn't a season we expected or our fans wanted, but we gave it our best. Sometimes, despite giving our best, the results don't show

## RR, SRH lock horns in must-win game

PTI ■ DUBAI

The inexperienced young guns of both Rajasthan Royals and Sunrisers Hyderabad would like to put their hands up in testing times when both teams square off in a must-win game on Thursday.

Whether it is Priyam Garg, Abdul Samad of Sunrisers or Kartik Tyagi, Riyan Parag of the Royals, the youngsters from both sides will be feeling the pressure of doing something out of the box in case their illustrious seniors fail in that pursuit.

The Sunrisers are currently tottering at the second last place in the eight-team table with just six points from nine games while Royals are a notch ahead with eight points after their comprehensive win over CSK in the previous game.

SRH can't afford to slip up even one bit since another loss would rule them out of the Play-offs race. The Royals would hope to continue with the winning momentum and hope that their foreign recruits continue to perform like they did against CSK.

They got their campaign back on track after two heavy defeats and would also have the edge over SRH, which lost to KKR in the Super Over in their previous game.

Losing Super Over contests often push teams back as KXIP found out after their opening loss to Delhi Capitals. One more loss would make it extremely difficult for the Royals to stay alive.

While Jofra Archer continues to be the backbone of Royals' bowling attack, the wrist-spinning duo of Shreyas Gopal and Rahul Tewatia were terrific in the middle overs against CSK and skipper Smith would be hoping for an encore from his bowlers on Thursday.

In batting, Jos Buttler

looked in ominous form against CSK, forcing Smith to play the second fiddle but RR would need more consistent partnerships upfront.

"I have been doing ok, not quite scored as many runs as I would've liked to and help the team win matches," Buttler said on the eve of the match.

The opener is happy that Royals as a team has found some momentum going their way.

"We have started to play better in the last few matches. We probably should have won the last three but have only managed to win one of those, so we now have four matches remaining, all of which are must-win for us. We will need to win all our games to give us a chance of making the playoffs," Buttler said, while admitting there is a gap between top and bottom four.

"There's obviously a bit of a gap between the top 4 and us and we know the equation for us, so we move on to the next game with a hope to do well and hopefully win against the Sunrisers."

All-rounder Ben Stokes is yet to fire and Robin Uthappa had been their weakest link so far, which might prompt Smith to give a go to someone like Punjab dasher Manan Vohra.

The other aspect that hurt them is Sanju Samson's form which like every other year has gone from good to bad and now worse.

SRH, on the other hand, would still be smarting from the Super Over loss to KKR.

David Warner and Co would definitely be hurt by that loss but they need to come out of that shock quickly and re-strategise if they want to keep themselves afloat in the T20 event. The team heavily relies on its batting unit, mainly on the top four comprising Jonny Bairstow, Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane Williamson.

## RCB TOTALLY OUTGUN KKR



Mohammed Siraj celebrates with RCB skipper Virat Kohli and other teammates after taking his third wicket | IPL20

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Royal Challengers Bangalore cruised to a facile eight-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders on Wednesday at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium. Mohammed Siraj led the way with figures of 2/8 as RCB strangled KKR to 84/8 in their 20 overs. They chased down the target with a whopping 39 balls to spare.

Earlier, pacer Mohammed Siraj and Yuzvendra Chahal wreaked havoc in a stunning display of swing and spin bowl-

ing as KKR could just manage a paltry 84 for eight. Siraj (4-2-8-3) ran through the KKR top order to trigger a stunning batting collapse and became the first bowler in the

history of IPL to bowl two maiden overs while Chahal (2/15) stymied their revival hopes.

It is KKR's second-lowest total after their 67 all-out against Mumbai Indians in 2008.

Playing without Windies star players Sunil Narine and Andre Russell, KKR struggled to get going after electing to bat and it was all over for them after skipper Eoin Morgan was dismissed by Washington Sundar for 30.

It was a masterstroke from skipper Virat Kohli to include Siraj in place of spinner Shahbaz Ahmed keeping in mind a fresh strip.

Siraj began with a double wicket maiden over in which he dismissed opener Rahul Tripathi (1) and Nitish Rana (0) off successive deliveries.

He followed it up with another wicket-maiden over, getting rid of Tom Banton (10) in the process. His figures read an astonishing 2-1-0-3 at that time.

