

NATION 5
INDIA SHOULD TALK TO PAKISTAN TO
DEFUSE BORDER ROW: FAROOQ**AGENDA 9**
EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY: CARV-
ING A NEW PATH TO SUCCESS

HYDERABAD, SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



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DRUG WITH POTENTIAL TO FIGHT COVID-19 IDENTIFIED

Scientists have identified a new drug that could prevent or mitigate the consequences derived from infection by SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for Covid-19. Preliminary results of the study conducted on animal models showed that the drug 4-Phenylbutyric acid (4-PBA) fully curbs mortality caused by respiratory failure derived from cellular stress, showed the research published in the journal Cytokine and Growth Factors Review. The inflammatory process identified in severe cases of coronavirus causes an uncontrolled and excessive release of cytokines -- molecules in charge of organising the body's defences- which could even trigger vascular hyperpermeability and multi-organ failure.



EMIRATIS JOIN EXPATS IN HONOURING 'GREATEST INDIAN ENGINEER'

Emirati and Indian expats and engineers in the UAE came together at a virtual event to pay tribute to M. Vishweshwaraya, the 'greatest Indian engineer', the media reported on Thursday. His birthday, September 15, is celebrated every year as Engineers' Day in India. The webinar was organised by Science India Forum-UAE, and among the speakers was Eesa Mohammed Bastaki, president of the University of Dubai, reports the Khaleej Times. "Sir Vishweshwaraya lived for nearly 102 years. He passed away four months before I went to Bombay when I was seven years old in August 1962. He had contributed a lot to India and the engineering world."



SRI LANKAN MINISTER CLIMBS TREE TO ADDRESS PUBLIC ON SHORTAGE OF COCONUTS

To convey the message to the people on the shortage of coconuts, Sri Lankan State Minister of Coconut Arundika Fernando climbed a coconut tree and said that the country is facing a dearth of 700 million coconuts due to high demand for local industries and domestic consumption. News First quoted Fernando as saying, "We hope to utilise every available plot of land for the cultivation of coconuts and boost the industry to one which would generate foreign exchange to the country." Giving a solution to the problem of prices of coconuts, he said that the government aims to reduce the prices amid the shortage of coconuts in the country.



4 OF FAMILY COMMIT SUICIDE AMID COVID-DRIVEN FINANCIAL CRUNCH

In a shocking incident, the bodies of a bullion trader and all three members of his family, including his two sons in their early twenties, were found hanging in separate rooms of their house in Jamdoli area, police said on Saturday. Trader Yashwant Soni, 45, his wife Manita, 40, and their sons Ajit, 23, and Bharat, 20, -- allegedly committed suicide amid their worsening financial condition in last six months during the COVID-19 lockdown, they said. They committed suicide in their house at Radha Vihar colony in Jamdoli area under Kanota police station and the matter came to light on Saturday morning when Soni's brother visited them, the police said.

**Learning lessons
about corona the
hard way**

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Covid-free world by end of 2021

With no incontestable vaccines or drugs immediately in sight to contain Covid-19, and amidst world-wide watch for light at the end of the tunnel, eminent gastroenterologist Dr D Nageshwar Reddy says confidently that mid-October would mark the beginning of the end of the pandemic. In an interview to The Pioneer, Dr Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman of the Asian Institute of Gastroenterology, highlighted the possibility of majority of people getting vaccinated by April 2021 and life getting back to normalcy by the end of 2021.

EXCERPTS:

Research suggests that masks can be as important as vaccines. What are your observations?

If everyone wears a mask, it is almost like getting a vaccine; it is the best prophylaxis for this virus. If everyone puts on masks, in six weeks the infection rate will drastically come down. But unfortunately people are not listening. There was a modelling hypothesis done in Harvard, where they found that if everybody in a community wore good masks, it is equivalent to implementing 90 per cent of complete lockdown. Unfortunately we got realisation late because WHO misled us stating that it is droplet infection. But research shows it is aerosol infection and one can catch infection even in a closed room, which is not properly air-conditioned. Even if you speak loudly or laugh loudly, you can transmit the infection up to nine feet. Initially we thought it is six feet distance,

“Even if you speak loudly or laugh loudly, you can transmit the infection up to 9 feet

but now we know it is nine feet distance that has to be maintained.

Does the virus stay in the gut for long, considering faeces have traces of the virus?

Coronavirus attaches itself to ACE2 receptors and these are present in the cells throughout the gastrointestinal tract, predominantly in the small intestine. ACE2 receptors are present in the liver and pancreas as well. So in 20-30% of Covid-19 patients there will be gastrointestinal symptoms in the form of diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain. We've seen a few cases of pancreatitis and hepatitis, especially in those people who already have fatty liver. It stays longer in the gut than in the lungs. While in lungs it stays for two weeks or at the most 4 weeks; in the gut, it stays longer -- up to six

weeks. So even after someone is cured, they continue to secrete through faeces. This is called a fecal-oral route, but it is still not clear if it spreads through faeces. About 50 years ago Dr Minnie Mathan published in Lancet from CMC Vellore, where they detected coronavirus in a village and said diarrhoea is self-limiting.

Do genetics have any role in COVID-19 susceptibility?

There is definite evidence as the incidence and mortality rates in South East Asia are less, compared to those of other countries. Even in India, the rates are not very large when compared to other populations. Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia also reported very low infection.

“No second peak of pandemic in India

“Wearing masks is equivalent to implementing 90% lockdown

There are some genetic factors that seem to protect, but then there are a lot of immunological theories. We may have had previous infection of coronavirus, they may have protective antibodies. There is possibly a genetic factor because a virus enters into our body through an enzyme called TMPRSS2.

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TRS to oppose agri bills

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Alleging that the agriculture bills brought in by the NDA government would cause great injustice to farmers in the country, TRS president and Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao on Saturday asked his party MPs to vote against them in the Rajya Sabha. Observing that the bills would hurt farmers and benefit corporates, Rao told the TRS parliamentary party leader K Keshav Rao to strongly oppose them in parliament.

"Chief Minister Sri K Chandrasekhar Rao said that the Farmers and Farming related Bills introduced by the Centre in Parliament would do a lot of injustices to the farm sec-

tor in the country.

The CM has instructed TRSPP Leader Dr K Keshav Rao to oppose the Bills tooth and nail in the Parliament, as it would benefit the Corporates and adversely impact the farmers, an official release said.

The bills, for public consumption, say that the farmers can sell their produce anywhere in the country, but, in reality, the bills would enable the traders to go anywhere in the country to buy the produce, Rao said. Though the NDA government says that the farmers can sell their produce anywhere in the country, is it possible for farmers to take their small produce to other places, bearing heavy transport charges, he asked.

"These Bills are nothing but

a sugar coated pill. This should be opposed at all costs," the CM said. Rao further said, as on date, there is 50 per cent import duty on corn and that the Centre has decided to reduce it by 15 per cent.

The Centre wanted to import one crore tonnes of corn and about 70 lakh tonnes of corn had already been purchased, he claimed.

"For whose benefit 35 per cent of import duty was reduced? When the country is going through economic crisis how did they take such a decision? corn is cultivated in a big way in the country. If we reduce the import duty on corn, what will happen to our own corn producers?," he asked.

Rao said the bills "should be opposed and voted against in the Rajya Sabha" since they would cause huge losses to the agriculture sector and are against the interests of farmers in the country.

Hyderabadi indicted in Amazon bribery case

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Six people, including an Indian national and an Indian-American, were indicted by a US grand jury on Friday with conspiring to pay over USD 100,000 in commercial bribes to employees and contractors of Amazon for unfair competitive advantage on its merchant platform.

According to the indictment, all the six accused used bribery and fraud since 2017 to benefit merchant accounts on Amazon Marketplace, a platform where third-party merchants sell goods, resulting in more than USD 100 million of competitive benefits to those accounts, harm to competitors and harm to consumers, the US Justice Department said.

The accused have been named as Nishad Kunju, 31, from Hyderabad, Rohit Kadimisetty, 27, from California, three from New York -- Ephraim Rosenberg, 45, Joseph Nilsen, 31, and Kristen Leccese -- and Hadis Nuhanovic, 30, from Georgia.

They have been charged with conspiracy to use a communication facility to commit commercial bribery, conspiracy to access a protected computer without authorisation, conspiracy to commit wire fraud.



Release pending Rs1,433-cr grants to ULBs now: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana MA&UD Minister K T Rama Rao has written a letter to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman seeking the immediate release of pending Rs 1,433-crore grants to Urban Local Bodies in Telangana.

In his letter KTR said, "I earnestly request you to arrange the immediate release of all pending dues under FC i.e. a total of Rs 1,433.95 crore, which includes the overdue first instalment of grant to million-plus cities (Rs 468 cr), the balance second instalment of grant to non-million-plus

cities (Rs 315.75 cr) and the pending statutory grants recommended by the Fourteenth Finance Commission (Rs 650.20 cr)".

KTR mentioned that the non-release of statutorily mandated Finance Commission grants amid the Covid-induced shortfall in State's own revenues had handicapped the State to no end. He pointed out that the State had been denied Rs.650.20 crore of the statutory grant to urban local bodies, though the full amount was released to some other States.

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Two arrested for selling prohibited substance

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The South Zone task force team on Saturday nabbed two persons who were illegally selling mephentermine sulphate injection, a cardiac stimulant used on the sly for performance enhancement.

There is high demand for the prohibited substance in the underground market as many youth take it for body-building. However, cardiologists are against the use of this drug. It is used as an injection by some gyms as well as to increase athletic performance, strength-building, and for increasing endurance by youth during workouts.

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Parliament's session to be curtailed, may end Wednesday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ongoing monsoon session of Parliament is likely to be curtailed and may end by the middle of next week in view of the threat of the COVID-19 spread among parliamentarians, official sources said on Saturday.

At a meeting of the business advisory committee of Lok Sabha, which has floor leaders of all parties besides the government representatives and is chaired by the Speaker, most political parties favoured curtailment of the session, which started on September 14 and was scheduled to conclude on October 1.

A final decision will be



taken by the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs.

The Lok Sabha has so far passed three Bills to replace agriculture sector related ordinances. Also, both the Houses have cleared a bill to replace an ordinance for cutting by 30 per cent the salaries of MPs to

ramp up funds in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

After some Members of Parliament, including Union ministers Nitin Gadkari and Prahlad Patel, tested positive for COVID-19 during the session, some opposition parties had conveyed to the government that conducting the full 18-day session could be a risky affair, sources said.

The government then started thinking in that direction, the sources said.

Several MPs had also tested positive for COVID-19 around the time the session began and they were advised not to attend proceedings.

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TDP MLA switches over to ruling YSRCP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Yet another MLA of the opposition TDP crossed over to the ruling YSR Congress in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday, taking the total to four so far.

Vasupalli Ganesh Kumar from Visakhapatnam met Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy at the latter's camp office and pledged his support while the legislator's two sons formally donned the YSRC scarf in a symbolic

entry into the party.

Ganesh, however, did not wear the party scarf to avoid disqualification.

Ganesh, however, later told reporters that he was ready to face disqualification if the TDP pressed for it.

"I am ready to face a by-election as well, if required," he added.

The two-time MLA hailed Jagan's pro-poor policies and hence was extending support.

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'Adhika Masam Brahmotsavam' begins

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

The nine-day 'Adhika Masam Brahmotsavam' held once in three years began at the shrine of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala, near here, on Saturday.

The 'brahmotsavam' began with the hoisting of the 'Garuda' flag atop the golden 'dwajathambham' (flag mast) by high priests amid chanting of Vedic hymn amid observing COVID-19 precautionary measures, a temple official said.

Later, the centuries-old pro-

cessional idols of Lord Venkateswara and consorts Padmavathi and Lakshmi, adorned with diamond-set ornaments and mounted on Pedda Sessa Vahanam (carrier) would be taken out of the sanctum sanctorum to the Kalyanotsava Mandapam inside the shrine, the official told PTI.

Special pujas were conducted for the celestial idols, he said.

For the first time in the history of the ancient hill temple, the customary practice of taking out Lord Venkateswara in



a grand procession on the 'vahanas' (celestial vehicles) around the temple was cancelled to avoid the huge congregation of devotees due to the coronavirus norms, the official said.