## We want to finish on top: AB

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Experiencing one of their finest IPL seasons, Royals Challengers Bangalore's batting maestro AB de Villiers says his team wants to top the points table on its way to the play-offs of the ongoing edition.

After their game against Kolkata Knight Riders, the RCB were placed at the second spot on the points table with 14 points from ten matches.

Going into their last four group matches, the RCB recorded seven wins and three defeats. "There is definitely a mental edge that a team takes in finishing at the top, having been the most consistent team over 14 matches against the best teams in the IPL."

"So, we will definitely be focusing on that. We know that we will have to take it one hurdle at a time though," the South African said in a video message uploaded by his franchise on its Twitter handle.

The supremely gifted cricketer has played some fine knocks for RCB this

seasons, a couple of them single-handedly helping the team to victory. "With it, we can also send a message to the other teams that we are here to finish at the top of the table and to not just qualify for the play-offs. I really think we have the ability to do that," the star batsman said.



and saw the team home with an unbeaten stand of 40 runs. Earlier, pacer Mohammed Siraj and Yuzvendra Chahal wreaked havoc in a stunning display of swing and spin bowl-

## 'This season Shami has lot more clarity about his role'

PTI ■ DUBAI

The ever-reliable Mohammed Shami has bowled with a lot more "clarity of mind" in the ongoing IPL, which has helped him deliver near-perfect performances this season, feels Kings XI Punjab skipper KL Rahul.

Shami, a world-class Test bowler, has been in his elements, taking 16 wickets for KXIP in 10 matches so far and played a big role in the last three games that the team has won.

"Look we all know that what Shami can do on a given day. He has been doing that for many years now. I think this year, there is a lot more clarity and he has put his hand up as a senior bowler," Rahul said on Tuesday after KXIP beat Delhi Capitals by five wickets to keep their campaign for Play-offs on track.

The KXIP skipper believes Mohammad Shami & Mayank Agarwal



that when seniors perform, juniors take inspiration and that's what is happening thanks to Shami's efforts.

"It is important that internationals across teams put their hands up. That makes the team lot better and youngsters can feed off that," he said.

"You start winning a lot of games and it's great to see Shami doing really well and touchwood the ball is coming out of his hand as perfectly as ever. Hopefully he can get more wickets for the team and keep bowling the way he is bowling," Rahul added.

Glenn Maxwell also raised hopes of being back to form with a 24-ball 32, something that augurs well for the team, feels the skip-

"Well, it's important for the team and individual as well...It's important that the team backs its match-winners. We know what Maxwell can do. When he comes good, he gives a lot of solidity to the team. He balances it out and is a great team-man," Rahul said.

KXIP has now beaten all top three teams — Royal Challengers Bangalore, Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals — in their last three games.

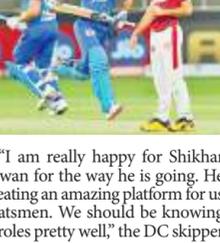
"It feels really good. We are at that stage of the tournament where we need to beat every team that we face. It's important that we take one game at a time and if we keep trusting ourselves, it doesn't matter who you are playing against," said Rahul.

## Defeat wake up call for us: Iyer

PTI ■ DUBAI

It's a wake up call, said Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer as he urged his team's batsmen, with the exception of an in-form Shikhar Dhawan, to take "more responsibility" following a surprise IPL loss to Kings XI Punjab.

"This is like a wake-up call for us. Going forward we are going to face tough situations and tougher teams. We have played amazing cricket in the past but we have to leave that in the past," Iyer said at the post-match conference.



"We have to come out all guns blazing, play with freedom and take more responsibility. We need one match to qualify and keeping that in mind, we will take one match at a time," he added.

Against KXIP, Dhawan alone scored 106 while the quintet comprising Iyer, Prithvi Shaw, Marcus Stoinis, Rishabh Pant and Shimron Hetmyer contributed 54 runs collectively.

"I am really happy for Shikhar Dhawan for the way he is going. He is creating an amazing platform for us as batsmen. We should be knowing our roles pretty well," the DC skipper said.

However, he feels that his batsmen are in a good frame of mind and the defeat was a one off setback.

"Other than that, I feel all the batsmen are in really good frame of mind and few matches can go wrong here and there as fatigue creeps in. Keeping that aside we need to focus on our strengths," he said.