Because of 'Adhika Masam' (an extra month which makes it 13 months this year) in the traditional Hindu Lunar calendar, two 'Brahmotsavams' of nine days each are being conducted this year, he said.

The regular 'Navaratri Brahmotsavam' would commence on October 16, the official said.

OBTUSE ANGLE



DO THE EASE OF DOING BUSINESS RANKINGS REFLECT REALITY?



Andhra Pradesh has much to rejoice about after being ranked first among the States in the ease of doing business announced by the Centre last week. This is the third year in a row that Andhra has achieved this distinction, overtaking heavyweights like Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, States known for investor-friendly ecosystems. In August, AP was ranked 20th in export preparedness, though it has a 1,000-km-long coastline, while land-locked Telangana was placed sixth. A week after announcement of the ease of doing business (EODB) ranks, a joint initiative

between the Department for Promotion of Industries and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and the World Bank, AP did not figure in the top rankings for start-ups. Expectedly, the Telugu Desam Party and the YSR Congress vied for credit for topping the EODB rank. But the present regime should not hesitate in sharing credit for this honour with its predecessor. Firstly, it is the continuation of a legacy and, secondly, the Jagan Mohan Reddy government assumed office half-way in 2019. The bigger issue is that the ranking is based on the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP), which is about ushering in 187 reform points. Telangana, which ranked third, could have edged out second-placed Uttar Pradesh or even Andhra if only it had intro-

Expectedly, the Telugu Desam Party and the YSR Congress vied for credit for topping the EODB rank. But the present regime should not hesitate in sharing credit for this honour with its predecessor. Firstly, it is the continuation of a legacy and, secondly, the Jagan Mohan Reddy government assumed office half-way in 2019

duced certain reforms on the legal side. The Jagan Mohan Reddy government, in order to retain its top rank next year, must strain every nerve to reverse perceptions about its attitude towards investors and implement YSR AP One, a new industrial policy designed to give fillip to 10 key services like food processing, textiles, pharmaceuticals, electronics, biotech and leather. Besides, Jagan's U-

turn on developing Amaravati as the State capital, throwing out the Singapore consortium from Amaravati and the Lulu group from building a grand convention centre in Vizag, administering shocks to Anantapur-based Kia Motors and shifting the capitalsignals that political vendetta is his priority. The EDB rankings, aimed at fostering a spirit of competition among the States, have a down-



S NAGESH KUMAR
Former Resident Editor,
The Hindu

side. Kerala and Odisha (29th position) have slammed the exercise for lacking transparency. Questions have been raised about the accuracy of the survey in UP, which pole-vaulted 10 positions to rank second. Experts have suggested to covertly track actual investors,

rather than depending on user feedback. The YSR government has to therefore look beyond rankings to perceptions whose parameters are difficult to gauge. It cannot wish away the foundations laid by predecessors. Foreign and Indian investors have to be proactively wooed, Sri City in Chittoor aggressively promoted, Special Investment Regions and Single Window Policy earnestly pursued, and incentives offered to prospective investors in the software sector on the lines of what Chandrababu Naidu did in Hyderabad to woo Microsoft and other tech titans. The late Kotagiri Vidyadhar Rao, who handled the Major Industries portfolio in Naidu's Cabinet from 1999, was not a great admirer of his boss. Yet, when I asked him once

whether all the song and dance by Naidu for promoting Hyderabad as an investment destination by visiting Davos every winter, hosting international conventions, and spending huge amounts on publicity was necessary, he backed the Chief Minister to the hilt. Positive perceptions, he said, were as important as performance. Ease of doing business should also eliminate hurdles like corruption, red tape and endless paperwork -- a phenomenon endemic in AP and Telangana. Try paying property tax at the e-Seva counters in Hyderabad and the reply one will get is "the server is down". It is set right in a jiffy if palms are greased. The massive corruption unearthed in the Revenue Department of Telangana recently is an indicator of not only how deeply

entrenched it is, but also how it may put off sellers and buyers of land. India ranked 63rd in Doing Business 2020 report of the World Bank, an improvement from its 100th position earlier. China's ranking is 31, though there is criticism of our Eastern neighbour for fudging data. The report ranks India at 163rd position in ease of enforcing contracts and 154th in registration of property. India has a long way to go to impress investors in our immediate neighbourhood and fiascos like Amaravati do not help. Investors tend to look at policy stability. It takes 27 days to start a business in India, compared to just one day in New Zealand, two days in Canada, six days in the US, and 18 days even in Pakistan. This is a telling commentary on policy deficits.

Two arrested for selling prohibited substance

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"The prime accused by name Shah Fahad, who worked as medical representative first, came across the mephentermine sulphate injection. He further noticed the demand for this injections in the market eyed on making huge profits by selling this drug," said S. Raghavendra, South Zone task force Inspector.

Accordingly, he along with his friend Shaik Abdul Owaisi, contacted a seller named, Vikram from Delhi through Akshay Enterprises, a medical agency. Explaining the use of mephentermine sulphate, Dr M.S.S. Mukherjee, senior cardiologist said, "This drug is mainly used in operation theatre for anesthesia and to raise the blood pressure of a patient. This is not a drug which can be used routinely, it should be taken with proper precaution." He added: Many youth use this for muscles' growth, but it is dangerous in the long term. "A drug which should be used on a patient whose blood pressure is low, if used on a normal person, there is high probability of suffering with heart disease and other side effects," Mukherjee said. Mephentermine also found its place in the prohibited list of WADA. The agency, formed to promote, coordinate, and monitor the fight against drugs in sports, considers this drug as banned.

Govt to pay 80% insurance premium of dairy, livestock

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dairy farmers and shepherds in the State can now get claim insurance for their livestock in case of their death due to road mishaps, lightning and other disasters. Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao gave his nod to launch a contributory insurance scheme for the livestock purchased by individual dairy farmers and shepherds. The State government is currently providing insurance only for the livestock supplied to the beneficiaries under the cattle distribution and the sheep distribution schemes.

Animal Husbandry Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav has asked officials of his department to make arrangements for farmers apply for new insurance scheme at offices of Animal Husbandry Department from October 15. Under the scheme, in case of death of livestock due to lightnings and road accidents, a new insurance scheme would be implemented with government and farmers sharing the premium in the 80% and 20% ratio. In a review meeting held with officials of his department on Saturday at his office in the Masab Tank, the Minister said that the new scheme is different from the insurance cover being provided to milch animals and sheep given to farm-



ers on subsidy basis. The Minister expressed concern over the death of livestock in accidents causing severe loss to the farmers. In case of the death of livestock given to the farmers under subsidy scheme, the insurance company gives animal for the animal dead. The death of livestock, not given to farmers by the government on subsidy, is causing loss to farmers. He appealed to the farmers to make good use of the insurance scheme and advised them to take remedial measures to prevent livestock becoming victims of the seasonal diseases in monsoon season. The government spent Rs 37 lakh to provide equipment to veterinary hospitals and spent Rs 3 crore to purchase medicines needed by the livestock, he said.

He asked the officials of his department to take steps to procure medicines which are in good demand from farmers. He asked them to implement the vaccination programme for goats and sheep to protect from dehydration. The government spent Rs 6 crore to purchase de-worming medicines for sheep, he said. He wanted the officials to take measures to protect cows from lumpy skin and blue tongue disease among sheep. Farmers complain of shortage of drugs during his tour of districts, he said asking the officials to ensure that such a situation does not arise. On starting 100 mobile vet clinics, he wanted the officials to inspect whether the mobile vet clinics services reach the target groups or not. He wanted the farmers to take up cultivation of fodder in their own

lands. Directions have been issued a month ago to Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries Departments to grow fodder crops on vacant sites, he said asking the officials to procure a report from districts on the extent of implementation of the orders. Fodder seeds worth Rs 3.21 crore were supplied among the farmers. He asked officials to take steps to strengthen the veterinary council and asked them to supply him with a report on the extent of funds received to the department from the Centre under various schemes and funds receivable from it. He asked the officials to obtain report from district officials on the insurance claim settlement for the dead livestock, distributed by the government under a subsidy scheme, and claims receivable from insurance companies. With the funds received towards settlement of claims, the officials should take steps to distribute livestock in lieu of the dead animals to beneficiaries. In view of heavy inflows into reservoirs, rivers due to heavy rains, he asked the officials to suspend distribution of fishlings among the fishermen for about four days as releasing the fishlings in water bodies would lead to flood waters washing them away.

Parliament's session to be ...

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In order to prevent the spread of coronavirus within the parliament complex, reporters and parliamentary staff entering the premises now have to undergo the rapid antigen test mandatorily on a daily basis, according to a new protocol put in place.

Besides, members of both Houses are undergoing RT-PCR tests on regular intervals on a voluntary basis, said a senior Parliament official.

A member of Parliament can undergo the RT-PCR test as many times he or she likes. Journalists covering the monsoon session from press galleries of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha also have the option to undergo the RT-PCR test, which is valid for 72 hours. Since the result of the much reliable RT-PCR test takes time, the antigen test has been made mandatory on a daily basis. Government officials accompanying their respective ministers during the bill discussions also have to show a negative report of RT-PCR test taken within the last 72 hours of their visit to the complex.

The session began on September 14 and is slated to end on October 1. Both houses are meeting in shifts of four hours each without the customary Saturday-Sunday weekend break.

The Budget Session was short-terminated in March after the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Release pending Rs1,433-cr grants to ULBs now: KTR

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The MA&UD Minister said that the State had been denied its rightful entitlement even in respect of the grants to urban local bodies recommended by the Fourteenth Finance Commission. "While the Commission recommended unconditional basic grant of Rs.2,711.12 crore, the amount released by the Centre was Rs.2,502.90 crore and thus a shortfall of Rs.208.22 crore. Though the State had fulfilled all the conditions attached to the performance grant of Rs.677.79 crore, the amount released to the State was only 235.81 crore, shortfall of Rs.441.98 crore", he wrote.

The Fifteenth Finance

Commission recommended that grants amounting Rs.468 crore to million-plus city i.e., Hyderabad and Rs.421 crore to non-million plus cities in the State should be released in two equal instalments -- in June and October, 2020. This recommendation was accepted by the Union Government and an Action Taken Report to this effect was also placed in Parliament.

KTR wrote, "While the grant to million-plus cities is yet to be released, grant to non-million plus cities has been split into four instalments, in contravention of the recommendation of the Finance Commission, and the first instalment amounting to Rs.105.25 crore has been released on May 19, 2020."

TDP MLA switches...

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TDP MLAs from Gannavaram, Guntur East and Chirala had already jumped over to the YSRC though they formally did not join the party to avoid disqualification.

Jagan Mohan Reddy had, in fact, said soon after becoming Chief Minister that he would admit defectors only after they resigned from their post. This is, however, followed only in breach as the YSRC has been admitting TDP legislators into its fold citing technicalities.

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SILVER	
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₹ 100	

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹181
Without Skin	₹206
Broiler at Farm	₹125

EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	501
VIJAYAWADA	498
VISAKHAPATNAM	500
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹5.01

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Now there is evidence that genetic component of this enzyme is different in different races. In Indians and South Asians, the enzyme is not strong.

Is the strain varying in different states of our country?

Within the country, the strain keeps mutating; in one region, you can find a little mutation after a few weeks. Initially the original strain was not very virulent. But later on different stages of mutations came. Even now strains are mutating but this mutation is not causing a difference in virulence or difference in immunity in different parts of the country. So why is it that States like Gujarat have more deaths and Maharashtra have more cases -- there may be a genetic factor or variation, which is making a difference. We haven't studied it yet in India. Not only immunity or genes, but a lot of other factors affect virulence like the amount of virus. If you are wearing a mask, then it won't be virulent. All the healthcare care workers who died initially were not protected properly.

What are your observations around the controversy surrounding plasma therapy?
We believe that plasma is very effective if given early and the controversy about it is very unfortunate. We have an

'Majority develop antibodies. Some may not have antibodies, but they will have immunity in spiPeople who have severe or critical disease, these people have fatigue, joint pains, inability to do their work, loss of appetite sometimes lasting 2-3 months'

on-going study which states: (1) Plasma has to be given between 5-7 days and (2) Plasma should have neutralising antibodies and not just antibodies. If the neutralising antibodies are 1 in 40, then it is very effective. Most centres don't have neutralising antibodies and they are just giving convalescent plasma.

What is Long Covid?
People who have severe or critical disease, these people have fatigue, joint pains, inability to do their work, loss of appetite sometimes lasting 2-3 months. This is called Long Covid. The body is producing antibodies against the virus. The virus stimulates the body's immune reaction in an uncontrolled manner and becomes like auto-immune diseases. Especially in children (aged 5-10 years) who are coming with joint pains, low-grade fevers, hypertension, BP. It will go on stimulating the immune system, with the body producing antibody-antigen syndrome. This is called Kawasaki syndrome. True magnitude of this will be known next year when all this original disease is gone and these diseases will continue.

What is your observation on reinfection cases and antibody levels?

Majority develop antibodies. Some may not have antibodies, but they will have immunity in spite of it due to T-cell. Even if you don't have high antibodies, the body recognises the virus and clears it off within 24-48 hours. All mutations occurring in this Covid-19 are outside the antibody domain called receptor-binding antibody domain. It won't cause disease again, but there will be a short span of reinfection similar to recurrent common cold. Initial reports of reinfection are not true reinfection as some of the RNA particles stay back in the nose. True reinfection is recovery from disease and documentation with other strains of virus. In India, the virus is not genotyped. So cases of reinfection in Telangana, Bengaluru or other states could be or couldn't be reinfection, but the procedure is to look at the strain.

Is there a rush to invent a vaccine?

Vaccines usually take decades because it is done in

leisurely fashion. If you want to get a vaccine, it would take one year. But in the case of coronavirus it is unprecedented. The amount of money, science behind this, and the number of people following this has never happened in medical science. Permissions are being granted quickly and governments are pushing it. We are involved in vaccine trials as well. The timelines are not abnormal. Irrespective of whether the vaccine is working or not, the producers are making vaccines because the government has written a guarantee that if the vaccine doesn't work, they will still be paid. This further shortened the duration of making vaccines. There are six vaccines that have gone to Phase 3 trails and the results are encouraging. By the end of January, we might be getting the first few vaccines. Vaccine manufacturers are going to produce millions and millions of vials of vaccines and by April or May next year majority of people will be vaccinated.

Did we touch the peak in the number of cases? Is a second peak expected?

We are at the peak now as we are seeing a large number of cases being reported. In September and part of October we will have peak and in the later part of November it will come down, if people take masks seriously. About the second peak, other countries are worried due to cold weather but we don't have such a prob-

lem, except for a few weeks of December when it will be cold. But again with Coronavirus we can't predict. We are doing field surveys now as part of research and in Hyderabad 20-30 per cent have antibodies; similar to the situation in other states. Once antibody levels go to 50 per cent, the rates will come down. We have 4,000 employees in our hospital. When we tested all of them, about 200 employees had Covid-19 but 400 had antibodies. There were 200 who didn't have an infection, but got antibodies. If 1 lakh people are infected, this means 2 lakh people are getting antibodies. If we wear masks, 4 times people will develop antibodies.

Will life ever get back to normal, like the way it was prior to the outbreak of Covid-19?

Life will come back to normal and it is a small blip in history. My belief is by 2022 life will come back to normal and by the end of next year there will be little normalcy. What will not come back to normalcy is the generations who have gone through this trauma. Positive things happened for us like realisation that we shouldn't interfere with Nature. When World War 2 happened, a lot of positive things happened in orthopedics, blood transfusion; now in coronavirus a lot of things are happening like understanding virus, preventive drugs and vaccines.

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Fraudsters dupe 40-yr-old of Rs 6.3 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Fraudsters duped a 40-year-old teacher under the guise of sending her a parcel through courier service. The fraudsters siphoned Rs 6lakh from the victim. Hyderabad Cyber Crime Police booked a case and further investigation is underway.

According to the complainant, a person befriended her on social media and started chatting with him. Further, the person informed her that he sent a parcel to her. Subsequently, the complainant received a call allegedly from International Courier Services Delhi and informed that one parcel is available with them and asked to collect it by paying Rs 43,500.

Since then on various charges like ownership charges, tax charges and others, she transferred an amount of Rs 6.3 lakh. When the courier started was not responding to her calls, she realised that she was duped by the person and approached Hyderabad Cyber Crime police. Based on the written complaint from the victim, Hyderabad cyber crime police booked a cheating case and other relevant sections of IT act and further investigation is underway.

PD Act invoked against woman

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda police invoked the PD Act against a woman who was allegedly involved in an online human trafficking racket. According to the police, Sadanala Devi alias Soumya alias Swetha had formed a gang and was organising flesh trade after bringing women from West Bengal on the pretext of employment. She was nabbed in July by the SOT and Keesara police during a raid. She is currently lodged in Special Prison for Women Chanchalguda.

Open, unfenced nalas at every turn to gobble you up

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Unfenced nalas (drains) across the city are waiting for a tragedy to happen. In some places, even lack of street lights are increasing the chances of accidents at night. That there are such unfenced drains on busy stretches is proof of the authorities' lackadaisical attitude. People are expressing concern over the nalas claiming lives of people more often than not. Death of 12-year-old Sumedha, who got washed away in Deen Dayal Nagar of Neredmet colony once again brought to the fore the hazard due to the nalas. Earlier, a woman was washed away in an open nala sometime ago. Last year, such incidents were reported from Old City and LB Nagar areas.

The GHMC in rainy season does not promise to take on removal of encroachments on nalas and take steps to expand them. But years rolled by, nothing concrete could be done. As the time passes, the nalas are becoming narrower and narrower. Construction of retaining walls at some places provided no solution at all. Following inundation of several homes in catchment areas of Hussain Sagar Lake nalas, Kirloskar committee was appointed to study the extent of encroachments on the nalas and to what extent the nalas to be expanded. The committee suggested expanding 71 nalas spread across an area of 170 km. It estimated that it would cost the GHMC Rs 6,70,000 crore to remove over 10,000 encroachments on the nalas. The city-based engineering consultancy Voyants Solutions Limited suggested widening the nalas up to a distance of over 390 km. It estimated that it would require Rs 12,000 crore to remove over 28,000 encroachments. When it rained heavily in 2017, Ministers went round the city at night to monitor the situation.



With the help of drones and topo sheets available with Revenue and Irrigation departments, a study was conducted again. The study indicated that there were 12,182 encroachments on nalas. In the first phase, measures were taken to remove 842 encroachments at a cost of Rs 230 crore in the first phase.

Tenders notification was issued to take up the works in 47 stretches. Works were handed over to the bidders in 46 areas. Works were grounded in 26 regions. In three years, nalas have been widened up to a distance of 6 km and construction of retaining wall. Several contractors have cancelled their contracts finding fault with the GHMC not acquiring properties. Officials alone would be able to say when the expansion of nalas would be completed.

At many places, there is no cover on the nalas. When it rains heavily, it would be difficult to identify nalas from roads. Even though the nalas have been claiming lives of people, there is delay in acquisition of properties on either side of the nalas. According to the GHMC and Traffic Police, water gets logged in the city at 132 places when it rains. Of them, 24 are major water logging points. Water gets logged at Mytrivanam, Punjagutta, Khairatabad, Lakdikapul, Che Number, Mettuguda, Musheerabad, Bala Nagar, Moosapet, Borabanda, Miyapur and Kondapur. To drain water into the drainages, covers on manholes are usually removed. It is often causing accidents.

According to JNTU professor Lakshman Rao, the flow of flood water per square kilometre should be identified.

People are expressing concern over nalas claiming lives of people more often than not. Death of a 12-year-old girl in Neredmet once again brought to the fore the hazard due to the nalas

Accordingly, the drainage system should be improved. Care should be taken to ensure that drainage and flood canals are not merged. The flood water drainage system should be developed on either side of the roads. According to environmentalist BV Subba Rao, creation of infrastructural amenities should not confine to development of roads, bridges and tourist attractions. The authorities should improve flood flow system. The flood water flow system in the city is not as per the guidelines.

SHRC seeks report from GHMC commissioner

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Human rights commission sought a detailed report from GHMC Commissioner over the death of 12-year-old girl, who died after skidding into a drainage while cycling. A PIL was filed by Mamidi Venu Madhav, an advocate and a trained social worker alleging the negligence of the government and concerned authorities which led to the death of the girl.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Venu Madhav said, "It is clear

negligence of GHMC. They could have closed the drain but they didn't. Technology has improved so far we could have come up with solutions like underground drainage system but they haven't implemented. This clearly shows the laxity of the GHMC to serve the public." He further demand ex-gratia of one crore to family members from the government. Based on the PIL, State Human rights Commission issued notice to the Commissioner GHMC for report by 13 November

2020. A 12-year-old, Sumedha Kapuria, who went missing on Thursday was found dead in Banda Cheru on Friday. According to the police, she accidentally fell in an open drain while she was on joyride on a bicycle on Thursday evening.

Based on the complaint of Sukanya Kapuria, Neredmet Police informed the GHMC DRF teams and started search operations and found her body on Friday afternoon at Banda lake after 13 hours operation.

College managements keep lecturers certificates illegally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite it being illegal, it is well known that college managements in Telangana keep the employees certificates for the tenure they work there. However, during pandemic, the college managements have been terminating employees without giving back their certificates. When the teachers ask them for their documents and experience letters, the managements assure the teachers that if the college needs their services after the classes resume they will be called back.

Sacred of not getting any jobs again, several teachers in the state have been keeping mum. A faculty, who worked in an Engineering College based in Peddapally, shares, "I served in the college for a decade. However I was terminated without any notice in April. Not just that, they haven't yet returned my certificates or issued a letter of experience. I am helpless as I can't even apply for a new job." In 2012, in a similar case, Madras High Court had given the verdict that, the retention of the



certificates by the second respondent Management is unlawful which makes out an offence under Section 406 I.P.C.

UGC has also warned the college managements against retaining certificates. A senior engineering faculty, who was terminated during the pandemic, shares on the condition on anonymity, "I received my termination letter by registered post in May. But despite pressurising the managements, I haven't yet received my certificates. They are more valuable than money. I complaint to IAS Navin Mittal as well, but without any inquiry he shut the case, telling me that I was trying to defame the college."

Although several associations have complaint against the practice in JNTUH,

During pandemic, the college managements have been terminating employees without giving back their certificates

authorities paid no heed. D Srinivas Varma, General Secretary of Telangana Technical Institutions Employees Association, shares, "I have received official complaints from at least 83 lecturers. When we spoke to JNTUH authorities they said we will see what can be done, but it's been five months without any action from the University's end. It's very unfortunate to see that one of the most reputed Universities in the country, is not abiding by the UGC guidelines."

GHMC alerts people to stay indoors

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad witnessed heavy rains on Saturday and IMD advised citizens to restrict movements. GHMC urged people to stay indoors as the rainfall led to water pooling on roads and low lying areas in many places. Since September 16-19, GHMC received 422 complaints in total of which 236 were water logging complaints, 106 complaints related to potholes.

As of Saturday 5 pm, 68 complaints were related to tree fall and fallen tree branches, 11 related to wall collapse and one dilapidated building condition. On Saturday alone, GHMC received 78 rain-related grievances with 40 related to water logging. IMD issued weather



er warning of thunderstorms accompanied with lightning over Telangana from Saturday till September 23. The warning also said 'heavy to very heavy rain' was very likely to occur in several districts including Hyderabad, Sangareddy, Vikarabad, Rangareddy, Medchal Malkajgiri and Yadadri Bhongir among others. The rains are due to The

cyclonic circulation over Telangana & adjoining Vidarbha extending upto 0.9 km above mean sea level has become less marked. During the last 24 hours, Highest Rainfall of 208.8 mm recorded at Addikal (Mahabubnagar), Highest Maximum temperature of 37.6oC recorded at Wyr (Khammam), Lowest Minimum temperature of 20.4oC recorded at Ghanpur (Nalgonda).

2,000 patients admitted in TIMS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (TIMS) at Gachibowli admitted nearly 2,000 patients over the past couple of months. According to officials, there are 275 patients admitted in the hospital of which 32 patients are in ICU as on Friday. TIMS has provided out-patient services to nearly 3,000 patients so far.

The 14-storey building, which was unused for over a decade, was converted into a Covid-19 centre. Even though the government has decided to make it a super speciality hospital, currently only Covid-19 cases are being taken care of. The patients who need super speciality care are being referred to Gandhi hospital.