## India could quarantine & train in Sydney to start Oz tour

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Sydney and Canberra are emerging as potential venues to host India's limited-over series against Australia during the upcoming tour starting next month.

The Indian team was initially supposed to land in Brisbane but apparently Queensland state health authorities won't allow the visitors to train during the mandatory 14-day quarantine period.

According to a report in ESPNcricinfo, Sydney could emerge as Indian contingent's port of entry and the city may allow them to train during their quarantine.

It is learnt that the SCG could be hosting four of the six white ball games (three T20s and three ODIs) while Canberra's Manuka Oval hosting two games.

New South Wales state's sports minister Stuart Ayres confirmed that they have received a request from Cricket Australia to allow the Indian as

well as the Australian team to undergo its mandatory quarantine as well as training.

"Cricket Australia has approached the New South Wales Government about quarantining the Indian cricket team and returning Australian cricketers in Sydney," Ayres was quoted as saying by the cricket website.

"That proposal is currently being assessed by NSW authorities including health and police. Fixtures for the Indian tour will be determined by Cricket Australia and won't impact our assessment of the quarantine proposal."

If CA and the NSW state Government are able to reach an agreement, a revised plan would then be submitted by Cricket Australia to the BCCI for approval.

## Late drama in Paris again

Rashford nets late winner as Man United beat PSG, Messi scores in Barca stroll

top of the group after beating Istanbul Basaksehir 2-0 in Germany.

**KOEMAN'S WINNING START**

Ronald Koeman got his first Champions League campaign as Barcelona coach off to a winning start with a confident win over Ferencvaros that gives them control of Group G, top but level on three points with Juventus.

Ferencvaros, the first Hungarian team to make the group stage in 11 years, started brightly and even had the ball in the net via Tokmac Nguen only for the powerful 12th-minute strike to be ruled out for offside.

Messi won and converted the penalty to give the Catalans a 27th-minute lead and the match was as good as done when Ansu Fati clipped home Frenkie de Jong's sumptuous pass just before the break.

Philippe Coutinho lashed



Marcus Rashford celebrates after scoring Man Utd's second goal | AP

home the third before Ihor Kharatin pulled one back from the penalty spot after Gerard Pique was sent off for pulling back Nguen as he charged towards goal.

Pedri and Ousmane Dembele finished the scoring for the 10-man hosts as they prepare for the weekend's Clasico with Real Madrid. Juventus looked comfortable in their 2-0 win at Dynamo Kiev in what was the Andrea Pirlo's first ever Champions League match in the dugout, with Alvaro Morata scoring twice to take the points for the Italians.

**IMMOBILE DOWNS EVE**

It was a good night for Italy as Ciro Immobile got revenge on his old club Dortmund by scoring in Lazio's 3-1 win over the Bundesliga club in Rome, their first Champions League match in 13 years.

Immobile managed just three goals in 24 Bundesliga games for Dortmund in 2014/15, but last season's European Golden Shoe

winner outshone Dortmund's star forward Erling Braut Haaland by netting the opening goal for the hosts after just six minutes.

Lazio went two ahead midway through the first half thanks to Marwin Hitz deflected Luis Alberto's whipped corner into his own goal.

Haaland pulled one back with a thumping finish but Immobile laid on an easy finish for Akpa-Akpro to hand Lazio a big win.

Simone Inzaghi's men are level on three points with Club Brugge in Group F following their dramatic 2-1 win at Zenit Saint Petersburg earned thanks to Charles De Ketelaere 93rd minute winner.

Chelsea are still waiting for a £220 million spending spree to pay off they began their campaign with an uninspiring 0-0 Group E draw with Sevilla at Stamford Bridge.

All four sides in the group are on a single point after Rennes drew 1-1 with Krasnodar.