The modern hospital has 1,224 beds out of which 1,000 beds have Oxygen supply and 50 beds with ventilator support. The hospital recently got a Liquid oxygen tank of 21KL capacity which can provide



The modern hospital has 1,224 beds out of which 1,000 beds have Oxygen supply and 50 beds with ventilator support. The hospital recently got a Liquid oxygen tank of 21KL capacity

uninterrupted supply to nearly 1200 patients. Officials noted that there is no shortage of staff and that 200 doctors and 250 staff nurses are working in the hospital. Of the 20,396 beds

available in government hospitals in Telangana, 17,932 are vacant. Nearly 11,950 regular beds are vacant while 4470 oxygen beds and 1512 ICU beds are vacant.

TREAT TO EYES



As part of beautification drive in public areas, the officials concerned painted the walls at Kukatpally Y Junction to spread awareness about cleanliness among people. The wall paintings made the roads present a pleasant sight to the commuters

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA

REVENUE (LAND ACQUISITION) DEPARTMENT

FORM-VII

PRELIMINARY DECLARATION

(As per sub-rule (1) of rule 25 of Act 30/2013)

G1/3155/2019 Dated: 02-09-2020

File No: F/29/2019 Dated: ---/08/2020

(Collector/Joint Collector/Special Collector
(Land Acquisition)/Special Deputy Collector
(Land Acquisition))

As per the directions of the government of Telangana District Collector, Nalgonda an area of Acres 46.17 1/2 Guntas is needed for the public purpose in Venkateswara village of Marripada mandal of Nalgonda district for construction of Shri Venkateswara Reservoir under Dindi Lift-Irrigation Scheme. The land figured under reach 0.000 to 5.875 was needed for the purpose as was mentioned in the schedule below.

Therefore a declaration has been issued to acquire Acres 46.17 1/2 Guntas in Venkateswara village of Marripada mandal of Nalgonda district as mentioned in the schedule below:

SCHEDULE-1

Village: Venkateswara Mandal: Marripada District: Nalgonda

Sl. No.	Syl. No.	Asses. Acquired	Name of Particulars/ Name of Enjoyer and Father/Husband	Tenent Description
1	10	0.01	Chasani Padmalah S/o Anilak	--
2	10	0.01	Kaaga Jaganath S/o Ramulu	--
3	20	0.02	Panga Chinamanyasa S/o Ramayya	--
4	64	0.01	Ganapati Padmalayya S/o Mayyasa	--
5	70	0.01	Mallappa Yashash S/o Madhalah	--
6	76	0.15	Girl Bagappaiah S/o Yashash	1 Bore Palm 30
7	76	0.15	Girl Ramulu S/o Yashash	1 Bore Palm 6, 30m 1
8		0.13	Girl Bagappaiah S/o Yashash	1 Bore Palm 30
9		1.11	Bodiga Satyanarayana S/o Nagabhusanam	1 Bore Palm 30
10		0.18	Indukuri Saroja W/o Kondabai	--
11		1.11	Bodiga Venkatesh S/o Nagabhusanam	1 Bore Palm 30
12		1.11	Bodiga Srinu S/o Nagabhusanam	1 Bore Palm 30
13		2.05	Patilangi Linganna W/o Yashash	2 Bore Palm 25, 30m 1
14	79	0.10	Indukuri Lakshmana Chary S/o Kondabai	--
15		0.07	Palasani Anandappa W/o Ramdhar Rao	1 Bore Palm 30, 30m 1, 30m 1
16		0.11	Bodiga Yashash S/o Nagabhusanam	1 Bore Palm 30, 30m 1, 30m 1
17		0.28	Indukuri Lakshmana Chary S/o Kondabai	1 Bore Palm 18, 30m 1, 30m 1
18		2.25	Balamkonda Manayya S/o Kallabai	1 Bore Palm 30, 30m 1
19		0.28	Indukuri Venkateswara S/o Kondabai	Palm 10, 30m 1, 30m 1
20		0.06	Narayan Kallamma W/o Srinu	--
21		0.02	Shanku Venkatesh S/o Jaganath	--
22		0.02	Shanku Mahamud S/o Jaganath	--
23		0.02	Shanku Yashash S/o Jaganath	--
24		0.02	Shanku Anand S/o Jaganath	--
25		0.06	Indukuri Lakshmana Chary S/o Kondabai	--
26	82	0.00	Narayan Chaitanya S/o Srinu	--
27	94	0.09	Patilangi Chandra Reddy S/o Madhalah	--
28	100	2.06	Patilangi Bhupathi Reddy S/o Chandra Reddy	--
29	103	0.01	Arbore Lachhi Ram S/o Bhadrappa	--

30	107	0.00	Jaravath Narendar S/o Ramji	
31	107	0.05	Jaravath Ramji S/o Purja	
32		0.10	Jaravath Jara S/o Chakru	2 Bore Palm 10, 30m 1
33	108	0.10	Jaravath Shankar S/o Chakru	Palm 20
34	108	0.10	Jaravath Pandu S/o Chakru	Palm 10, 30m 1
35	108	0.10	Jaravath Lachya S/o Chakru	Palm 10, 30m 1
36		1.08	Sapavath Nagamma W/o Kati	Palm 15, 30m 1, 30m 1
37		0.28	Megavath Kavitha W/o Raju	Palm 10
38		0.18	Megavath Saradha W/o Gopal	Palm 10
39		0.04	Megavath Suguna W/o Vija	--
40		0.30	Jaravath Narendar S/o Ramji	--
41		2.01	Thaddei Venkatesh S/o Venkatesh	--
42	110	1.20	Megavath Pooja W/o Sakru	Palm 20, 30m 1, 30m 1
43		1.02	Thaddei Srinivas S/o Venkatesh	--
44		0.06	Sapavath Nagamma W/o Kati	--
45		0.30	Sapavath Kati S/o Sakru	Task 4
46		0.30	Megavath Sani W/o Hari	Palm 10, 30m 1
47		0.10	Jaravath Bichi S/o Seetha	Palm 10
48		0.20	Jaravath Bichi S/o Seetha	--
49		0.30	Jaravath Ramesh S/o Thanya	Palm 10
50		2.30	Jaravath Mahamma W/o Balya	Palm 10, 30m 1, 30m 1
51	118	0.01	Marla Lachaya S/o Yashaya	--
52	120	3.06	Pasunuru Anand S/o Jaganath	Palm 10, 30m 1, 30m 1
53		0.19	Pasunuru Vijayamma W/o Indraya	Palm 10, 30m 1, 30m 1
54		0.37	Pasunuru Murali S/o Venkatesh	Palm 10, 30m 1, 30m 1
55		0.37	Pasunuru Srinamulu S/o Venkatesh	--
56		1.17	Pasunuru Srinamulu S/o Venkatesh	Palm 10, 30m 1, 30m 1
57		1.16	Pasunuru Murali S/o Venkatesh	--
58		0.28	Pasunuru Srinamulu S/o Venkatesh	--
59		0.37	Pasunuru Vijayamma W/o Indraya	--
60		3.07	Pasunuru Sathakur S/o Jaganath	--
61		1.17	Pasunuru Vijayamma W/o Indraya	--
62		3.07	Pasunuru Padmakur S/o Jaganath	--
63		0.20	Pasunuru Murali S/o Venkatesh	--
64	125	0.01	Megavath Seetha W/o Srinu	--
TOTAL 46.17				

The declaration has been issued under Section 15 (Central Act 30/2013) after subjecting all objections for the land acquisition to scrutiny.

Mines of coal, iron-stone, slate or other minerals lying under the said land or any particular portion of the said land, except such parts of the mines and minerals which may be required to be dug or removed or used during the construction phase of the project for the purpose of which the land is being acquired, are not needed.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Special Land Acquisition Officer, AMR Project, Unit-2, Nalgonda during working hours on any working day.

Special Deputy Collector (Land Acquisition) AMR Project, Unit-2, Nalgonda

Additional Collector Nalgonda

District Collector Nalgonda

DIPR R.O. No: 621/LA/PP/Advt/Pub/2020-21

MLC polls turn prestigious for parties

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

Political parties in the state are taking Graduate Constituency MLC elections on a prestigious note. They are gearing up for the polls and have begun preparations at ground level. The Graduate MLC elections will be held for two constituencies—Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal and Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar.

The parties are considering these elections as prestigious and hence have already started the election process and sending voter enrolment pro-formas to the graduates to enroll their names whenever the Election Commission begins enrolment of the votes. Though the elections will be held apolitically, the political parties in the state wants to show their strength by fielding their candidates.

However, the competition is more in Congress party for the two graduate MLC tickets. Senior leaders like G Chinna Reddy is expecting ticket for the graduate MLC elections as Congress senior leader and



former Minister T Jeevan Reddy, who won the Karimnagar graduate constituency election with a thumping majority, lost Assembly elections in 2018.

Jeevan Reddy's thumping victory tempted leaders like Chinna Reddy, who also lost Assembly elections like Jeevan Reddy. Chinna Reddy has applied for the MLC ticket to contest from Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar Graduate Constituency which is in the hands of BJP now. Not only Chinna Reddy but also the leaders like Ch Vamshichand Reddy, SA Sampath Kumar,

Dasoju Sravan, Kuna Srisailem Goud, who lost Assembly elections, are trying for the Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar Graduate Constituency ticket along with leaders like Indira Shobhan, Harsha Vardhan Reddy and several others.

The BJP, which is stating that it is the only alternative to the ruling TRS, is preparing strategies to win both Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar and Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal Graduate Constituencies this time.

Party senior leader N Ramchander Rao is sitting

Many senior leaders from Oppn parties are looking forward to contest polls, which in turn will benefit the ruling TRS

MLC from Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar Graduate Constituency. According to sources, the party is fielding N Ramchander Rao once again from Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahbubnagar constituency.

Besides these national parties, Congress and BJP, the TJS is also going to field its candidates in the MLC elections. TJS Chief Prof M Kodandaram, who didn't contest yet though he floated the party much before Assembly elections, himself is going to test his fortune from Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal Graduate Constituency. He sought the support of the

Congress, TTDP, CPI, CPM and CPI ML New Democracy too. There are rumors that the ruling TRS is seriously trying its best to see that Kodandaram does not win these elections and is preparing Kodandaram centric plans. It's not that easy for Kodandaram to win the elections if opposition parties don't extend their support.

On the other hand, Telangana Inti Party chief Dr Cheruku Sudhakar too wants to contest MLC elections from Nalgonda-Khammam-Warangal graduate constituency. Besides these political parties' candidates, many independent candidates are also vying to contest the elections. Both Kodandaram and Cheruku Sudhakar worked with TRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao and separated from the latter. One of the political analyst opined that many stalwarts like Kodandaram, Cheruku Sudhakar, Chinna Reddy, N Ramchander Rao, Ch Vamshichand Reddy, SA Sampath Kumar, Kuna Srisailem Goud and several others may become an advantage to the ruling TRS.

TS Government likely to revise market value of lands

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State Government is keen to recover the loss of revenue due to Coronavirus through revising the value of lands upwards. It may be recalled that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao raised the issue on the floor of the State Legislative Council on September 13.

He said the execution of the irrigation projects and implementation of the Rythu Bandhu scheme has increased the value of the lands in the open market. He said that an acre of agriculture land costs at least Rs 10 lakh anywhere in Telangana. At some places, its cost went up to Rs 1 crore, he added. The statements drop the hint that the state government is keen to revise the market value of lands upwards.

The Stamps and Registration Department has studied the land prices in the open market in 2019 and submitted a report to the government and recommended the



government to increase the land cost. As the market value is very less the Stamps and Registration Department is not able to earn enough revenue by way of stamp duty and fees. The state government did not entertain the increase in the prices of land values then. It went back fearing backlash from the people. Now the situation is totally different. There is huge variation in land prices.

In 2013, the Kiran Kumar Reddy Government revised the market value of lands in undivided Andhra Pradesh. The same rates are prevalent

even now. As per the state government's assessment, the revenue realised from Stamps and Registration Department in 2019-20 was Rs 6,446 crore. In 2020-21, it targeted to earn Rs 10,000 crore revenue. The Government of Telangana collects 6 per cent of the market value towards registration fees, stamp duty and transfer duty, while AP collects 7.5 per cent towards the same charges. By any amount, the stamp duty and registration is very less, feels the government which is toying with the idea of increasing the market value of the lands.

HC relief for contract employees

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a relief to contract employees working in various government departments of the state including power utilities, a full bench of Telangana High Court comprising the Chief Justice of the state Justice RS Chauhan, Justice A Rajasheker Reddy and Justice Naveen Rao held that the employer viz-aviz state government service and service power utilities has got the power to apportion marks towards service rendered on temporary basis.

The bench, however, said that the marks, so apportioned, should not be more than 20 marks out of total marks of 100 or not more than 20 per cent of the total marks while having direct recruitment. The bench has also upheld the constitutional validity of Rule 31 of the Telangana State and Subordinate Service Rules, 1996 and added that the exercise of power under the



said Rule was legally valid. It also said that the power of relaxation of Service Rules could be exercised by the Government in order to remove the restriction on computation of temporary service imposed by the Service Rule, and to enable the temporary employee to compute the temporary service as weightage in the process of regular recruitment.

It, however, made it clear that if the Service Rules do not envisage assignment of marks for temporary service in the

regular recruitment, it was for the employer to assign such weightage. For, such a power is an enabling power. It does not bestow any vested right upon a temporary employee to insist upon extension of weightage to temporary service rendered by him," the bench said. Referring to the petitions filed on the issue. It said that as the binding Settlements require assignment of marks for temporary service in the regular recruitment, the temporary employee is entitled to seek its enforcement.

Reach out to students in Agency, officials told

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tribal Welfare Minister Satyavati Rathod on Saturday called upon ITDA project officials and district tribal welfare officials to work with more efficiency to ensure the fruits of welfare schemes being implemented in the department trickle down to the beneficiaries. She reviewed implementation of development schemes in the department with ITDA project officials and District Tribal Welfare officials in a meeting held at MCR HRD Institute here on Saturday. Later speaking to media, she said that she asked the participants of the meeting to complete the works suspended mid-way due to Covid-19.

He said that the depart-



ment always puts the interests of tribals first whether food processing units are set up in tune with KCR's ideals or other industries set up. The department always strives hard to ensure the new industries improve living standards of tribals. The Tribal Welfare Minister said that the teachers asked to teachers to reach out to ST students at their homes because there are no proper educational amenities in Agency areas.

Vijayashanthi hits out at CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC Campaign Committee chairperson Vijayashanthi on Saturday launched a scathing attack on Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao over the death of 12-year-old girl who died after falling into an open nala at Deendayala Nagar in Malkajigiri area. "Hyderabad will enter the Guinness World records if they take into consideration the deaths due to nalas, drainages and manholes during the rainy season," she alleged. "It has become a common thing for the TRS leaders to give assurances whenever incidents like Sumedha take place. The government says that it will see that such incidents will not be repeated," she pointed out. Vijayashanti said that the TRS leaders have also got habituated that they will criticise the previous governments whenever such incidents happen.

State wins praise for Covid management

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal along with Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on Saturday held a video conference with Chief Secretaries of twelve states and enquired about the steps taken by the various states in containing the spread of Coronavirus. Cabinet Secretary complimented the state for managing the pandemic well and maintaining low case fatality compared with national average.

Ramping up the number of Covid tests and making testing facilities available in large number of locations across the state such as Primary Health Centres, Urban Health Centres and Basthi Dawakhana in the state was also appreciated by the Cabinet Secretary.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar



informed that the government is having a close watch on the situation and fully geared up to handle the pandemic, even as the number of positive cases have started declining. Explaining the various measures taken by the state government, Chief Secretary said that testing has been ramped up in the state. RT-CPR testing is being done on every person who is found symptomatic under rapid antigen test. The government has formulated a strategy to make all beds equipped with oxygen facilities.

Cops clear traffic to help organs reach hospital

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Traffic Police provided a green channel for ambulance transporting live organs. The ambulance covered 36.8 km in 25 minutes. In this year alone, Hyderabad Traffic Police has facilitated organ transport nine times.

The Hyderabad and Cyberabad Traffic Police coordinated and arranged Green Channel for transportation of live organ (Lungs) from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Shamshabad to KIMS Hospital, Begumpet.

The distance between Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Shamshabad to KIMS Hospital is 36.8 km which was covered in 25 minutes. The medical team carrying live organ (Lungs) left at 13:23 hrs from RGI Airport, Shamshabad and reached KIMS Hospital, Begumpet, Hyderabad at 13:48 hrs.

Taking to Twitter Hyderabad City police



Commissioner Anjani Kumar said, "Greatest sense of satisfaction, when an Ambulance carrying live Organ was escorted from Shamshabad Airport to KIMS Hospital in 24 minutes. Though it must have caused inconvenience to some but you will agree that it was for a good cause. Kudos to traffic police and the public."

Congress blames KTR for death of 12-yr-old girl

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AICC Member and TPCC official Spokesperson G Niranjana on Saturday blamed Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao for the death of 12-year-old Sumedha Kapuria, who drowned in an open Nala at Malkajigiri on Friday. He demanded the Minister to resign for his post.

"Residents of Greater Hyderabad are afraid to step out of their homes in rains. KTR is misleading the people with figures and wasting time of officials with his review meetings without taking any concrete measures to safeguard the lives of the people," he alleged. Niranjana, in a statement asked KTR to reveal as to why precautionary measures were not put in place at vulnerable places as the heavy rains are lashing state since the last few days."

Cong: Only KCR benefitted from TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AICC In-charge for TPCC Manickam Tagore on Saturday urged the party leaders to adopt a constituency-centric approach in order to win next Assembly elections in 2023. Manickam Tagore, along with TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy, had a video-conference through Zoom App with AICC Secretaries, contested candidates of Lok Sabha, former Ministers and other senior leaders.

CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, AICC Secretaries NS Bose Raju and Sreenivasan Krishnan, TPCC working presidents Ponnamp Prabhakar and J Kusum Kumar, former Union Minister Renuka Chowdhary, former ministers Dr J Geetha Reddy, R Damodar Reddy, Marri Shashidhar Reddy, AICC spokesperson Dr Dasoju Sravan, contested candidates



including Mallu Ravi, R Damodar Reddy, Anjan Kumar Yadav, Feroz Khan, Madan Mohan, Gaddam Vinod, Konda Viveshwar Reddy and S Chandrasekhar participated in the meeting.

TPCC chief Uttam Kumar Reddy introduced the leaders to Manickam Tagore and said that it was the second meeting to facilitate interaction between senior leaders with the new AICC In-charge. He informed that a few more meetings, through video-conference, would be held in the coming days to complete the formal introduction of all leaders and take their views and suggestions on strengthening the Congress. He said that Tagore would visit Hyderabad in the first week of October after the end of Parliament session. In his opening remarks, Uttam said that the agenda for the meeting was to discuss membership drive, Dubbak by-elections, MLC polls and others.

Teachers go the extra mile to teach students

NAMRATA SRIVASTAVA
■ HYDERABAD

The pandemic and subsequent lockdown in the country raised several questions on the continuity of education for several students. With the schools closed for a good six months, several teachers, especially those in their fifties, have been going the extra mile to make sure that the education of their students is not affected during the pandemic. Most of these teachers, who have taught their lessons in the traditional, classroom setting for decades, have to change their medium of interaction with the kids. While initially there were a few hesitations, these teachers are learning quickly.

P Uma, a 58-year-old, government school teacher, shares how she used her time recover-



P Uma

ing from Coronavirus to learn a bit of new technology so that she can take the class. "All of it is so new. I won't claim that I have learnt it all, I am still learning and mostly my daughter helps me with various things. I teach Environmental Science to primary kids. A lot of lessons were outdoor based. But now, I perform experiments at



Murthy

home as they watch and make slides for them as well. It's nice to know that even in pandemic my students' education is not affected."

While learning new technology initially was a bit scary, most teachers are finding it exciting now. After all, as they say, there is no age to learn anything. Talking about her experience of learning new



Telichetty Ranga Bai

things at 58, Telichetty Ranga Bai, English teacher at Kendriya Vidyalaya Tirumalagiri said, "Learning new things at this age is really thrilling. Had it not been so we would have been with chalk and talk. It has also boosted our morale. I have been using Zoom and Google for taking the classes." Incidentally, it's not just the schools teachers

who have stepped up their technical knowledge. Teachers, who used to take tuitions for students also are using online medium to ensure their kids get maximum support. Murthy, a 61-year-old retired mathematics teacher, who ran tuition for students' started a YouTube channel so that classes won't stop. "I took tuition for over 20 kids. But, the pandemic halted all the classes. Many parents insisted that I take the classes, but I thought it was too risky. That's when I thought of making my videos. Initially, I understood nothing about making videos or uploading and giving appropriate captions. My son helped. Slowly, I am grasping various things. It's nice to learn something new at 61, while imparting knowledge to your students," he said.

GIFT A SMILE



Social Welfare Minister Koppula Eshwar, MLA Arekapudi Gandhi and Ex MLA K Prabhakar Reddy donated Covid-19 response ambulances to the state government under 'Gift A Smile' initiative, on Saturday

TRS leaders cheating people in every election, alleges Bhatti

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

CLP Leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Saturday alleged that TRS leaders from Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao to Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao and Animal Husbandry Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav won the elections by deceiving the people of Greater Hyderabad in every election. "The TRS leaders are troubling the people after winning the elections. Minister Talasani Srinivas left the people to the wind instead of showing 1 lakh houses in GHMC limits," he alleged.

Speaking to the media on Saturday along with V Hanumatha Rao, Dasoju Sravan and others at Indira Bhavan, Bhatti alleged that KCR, KTR and Talasani assured the people of Hyderabad that the government would give construct 1 lakh houses but the government constructed only 3,428 2BHK units. The government has to construct 96,000 2BHKs in 150 divisions (24 Assembly



Constituencies) in Hyderabad city but it constructed mere 3,428 2BHKs only," he pointed out.

He alleged Talasani showed 2BHKs in Maheshwaram, which were constructed in 2016, constituency instead of Greater Hyderabad. There is no truth in the words of Talasani, Bhatti alleged. The government vacated 150 families four years ago in Ambedkar Nagar Colony, however, the colony is still vacant till date, Bhatti alleged. "Even in Mallepally, the government left the vacant place by laying foundation stone," he said. The Congress leaders

will explain to the people of all the divisions of Hyderabad city about the deceivings of TRS party, he said. Bhatti said that the TRS government is stating that there is no vacant land in Hyderabad city to construct DBHs but the Congress is ready to show the land in Hyderabad city. "We will sit in chairs in Miyapur lands as KCR assured in Warangal that he will construct houses by sitting in the chair in Warangal but nothing has happened over there", he said. The Congress will wage the same fight for the sake of Warangal and Khammam people, he said.



‘Thrilled to do a negative role’

Talktime

KAVIN DAVE

He is known for his comic timing and has done films like My Name Is Khan, Shirin Farhad Ki Toh Nikal Padi and Kick. The actor speaks with Shalini Sakseena about why he played a negative character in a web series, Flesh and his upcoming

■How did you come on board for the series — Flesh? The casting director of the series approached me; he is a friend of mine. The character I play here is very different from what I have done in the past.

He thought of me and wanted to see if I fit the role. I was thrilled that somebody approached me for a negative role. Then the series is directed by Danish Aslam and there was nothing that made me turn it down.

■You play a negative role. Was it something that you were looking for? I was not specifically looking for a negative role. I wanted to do something different from the roles that were offered to me. In the past, I have played comic roles. People associate me with those type of easy-going characters. I wanted to show I could do other roles. I also wanted to experiment.

■You have done films and TV shows — Bollywood and Gujarati, what made you say yes to a web series? I said yes purely on the basis of the content and the role that was offered to me. I had been offered other web series before as well, but they were similar to what I had

I started acting when I was very young. But it was more of a picnic back then. During my college days I started doing theatre. That is when I got to know what acting was all about. After graduation, I pursued it as a profession.

■What has been the most significant change in the industry? I would say it is the influence of social media. I am a private person so it becomes difficult because people approach you for a particular character after they see the kind of following one has on social media. Not everybody does it, but there are many

done in the past. There was no role that excited me. But the role in Flesh excited me.

■What is Scam 1992 about and your role in it? The series is directed by Hansal Mehta; it is based on the scam by Harshad Mehta back in 1992. The series is all set to release on SonyLiv. I may have a small part here, but the role excited me because it is based on the real-life character. The role was really challenging since it is based on real person.