## DUGOUT

MOTION PICTURE



Kings XI Punjab co-owner Preity Zinta poses for photo with Arshdeep Singh, Glenn Maxwell and Ravi Bishnoi after win against Delhi Capitals on Tuesday | @realpreityzinta



Cricketer-turned-commentator Aakash Chopra took to Twitter to share a picture of the IPL virtual fan-wall where a person from Solapur watching the match between DC-KXIP looked like Rishabh Pant | @cricketakash

**BRAVO OUT OF IPL WITH GROIN INJURY**

CSK all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL with a groin injury, dealing a massive blow to the already struggling side which has very slim chances of advancing to the play-offs. "Dwayne Bravo is ruled out of the IPL due to a groin injury," CSK CEO Kashi Viswanathan told PTI. The 37-year-old Bravo played six games and scored only seven runs in two innings. However, he got six wickets in as many games with an economy of 8.57. "It's sad news, it's sad to be leaving my team CSK. To all our CSK fans, I want you all to keep encouraging the team, keep supporting, all the true die-hard CSK fans," Bravo said in a video message.

**HOLDER SAD THAT BLM NOT PART OF IPL**

West Indies captain Jason Holder has expressed his disappointment over none of the IPL teams taking a knee in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, which, he feels, has gone unnoticed in the world's most glamorous cricket league. Holder, who is member of SRH, made the statement while receiving the prestigious Peter Smith Award on behalf of the West Indies cricket team in a virtual ceremony. "To be honest, I haven't had one conversation up here around it (BLM). Sometimes it seems it has gone unnoticed, which is a sad thing," Holder said in his address posted on Cricket West Indies website.

POINTS TABLE						
	P	W	L	NRR	PTS	
1	DC	10	7	3	+0.774	14
2	RCB	10	7	3	+0.182	14
3	MI	9	6	3	+1.201	12
4	KKR	10	5	5	-0.828	10
5	KXIP	10	4	6	-0.177	8
6	RR	10	4	6	-0.591	8
7	SRH	9	3	6	+0.008	6
8	CSK	10	3	7	-0.463	6

Brahmaji's post lands him in trouble

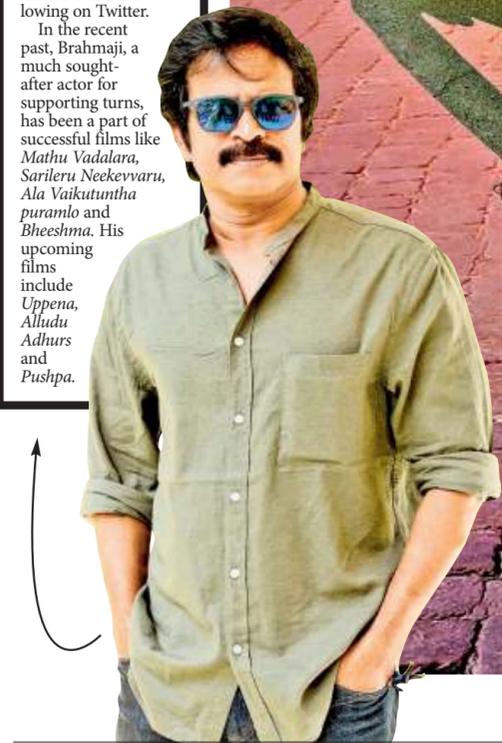
When prominent actor Brahmaji tweeted that he was "planning to buy a motorboat... suggestions please..." in the wake of relentless rains in Hyderabad, little did he know that his wit would land him in huge trouble. He was subjected to immense trolling, with many netizens finding his tweet in poor taste, especially with the rain fury causing great damage in low-lying areas.

The actor, who usually displays his funny side on Twitter as well, was also a victim of the floods, as his apartment cellar in the city was filled with rain water. His plan of parking his car after work at a nearby apartment proved futile and it is in this regard, he uploaded the motorboat post. But the brutal backlash left him with no option but to deactivate his Twitter account. He commands a sizable following on Twitter.

In the recent past, Brahmaji, a much sought-after actor for supporting turns, has been a part of successful films like *Mathu Vadalara*, *Sarileru Neekevaru*, *Ala Vaikutuntha puramlo* and *Bheeshma*. His upcoming films include *Uppena*, *Alludu Adhurs* and *Pushpa*.

# A classic look for Prabhas in RADHE SHYAM

Unveiling a brand new still and announcing the character name of Prabhas from *Radhe Shyam*, production house UV Creations is gearing up to make the actor's birthday special for his fans



A couple of days before superstar Prabhas rings in his 41st birthday, the makers of his next, *Radhe Shyam*, have unveiled a new still of his from the film, bringing smiles on the faces of the legions of his fans.

Dressed in a classic dark purple sweatshirt with dark brown trousers and a blue pocketed blazer, Prabhas strikes a cool pose while resting on top of a vintage green luxury car. Italian vintage architecture dots the background.