■How did you get into acting? I started acting when I was very young. But it was not much of work back then; it was more of a picnic. During my college days I started doing theatre. That is when I got to know what acting was all about. After graduation, I pursued it as a profession.

■What has been the most significant change in the industry? I would say it is the influence of social media. I am a private person so it becomes difficult because people approach you for a particular character after they see the kind of following one has on social media. Not everybody does it, but there are many

One is not selected on one's talent and if you fit the bill.

■Does that mean you still have to be recognised by the industry? I think so. I am only half way there. I still have a long way to go.

■Is there a role that you loved being part of? There were a couple of roles that I did for YRF Television. In 2010 I played Huzaifa Ali in *Rishta.com*. Another role that is dear to me is a role that I did for *Fatmagul*, a Turkish series.

■You have done comedy and now a negative character. Which would you choose? Comedy comes naturally to me. It is my first love. When I was younger, I did *Filmi Chakkar*. I have learnt from the greats like Satish Shah, Ratna Pathak Shah and Rajesh Bedi. As a kid I used to observe them; I owe my comic timing to them.

■What next? There were a few things that had been planned but the pandemic has pushed those projects. But *Scam 1992* is set to release. There is another film, I have just finished dubbing for it and is in the post-production stage.



TIME TO KISS THE GROUND

The award-winning documentary, Kiss The Ground, by Josh and Rebecca Tickell talks about the agriculture revolution and climate change

Who would have thought that ploughing our fields meant denuding the soil, triggering desertification and leading to unprecedented water crisis, famine, starvation and global crises of unimaginable proportions? Who would have thought that years of fertilisers and pesticides being used in fields worldwide came from the residues of what an evil German scientist evolved in a lab to gas the unsuspecting Jews in millions? Who would have thought that an arrived nation like the US would actually transport this poison and insert it into its soil to botox unscrupulous farm production and, in turn, bring in cancer, heart, kidney and other fatal diseases in the form of global epidemics?

Not many of us would think deeply about this agriculture revolution, Monsanto and other prime suspects that are slowly killing the planet and its human population, not to mention the millions and millions of soil organisms that take in CO2 and turn it into natural manure for the plants to grow organically. We still are not thinking about it even if brilliant documentaries like this one makes the

THE INTERESTING ONE HOUR, 24-MINUTE DOCUMENTARY, IS THE STRONGEST EVER DEFENCE OF ORGANIC WAY OF LIFE. SOME PARTS OF THE DOCUMENTARY ARE SO WELL PUT OUT IN THE SEGMENT OF STORY-TELLING THAT IT ALMOST COMES OUT AS A THRILLER



issue clear and obvious.

Call it the curse of meddling with God and his creation, but the way humanity has evolved leaves a lot to be questioned as we tussle with the inconclusive talks on climate change at the highest international level.

Kudos to the husband-wife duo Josh and Rebecca Tickell, full time environment activists and filmmakers, to have put up such a well-researched, convincing and alarming state of affairs about the killing of our soil. The documentary is a stunning mount on the soil-conscious farming practices that need to be implemented if climate change has to be curbed.

The interesting one hour, 24-minute documentary, is the strongest ever defence of organic way of life. Some parts of the documentary are so well put out in the segment of story-telling that it almost comes out as a thriller.

Such is the story of the soil that it is put to you that you don't mind the preachiness that accompanies it.

A worthwhile watch not just for enjoyment but to face the soil crisis with some viable alternatives.

‘Owning a production house is diversification, not transition’

RAVI DUBEY, who has completed 15 years in the industry, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about his production house, his recent poem and album, among other things

■ You started off as an actor, how did it lead to a production house? I would not call having a production house a transition from acting; it is a diversification. I am very much still an actor and I still love acting. One thing just led to another. Sargun (wife) and I have been lucky that we have been able to forge good relations and people trust us. It is an organic diversification.

■ Are there any particular kind of projects your production house would like to promote? There are Punjabi films that we are doing. A third has just been put on the floor. There is content we are working for Hindi TV. There is content for the web. Everything from music videos to cinema to TV, we are all there.

■ Is that how your poem and album happened? No, I wouldn't say that. When we produce content, there are many factors that come into play. But for poetry, it was something that I had been wanting to pen down. One by one, people came and got associated with it and became a project. A friend created a video and another gave the music. We produced the video and I have written the poetry, but would not call it a commercial production, it was more of a creative bent.

■ How has the journey been? I have been lucky. God is kind. The industry has embraced me, honour, taught me so much, been kind to me and showered me with love. I am grateful that I am here more than anywhere else. This is where I love to be, this is what I enjoy. I am fortunate to be part of this industry.

■ What is the best part of owning a production house? You can tell stories you believe in; you push forward ideas and stories that you want and closet to your heart. It is an opportunity where one doesn't have to necessarily rely on others to tell a story. One doesn't have to convince people that a project is good because you think it is. Having your own resources makes it possible. We are lucky we could start this and put forward ideas we believe in.

■ Does that mean that the kind of content in the industry is not something that works for you? This is not true. There is great work happening. In my 15 years in the industry that I have been an actor, there is fantastic work happening. It is only in the last one year that we decided to diversify for commercial and creative reasons. I am personally proud of the work that I have done like *Jamai Raja* and *Saas Bina Sasural*. Opening a production house doesn't mean I am undermining what is happening in industry but celebrating it.

■ You also debuted in the digital space with *Jamai 2.0*. What made you say yes to the project? It was an organic move. The show — *Jamai Raja* has given so much; people loved it and wanted to see a metamorphosed version of it. I liked the story and the comfort level of working with Nia (Sharma). Doing it was like being at home. I enjoyed the process and that people loved it.

■ From modeling to acting to hosting a show. Where are you most comfortable?

I am most comfortable performing. I love and enjoy acting. I love hosting as well. Playing a character really grinds my gear. Just putting myself in front of the camera, the imagination is at full throttle, your creative potential and juices are flowing. But it doesn't mean I don't like hosting or dancing. I just love the art of performing.

■ What are some of the upcoming projects? Besides the Punjabi films, music videos, web series and content for TV, there are some acting projects as well but I can't speak about them at present.



WEEKLYNATTER

SUNNY KAUSHAL MAKES DEBUT WITH TAARON KA SHEHER

In 2019, Bhushan Kumar and Vicky Kaushal teamed up for the chartbuster *Pachtaoge* that stands tall with around 450 million views on YouTube. Just a year later, the T-Series head honcho has signed Sunny Kaushal for his next music video. The single, titled *Taaron Ka Sheher* will have Sunny, who debuts in the world of music videos, opposite the vivacious and talented Neha Kakkar.

When you speak of music artists, Neha Kakkar has many blockbuster tracks to her credit and is one of the trending artist on YouTube, streaming sites and social media. But with *Taaron Ka Sheher*, the audience will witness a different side of Neha, on the other hand Sunny will don a never-seen-before rugged look, with long hair. The duo romantically paired opposite each other will definitely surprise the audiences with their chemistry.

It's the first time lyricist Jaani has given the



music and composed this intense romantic track sung by Neha Kakkar and Jubin Nautiyal.

A visibly excited Sunny shares: "When Bhushan sir called me for the song I was really excited to be associated with T-Series but after listening to it I got on board immediately, without a second thought. Neha and Jubin have sung the song so well that you can't help but feel it completely. And I've always been a fan of Jaani so I am really kicked about being a part of the song."

Songstress Neha who reunites with Jaani yet another time is all smiles: "It's an amazing composition by Jaani, one would hear after a long time. Bhushan sir's vision on this track is something to look forward to. I am super excited to feature with Sunny and give the audience this intense romantic track in mine and Jubin's vocals. Arvind Khera, our director, has done a great job with the video."

A DINNER TO REMEMBER

Ever feel like the weeknight struggle is real? Sometimes it's hard to find the time to put a balanced meal on the table that the whole family will love, and it can be just as hard to think of something to prepare that you didn't already eat last week! We're with you.

It doesn't take a long list of ingredients to make a great weeknight dinner. With simple and versatile ingredients, you already have at home combined with the goodness of California walnuts you can prepare comforting and wholesome meals that are sure to win your family's heart. Walnuts make a fantastic addition to the recipes. They're crunchy, filling and go with just about everything.

So, whip-up these delicious meals in thirty minutes or less so



you have more time to do the things you love with the people you love.

California walnuts Coimbatore Tomato Bhat

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups basmati rice, cooked
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 spring curry leaves
- 2-3 dried red chillies
- 1/4 teaspoon asafoetida
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper powder
- 1 cup fresh tomato puree
- 1 tablespoon Kashmiri red chilli powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garam masala powder
- 1/2 cup California walnuts, chopped roughly

- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric powder
- Salt to taste

PREPARATION

- Heat oil in a kadhai.
- Add mustard seeds and cumin seeds. Allow them to crackle.
- Add curry leaves, red chillies and asafoetida.
- Stir in California walnuts and add the tomato puree.
- Season with salt and add in all the powder spices.
- Once the tomato puree thickens and reduces to 1/3rd its original size, add the rice.
- On high flame stir fry the rice.
- Serve hot!

— By Chef Varun Inamdar



SHALINI SAKSENA speaks with experts who say that the rising numbers need to be tackled on a war-footing as a 2019 report by the World Health Organisation revealed that 7.5 per cent of Indian population suffers from some form of mental disorder, which constitutes one-sixth of all health-related disorders and accounts for nearly 15% of the global mental, neurological and substance abuse burden

Triggers

■ **Stressful events:** Personal events like divorce, loss of job, death of a friend or close relative may cause depression.

■ **Family history:** Genes have a role to play, so if you have a parent or a sibling with the condition, chances are you will also develop it.

■ **Giving birth:** The hormonal and physical changes in a woman's body during pregnancy and after birth, coupled with the added responsibility of a new life, may cause postnatal depression, also known as baby blues'

■ **Substance abuse:** Sustained high consumption of alcohol and psychedellic can affects brain.

■ **Illness:** Chronic or life-threatening illness like cancer, can cause depression. Other triggers can be poor hormonal balance (hypothyroidism) or head injury.

■ **Gender:** Women are more commonly prone to depression than men, mainly due to socio-cultural surroundings.

A 15-year-old student has allegedly died by suicide because she could not cope with online classes. The Class X student, Subiksha, from Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu allegedly ended her life on September 15, 2020 since she couldn't understand the lessons taught through the online sessions. Subiksha was depressed as she was not able to follow the lessons and feared that she would not be able to score high marks in her exams if she was to study via online classes.

On August 14, 2020, a decomposing body of a 40-year-old doctor working at AIIMS was recovered from his residence in South Delhi. Mohit Singhla was found hanging in a room on the second floor, which was locked from inside. The doctor worked with Department of Paediatrics at AIIMS. A suicide note was recovered that said: 'It was his life, his choice and he didn't want to live till 60-70 years. The letter also said he couldn't hide his mental state anymore.'

On August 10 2020, a 22-year-old medical student, Vikas, had allegedly committed suicide at AIIMS. He was a second-year MBBS student from Bengaluru, and had been seeking treatment at the institute for depression.

On July 11, 2020 Dr Anurag Kumar (25), a junior resident with the psychiatry department, allegedly committed suicide at AIIMS.

Depression is a term we often throw around without realising the depth of the disease. "It is a mental health condition that affects people of all ages in the form of one or recurrent major depressive episodes that can be mild, moderate, or severe. There is no single cause of depression; it is a disorder of the brain that occurs due to a combination of genetic and environmental factors working together. It is a frequent mood disorder that is severely disabling and has a significant impact on everyday life of an individual as well as society at large, including a substantial economic burden on society," Dr Prakriti Poddar, director Poddar Wellness Ltd explains.

According to The Lancet, mental disorders are among the leading causes of non-fatal disease burden in India and 197.3 million people had mental disorders in India in 2017, which includes 45.7 million people with depressive disorders and 44.9 million people with anxiety disorders. It goes onto state that mental disorders comprised 2.5 per cent of the total disability-adjusted life-years in 1990 that increased to 4.7 per cent in 2017. Among non-communicable diseases mental health is the largest contributor to economic loss in India.