Unveiling his look, lead actress Pooja Hedge, who plays Prerana, in the film, posted, "The BIG moment has arrived!! Here's introducing #Prabhas as #Vikramaditya in the latest poster of #RadheShyam!"

Production house UV Creations is also planning to reveal a motion poster of the film to mark Prabhas' birthday on Friday. Presently, the film is progressing in Italy, where director Radha

Krishna Kumar is filming scenes on the lead pair and other supporting actors. The unit is expected to return to Hyderabad towards the month-end.

A romantic drama set in Europe, *Radhe Shyam* is being shot in Telugu and Hindi simultaneously, while it will be dubbed into Tamil and Malayalam. It will also mark veteran actor and Prabhas' uncle UV Krishnam Raju's daughter Praseeda making her debut as a producer. She is jointly producing it along with UV Creations' Vamsi and Pramod. She is representing her dad's banner Gopi Krishna Movies, the production house of which is presenting the film.

The likes of Bhagyashree, Sachin Khedekar, Murli Sharma, Kunal Roy Kapur, Sathyam, Priyadarshi, Sasha Chettri, Beena Benarji and Riddhi Kumar are playing supporting roles in the film, which according to a little birdie, is being planned for an April-end big screen debut.

## Pawan Kalyan announces Rs 1cr for TSCMRF

Late on Tuesday night, superstar and Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan announced a contribution of Rs 1 crore to the Telangana government to aid the people who have been affected due to ceaseless rains in Hyderabad. His donation comes in the wake of fellow actors like Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, Mahesh Babu, Jr NTR, Prabhas, Ram, Vijay Deverakonda and directors like Trivikram, Harish Shankar and Anil Ravipudi contributing handsomely to Telangana CM Relief Fund.

In a video statement, Pawan said that on one hand while the world economy has crashed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, India has recorded the highest amount of rainfall in centuries. "Telangana, especially, has witnessed incessant rains



in the past one week, leading to property damage and loss of livelihood. I blame it on improper town planning in the last few decades. Irrespective of the present circumstances, the Telangana government has understood the trouble that people are facing on the ground and are doing their bit financially. I'm announcing Rs 1 crore for the government to continue helping the people," the actor noted.

Filmmaker Shankar of *Jayam Manadera* and *Jai Bolo Telangana* fame too announced a sum of Rs 10 lakh as his contribution to CMRF.



## Happy to come out victorious from this battle: SD

Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt on Wednesday announced that he has come out "victorious" from his cancer battle and thanked fans and well-wishers for their unwavering support in this journey.

The 61-year-old actor shared the news in a statement on Twitter on the occasion of his children's birthday, Shaahran and Iqra who turned 10 today.

"The last few weeks were very difficult time for my family and me. But like they say, God gives the hardest battles to his strongest soldiers. And today, on the occasion of my kids' birthday, I am happy to come out victorious from this battle and be able to give them the best gift I can. The health and well being of our family," Sanjay Dutt said.

The news comes days after a family source told PTI that the actor had responded "very well" to the medical treatment for cancer.

In August, Sanjay Dutt had announced that he would be taking a break from his professional commitments to focus on medical treatment, amid speculation that he was battling lung cancer.

The actor, in his statement, further thanked friends and family for being his source of strength.

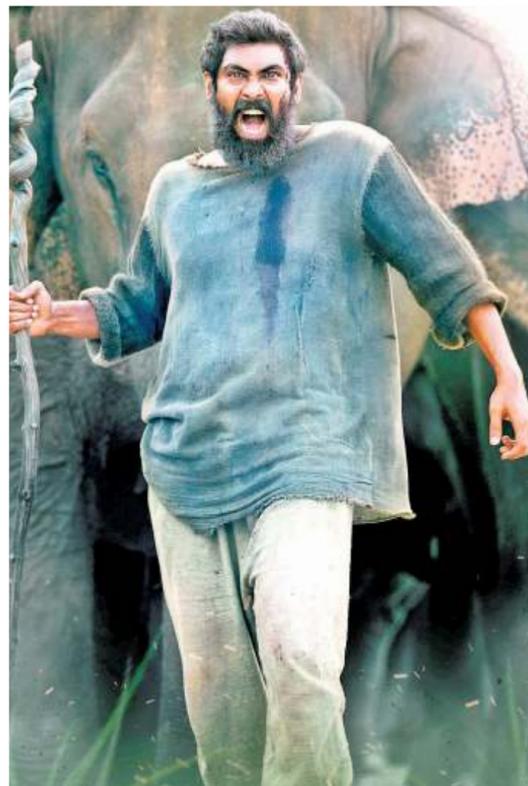
## Aranya books Sankranti date

The makers of *Aranya* on Wednesday confirmed that the film, spearheaded by Rana Daggubati and Vishnu Vishal, will be hitting the screens during Sankranti next year. The film, after witnessing multiple production delays, was slotted for an April big screen rollout earlier this year before the pandemic forced the makers to defer it indefinitely. Amid rumours that production house Eros Motion

Pictures was toying with the idea of a direct-to-web release, the Sankranti release announcement dispelled such notions. "As we fight together against the deadly pandemic, we must look to our forests for inspiration — The lungs of our planet that have long battled a growing pandemic of deforestation & industrialisation! This Sankranti 2021, let's save them with #Aranya at a theatre near you," read a statement from the production house.

Peppered with a lot of action, the film tells the story of a mahout (played by Rana) who fights for the jungle, the animals, and against society. The issue of deforestation and a wall which is being made in the middle of the jungle which breaks nature and the elephant corridor is highlighted in particular. Directed by Prabhu Solomon, the lavishly-mounted *Aranya* has been shot in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu simultaneously.

Interestingly, *Aranya*, at the Telugu box-office, has to face some stiff competition from *Rang De* and *Alludu Adhurs*, both films of which booked their dates for Sankranti some-time back.



## Karthi blessed with a baby boy

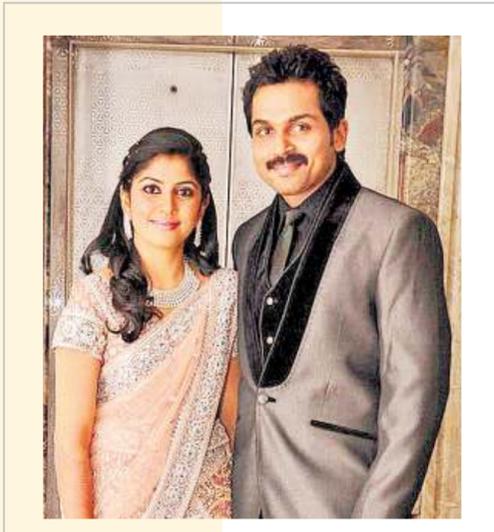
Its celebration time in the family of Sivakumar as his younger son Karthi, a Tamil-Telugu actor, was blessed with a baby boy on Tuesday evening. Updating the happy news to his followers on his social media pages,

Karthi thanked the doctors and nurses who helped his wife Ranjani deliver a healthy child. "Dear friends and family, we are blessed with a boy baby. We can't thank enough our doctors and nurses who took us through this life changing experience. Need all your blessings for the little one. Thank you god (sic)," his post read.

The actor's big brother Suriya too expressed his joy, welcoming a new member to their family. He wrote, "We are blessed! Thank you yet again Dr Nirmala Jayashankar and team."

The newborn is Karthi's second child, as he already has a daughter Umayaal who was born in 2013. Karthi had tied the knot with Ranjani on 3rd July, 2011.

On the professional front, Karthi will be next seen in *Sultan*, which is presently in post-production. He is also playing a prominent part in mentor Mani Ratnam's *Ponniyin Selvan*, whose shoot is on pause mode due to COVID-19 pandemic.



## F2 gets national recognition

Winning the box-office aside, *F2-Fun and Frustration*, starring Victory Venkatesh and Varun Tej, has now bagged two prestigious awards at the Indian Panorama for 2019 from the Telugu category. According to The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, the film has been named as the Best Film for Telugu category while Anil Ravipudi bagged Indian Panorama Regulations Special Jury award as the Best Director.

Expressing his happiness over the acknowledgment, Ravipudi extended his thanks to his leading lights and crew for the support they've extended during the making. "My thanks to the team of SVC, Raju garu and Sirish garu for making this laugh riot of a film to happen," he added. He is gearing up to the sequel, *F3*, with the same cast up next. It will commence from next year.