PREVENTION

✱ **Take good care of yourself. Get enough sleep, eat nutritious food, and exercise regularly.**


✱ **Reach out to family and friends if you are feeling lonely or sad and spend time with them.**

✱ **Fight stress with exercise, meditation, and yoga.**

✱ **Know yourself better. Find your strengths and pay attention to what makes your symptoms worse. This can help your doctor or therapist.**

✱ **Stick with your treatment plan. If you are on medicine, take it as prescribed.**

✱ **Do not skip sessions and tell your doctor what is and is not working for you**



"It is time we shun this one at a time approach towards depression and other mental health conditions and take up the cudgels to support them. Depression is a risk factor for suicidal thinking and good mental health care can reduce the risk, there are several ways to ensure the affected person can access these. Suicide prevention programmes and hotlines can provide support and can withhold the tendency for some time. However, the focus and its prevention draws attention away from the fact that in worst case situations depression and resultant suicidal thinking/suicide attempts/suicide can be compelling," Dr Poddar says.

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the stress and disrupted not only just businesses but also our consumption patterns and the way we live. The pandemic induced forced work from home and online education has become the new normal. Screen time has gone up exponentially and a lack of physical activity has significantly impacted mental and physical health. Established routines are completely unsettled. Within a week of the lockdown, reported cases of mental health went up 20 per cent.

A Tata Salt Lite survey has indicated that for Delhiites, work related issues and technology related issues were the top reasons

forgetting angry and stressed. Every three out of five (61%) respondents admitted that they would feel extremely angry, make errors or even argue with their boss if they were assigned work on their holidays or if they were asked to work longer on Fridays for some urgent work.

According to Dr Raj Kumar Shrivastava, senior consultant and head, Department of Mental Health and Behavioral Science, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Patparganj, depression is the most common form of psychiatric problem. "It has always been there. Today, people have started talking about it more. People are more open and reporting is on the rise. The role of social media and the celebrities also talking about their mental health, people have become courageous. The pandemic has not helped matters. Fear of infection, losing jobs and negativity around the Coronavirus has added to the burden. There is a change in the lifestyle of people as well. The uncertainty has made people anxious. Glorifying suicide of a celebrity by the media is to be blamed. One has to understand that the person who commits suicide, that person is not mentally strong. Even the smallest things in one's life can be a trigger leading to mental illness," Shrivastava says.

The good is that stigma around mental illness is getting diluted, people are willing to talk about their problems. "However, in smaller towns the problem still continues. In the metros the situation is much better. What is more important is to look for signs. There is a term, intent to suicide in psychiatry. It may be a casual phrase which can be a phase that a person is going through. But if the phrase becomes repetitive, that is a red flag," Dr Shrivastava tells you.

Pallavi Joshi, clinical psychologist at Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute, tells you that people are more aware today and open to talking about mental illnesses. "But there is a need to go through psychometric tests and then diagnose. There are a series of tests that the person is put through. Clinically diagnosed depression is a serious problem. The present generation, if denied certain comforts feels they are depressed; this is not true. The coping mechanism is low for Gen Z now for a few reasons. Lack of physical exercise is one reason. It makes some changes in the brain. Second, the older generation was asked to do certain things like help the mother in the kitchen or offer water to the guest. Kids had household chores to do. They felt needed and had a role to play. Today, they don't have this and are unable to tackle the pressure. Contributing to the life of others has its benefits, it prevents mood swings, getting bored and falling into depression," Joshi explains.

Natasha Sharma, counselor, psychotherapist and clinical hypnotherapist opines that the younger generation has lost the art of communication because they have been living in the virtual world of social media and reality is so different.

"Therefore, the lockdown has been so devastating. Humans are social animals. We are meant to be in community. We shrivel up when there is no touch. Isolation is the severest of punishment in jails, there is solitary confinement. This is psychologically the worst thing that one can do, to a human being. Then there is an illusion of being connected due to social media. We don't pick up our phones anymore. There was a time when one had to wait one's turn to speak over the one phone in the house. Today, even with each one having a phone, we send messages. There is no face-to-face conversation. There is no touch which is a form of communication; there are verbal and non-verbal modes of communication when you are in the same room or in a relationship. What we are seeing is the dark side of technology," Natasha says.

For a person to commit suicide, research suggests that 90 per cent people who com-

mit suicide have undiagnosed mental disorder. That is not to say that because you have mental disorder, one will commit suicide. There is impulsive suicide as well which doesn't follow any steps. But suicide does involve a lot of steps and intervention therefore is required which has lot of steps. Skipping a step can result in a loss of life. Essentially, there is no one cause but a bunch of precipitating factors that come together at a particular time or stage.

Pulkit Sharma, Puducherry-based clinical psychologist, says what has changed between then and now is that on an external level. Back then there was a good support system. "People were well-connected. If something bad would happen, society would rally around the person. Face-to-face communication helped and the relationships were deep and meaningful and not superficial like today. Earlier, life was less complicated. Today, the work culture is such that the mind never gets a break. We are doing a lot and have no space to just be yourself. Social media, the virtual world, has added to the problem. One might have 500 friends online, but none whom they can really connect with emotionally," Sharma tells you.

Though people today may be doing well financially, there is a feeling of lack of accomplishment. "Beyond money, life is empty today. People are working like machines especially for those in the corporate sector. The sources on which one's self-esteem was based earlier, were deeper and were about value, ethics and work performance. Today, it is superficial; it is all about material things — it is about how much you earn, how you look and what you own. This superficial life can ditch you fast and can lead to depression. 'I have lost my charm' and 'I don't look like I used to' are common and become triggers," Sharma explains.

Since there is no or little Government help in order to reach out to people with mental illness, Natasha tells you that it is the people around, the society that needs to step in and lend a hand.

"There are rumblings that there may be something happening at the Government level. We, as a nation, are under-equipped. We have not Centre of State level policy for suicide prevention. We have no national helpline for suicide prevention, whatever is happening it is due to certain people. There are not enough mental health professionals per capita; there are not enough mental health clinics or hospitals given the population. So, the Government should take up steps. While some head way has been made, a lot more needs to be done," Natasha says.

GATEKEEPERS ARE OUR EYES, EARS AND HANDS ON THE GROUND

Shalini Saksena ■ NEW DELHI

Last December, when Kushal Punjabi committed suicide his friends were shocked. He had been out at a friend's party on December 25, 2019 and none of his friends picked up the signs that Punjabi was depressed and when they said goodbye that would be the last time, they would see him alive. That got his good friend Harmeet Singh of Meet Brothers thinking.

"When I said goodbye to him at the end of the party I never realised that I would not see him alive again. The next day when I got the news, I was shocked; I couldn't believe it. When I went to his house and saw his mother

and sister in tears and inconsolable, I knew that I had to do something about it — how to help others. Charity, like they say begins at home and hence The WeCare Initiative was launched on World Suicide Prevention Awareness Day on September 10, 2020," the singer-music director tells you.

The aim of the initiative is to train common people as gatekeepers to who can then spot the signs of depression in others and offer help by asking them pertinent questions without alarming the person but ensuring that he opens up and gets the help that he needs. The focus is to also reduce the stigma around emotional and mental health issues, spread awareness about suicide

prevention and change the way people look at mental and emotional health. By training as many people as possible within the industry as gatekeepers, there will have eyes and ears everywhere to identify the signs of suicide and know what to do and how to help. "The idea is to train ordinary people who can identify signs of depression among others, create awareness about the issue and where necessary help the person suffering from mental illness get the necessary help he requires. The training is imparted by experts. It is a two-hour session which people can join after registering at www.wecareinitiative.co.in and paying a fee of ₹1,000. The initiative has been



launched with the help of a few friends and well-trained professionals. The rising rate of suicides in the country, especially in the entertainment industry, has brought the conversation around mental health into the open and that's the first step," Singh explains.

Natasha Sharma, executive director of the initiative tells you the one of the goals on their initiative is about suicide prevention and how to tackle the mental disorders. "The more we talk about it, the more it will help people. One of the reasons for the rise in suicides can be attributed to the lockdown due to the pandemic. Today, the world is a very pressured place. There is a lot of financial pressure and the younger

generation is a lot more sensitive than what people were of the 70s-80s. Anxiety is on the rise. They see everyone struggling; they are worried about their future," Sharma says.

She tells you that before any initiative starts, it is important to define a target audience.

"For us it is the entertainment industry and not just Bollywood. There is this institute in the US, the QPR Institute by Dr Paul Quinnett, founder-CEO. He has 20 years of research-based programmes and one of them is gatekeepers training programme. There is an NGO in Bengaluru, Suicide Prevention India Foundation. We have collaborated with them endorsed by

QPR Institute and we conduct gatekeeper training which teaches people who to identify signs and what to do about it. It is a sensitising training where people are taught to look for certain signs that this person is going through or attempting or planning suicide and understand what he is going through. As a gatekeeper you will know and save a life. It may be 20 years down the line but the gatekeeper will know. We realise that we can't be accessible to everyone. What we can do is train as many gatekeepers as possible to be our eyes, ears and hands on the ground. If we can train enough gatekeepers, we can prevent the next Kushal Punjabi from happening," Sharma says.





IT'S NOT HOW MUCH WE
GIVE BUT HOW MUCH LOVE
WE PUT INTO GIVING
— MOTHER TERESA

HYDERABAD, September 20, 2020

tarot 8



YOUR
WEEK
AHEAD

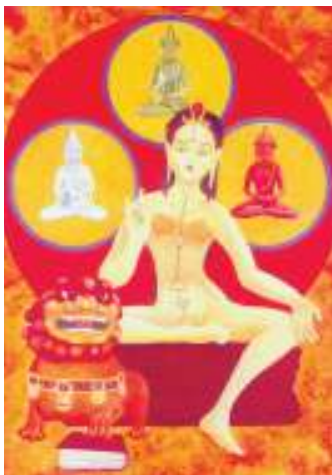
MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week some challenges are foreseen on the health front. Problems may come up at the same time and make you restless. Indigestion, gastric, BP and depression issues may crop up. Your emotions and sensitivity are badly affected. You must relax. On the career front, your work graph will take a new turn this week, as your potentials will be duly recognised. The finance part will also improve. You will feel the positive vibrations at the workplace. This is a week of attainment, accumulation and finding inner satisfaction. On the personal front, be cautious in your relationships. You may be marked as arrogant or incompatible. Married couples may not be in harmony and want their own space to escape any conflict and tension.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Off-White
Lucky day Monday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week you will be balancing five elements in life and have harmony between body, mind, and soul. Those with an ongoing health issue may benefit greatly from an alternative therapy like nutritional counselling, massage, dietary restriction etc. Professionally, you need to sharpen your skills. Career counselling from someone experienced would be a good idea. Attending short courses, workshops, or lectures etc will help you in your goals. Work should be going very well if you can be organised and work as per the rules. Relationship wise you are lucky as the people around you listen to you with respect and value your ideas. At professional and personal fronts, you live life king size. In love, you make an impression on your partner with your positive and honest approach.

Lucky number 16
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Sunday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This is a great week for your creativity and optimism, and you believe that everything will turn out in your favour. You are generous and willing to share. You have learnt to accept your flaws and to accommodate others. It gives you the strength to be what you want to be. Health will be fine, and you will enjoy it. On the work front, a feel-good factor will bring a smile on your face. This week you find the support of colleagues and seniors, and there is a chance that your name may be recommended for promotion. Make the best use of this time. On the love front, you may have your eye on someone who you feel is not treating you the way they should. The best solution would be that you stop fantasising about this person entirely.

Lucky number 9
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Tuesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

You have overcome the challenges you were facing and are now feeling on top of the world. Appreciation for a job well done on the domestic front will be encouraging. You have the blessings of elders and it radiates your personality. You have inner satisfaction, with positive energy after easing a difficult situation. On the career front, a good message is on the cards. Some of you will be promoted and assigned an important task which will give a boost to your career. You might attend a virtual seminar or training session to enhance your skill. The stars are with you and you enjoy the results of your hard work. Relationship wise, if you like someone goes ahead and express yourself. Avoid the loose talk as this may spoil your relationship.

Lucky number 1
Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Friday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Your efforts towards good health will pay you well this week. You feel energetic, creative, and versatile. There is a sense of purpose in life, and you are charged. Practices such as yoga, Pranayam and healing exercises help you keep fit and rejuvenated. Spiritualism will help you to restore your confidence and add a spark in life. On the career front, all of a sudden, you may find things working out much better. A powerful person is likely to support you. This is a good time to ask for a raise or to seek employment that pays more if you are so inclined. Overall, your career front is looking up. In the context of love, it's important to remember that no relationship can stand up to constant analysis. Try to give your beloved some breathing space.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Sunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

The week starts with never-ending activities such as meeting, attending to guests etc. This will give you no time for yourself. You are working hard. There are chances that you may get bruises or hurt yourself. Stay focused while you drive and take all safety measures to avoid any unpleasant situation. On the work front, you feel at ease as things are going in your favour. Great things come in a small package and this is what going to happen with you. There will be new opportunities in a job, and those who are unemployed will get that job in their desired field. On the personal front, your partner may put things in some challenging situations and give you excuses of not accepting your relationships by parents.

Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Camel Brown
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week positive energy flows in your veins. You must use this energy in some creative pursuits. This can be a very creative time for you, and a good time for you to dream, play and be inventive as a child. On the professional front, things are likely to go your way. This seems to be an excellent time career-wise. A raise or promotion is certain for those who work in the private sector. Stay focused. Approach of a senior official will help make your work easy. On the relationship front, action holds the key. You need to talk to your partner face to face to sort out the mess which has been created knowingly or unknowingly between you two. Take out some time and plan a romantic endeavour to boost up your love life.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Wednesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week you will be filled with confidence and be in the best of your health. Your health efforts are likely to bear fruit. Do not hesitate to consider alternative ways to treat or deal with health challenges. Professionally, the way your career graph is going at present, you need a break and professional counselling. Seek some advice from your senior for better results. To maintain control over your domain and to achieve mastering in your trade, someone's guideline will give a boost to your career. Join a virtual professional course/seminar or workshop to enhance your skills. On the love front, there will be tension. A rejection or break up might be faced. The singletons will remain single. This is the time to make thoughtful bonding whether in love or marriage.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Pastel Blue
Lucky day Thursday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week, avoid anger and aggression. Listen to your body and treat it accordingly. Seek the advice of an elderly person in the family, maybe your mother or aunt. Her homemade remedies will give you relief in your current health problems. Workwise, you are filled with the guts and try your level best to achieve what you want in life. Those who are waiting for final verdict in court in legal hassle will be pleased to have the case turned in their favour. Those in media, opposition, and justice etc fields will do well this week. On the personal front, love is not happening, neither do you have time to think about the matters of the heart. The existing relationships too may suffer due to the lack of understanding and busy schedule.

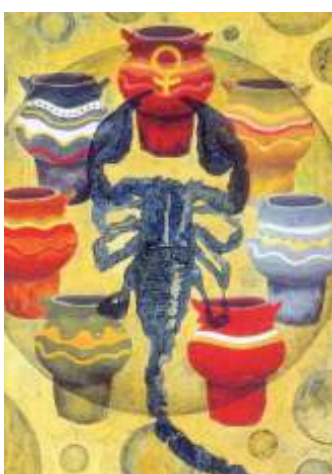
Lucky number 7
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Thursday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week you are confused and contemplating a change in your life. Health is fluctuating and affecting the quality of life. You need guidelines, a session of counselling to gain the results of your past behaviour. It is never too late to improve. Sow the seeds today for better tomorrow. On the work front, there will be challenges. With your determination and will power you are likely to take hold of the situations and emerge a winner. Electrical, technical gadgets may create problems and take most of your time. On the personal front, this week is likely to bring love to the centre stage of your life. This is either a new relationship or a powerful re-bonding of an old one. You share your joy with those around you who need it.

Lucky number 17
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Saturday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week as well as in general, you need to let go of the past wounds to move forward. This is a time that you must look within yourself thoroughly to analyse the areas of fears, trying to hold onto things. Non-attachment is also freedom. Learn about the energy centres in the body and meditate on how you are functioning. Be open to changes as it is the only constant in life. This week professionally, the need of the hour is to give your time and attention to your work. You need to be sure that your work balance is where it needs to be. Make sure you do justice to your work. Avoid confrontations and conflicts with the people at work area as that will only tarnish your image. You will find success in love and rejoice this week.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Rose Gold
Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Health looks promising this week. Some of you may gradually regain your health and feel a new spark of creativity. This is a great time to try a new health care approach, especially preventative care. Exercise, eating well, and making sure that you get enough sleep are all common approaches that you can consider. On the work front, a change of place, relocation, posting or transfer is on the cards. You are filled with new hopes and aspirations as it is your desired post for which you have been aspiring for a long time. The new avenues of progress will be opened, and you get a chance to prove your worth and potentials. On the personal front, you are demanding and very strict in your relationships, and this attitude will not go in married couples' favour.

Lucky number 3
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Saturday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Living in a giving mode

One day, sense of reasons dawned upon a feuding couple, when they came together seeking guidance on how to improve their relationship. Their common urge was: "Suggest some puja or such remedial measure as would help improve our relationship."

Well, caught up on the plane where the problem exists — both of you stuck to own perceptions — you can't find a way out. Unless you change your perception, things won't improve. No belief driven puja can invade your mind space to make necessary correction. You need to first explore the premise on which the institution of marriage stands. You may then be able to understand where you are going wrong. Following which, you may become keen to redo your perceptions.

Both of them then countered in chorus: "Sir our expectations from each other are not being met, which remains the bone of contention. Is it not natural to carry expectations?" Well, there is nothing wrong in having expectations. But before that you need to appreciate that every being is born unique. Each would thus, reflect varying desire and mind-trends, coming as they may as Karmic carryover from the past. So, differences of

opinion is natural. Coming to marital relationship, it is not simply meeting of two unique characters, but sporting different psyche as well. And it needs no elaboration that convergence of two corresponding opposites prove productive and fulfilling. When there is discord, it becomes painful. The choice is yours.

Now, how to go about? It simply calls for a lesson in the art of living, which may help you be in accord, overriding individual limitations. Here, exposure to some fundamental truths of life becomes imperative.

All existences in the cosmos — planets, stars and other astral bodies — have been serving the larger existence in a giving mode, not expecting anything in return thereof. Such a humongous crowd of cosmic bodies are in perfect harmony and balance, because they are bound by the design underlying them, with no scope for making any exception. Look at the beauty of cosmic design. All planets in the immediate galaxy, while going round the Sun, traverse their exclusive path, each respectively moving at their own speed. Each, thus, enjoys its own independent space, simultaneously maintaining relativity amongst them. It is, as if



a family discharging their individual and collective obligations in service of the larger existence. Even on earth plane, trees, plants, animals, birds and micro-organism are bound by their predefined nature, and therefore, continue serving the larger existence in a giving mode. They are not bothered who benefits, nor do they have any expectation from us. If we attend to them, it is to serve our own interest. Trivial looking termites for example, feed themselves by creating hole deep inside the soil structure. That facilitate entry of oxygen to augments earth-mass's dynamic potential. They have to, however, meet their end before the crop comes up, but not before servicing the cause of larger existence.

Human beings enjoy the exclusive privilege to guide their actions by choice and discrimination. This, coupled with the sense of ego, make them live in a demanding mode. What we forget that being an inseparable part of a unified organism, necessarily framed into an interdependent setup, we all have a shared destiny. No individual is capable of meeting one's bare existential needs all by oneself. That makes complementing and supplementing each other's efforts imperative, to carry on the cycle of life.

The problem with the two is that, bound by individualistic whims and fancies, the two are living in a demanding mode, trying to impose one's will on the other, which creates conflict. Look at your astrological pointers. Whereas one is born in Sagittarius *laguna*, with Moon there itself and placed adverse to Uranus, which implies being tactless, undiplomatic, and erratic. Mars placed adverse to Jupiter is indicative of inflated ego. Moon again ill-disposed to Neptune, implies being stuck to one's own delusional perceptions not open to look beyond for a reality check. In the other case, the *laguna* and Moon both, occupy fixed sign, which indicates fixated one track mind. Sun placed adverse to Jupiter speaks of swag-gering ego. Moon placed adverse to Neptune is indicative of being stuck to one's own delusional perception. The result is there to see. Once, you start living in a giving mode, you will care for each other's concerns and sensibilities. In the process, you will be particular about servicing each other's expectations. Your life will turn into a beautiful experience.

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



A man extraordinaire
An Extraordinary Life stands out because of the main protagonist, Manohar Parrikar



Living in a giving mode
Once you start living in a giving mode, you will care for each other's concerns and sensibilities



If I look at the message I'm portraying, I think it definitely is be who you are, but be your best you
— Kim Kardashian



the pioneer
agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

The Ed-Tech industry in India has been going through three major push backs including resistance from schools, the lack of trust in online education and the reach of internet and communication devices such as computers, tablets and mobile phones. Covid-19 served as a catalyst in resolving these concerns. The outbreak encouraged schools and other educational institutions to embrace technological solutions, writes PRAVEEN PARAMESWAR

EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY

CARVING A NEW PATH TO SUCCESS



Covid-19 has taken the country off-guard and is seen impacting the Indian economy. As per the Moody's report published in June 2020, India's GDP is expected to shrink by 3.1%. Going one step further, the Dun and Bradstreet Report released in August 2020 predicted that the GDP would contract by 4.5% this fiscal year. Amidst these daunting numbers, one industry that is still reflecting a ray of hope while showing unprecedented growth in India is the Education Technology, that is, the Ed-Tech sector. RS Components, analysing the Crunchbase data, observes that other than the USA, India is the second country that hosts the most number of Ed-Tech companies in the world.

In 2020, Ed-Tech stands as the most funded business sector in India. Only between January and July \$998 Mn has been invested across 31 deals. Furthermore, the ed-tech sector, according to the Omidyar, Redseer report, 2020, is expected to touch a size of \$3.5 Bn by 2022.

To understand the inner working of this sector and map its growth, let us delve deeper and analyse the current scenario along with the latest trends, impact, opportunities, possible pitfalls and the way ahead for the Ed-Tech industry.

INDIAN ED-TECH INDUSTRY: GROWTH AND INVESTMENT

The umbrella term of 'Ed-Tech' largely consists of five segments, which include Online Teaching and Test Preparation; Assessment, Guidance and Mentoring; Skill Development and Certification; Professional Development Programmes, Infrastructural and Administrative Solutions. Amongst these segments, Online Teaching and Test Preparation leads the market with a 64% share and further anticipating size of \$515 Mn by 2021. The sector is lately experiencing a boom as it alchemises with artificial intelligence and neuroscience

The growth of Ed-Tech in India started around 2004-05 when ventures such as Everonn, NIIT and Educomp made their mark through digital course content, smart classrooms and skill development programs. The industry has been reaching new heights with 3000 companies, including Byju's, Unacademy etc. along with various investors like Tiger Global, General Atlantic, Steadview Capital, GGV Capital, Foundation Holding, Aarin Capital, Simplilearn and Blume Ventures venturing into this landscape.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The Ed-Tech industry in India has been going through three major push backs including resistance from schools, the lack of trust on online education and the reach of internet and communication devices such as computers, tablets and mobile phones. Covid-19 served as a catalyst in resolving these concerns. The outbreak encouraged schools and other educational institutions to embrace

technological solutions. In addition to this, it also influenced offline institutions to collaborate with companies such as Embibe and Simplilearn.

Not just this, parents are also trying to adapt to the new normal and subscribing to educational help platforms such as Byjus or Toppr or Global Shiksha, Khan Academy and others. People are going an extra mile to adapt to the Ed-Tech culture and connecting internet, mobile phones, TV, computers and tablets more to learning.

THE BENEFIT COMMON PEOPLE ENJOY FROM THE GROWTH OF ED-TECH

The growth of technology in the education sector is, in fact, impacting lives of millions majorly in five different ways:

- Many of the top-notch teachers, courses and institutions were only accessible for people who live in the city. But technology dilutes the geographical borders. Today, a person sitting 200 kilometres away from a city like Bangalore or Mumbai or Thiruvananthapuram or Lucknow would get easy access to high-class lectures and tutorials.
- Platforms such as Unacademy and Upgrad are helping people to learn/get certified/professionally qualified even along with the job they do. This helps more people to up-skill them without moving out of jobs.
- Technology in the coming years shall make education accessible for more people who are not able to afford fees at schools or colleges. This would also help the government to provide education to children and adults without much capital investment in high rise buildings and infrastructure, leading to the real democratisation of education in India.
- Assessments, guidance and mentoring are some of the areas that have to consider multiple data points at the same point. Most of the time these aspects go wrong in education as it is humanly impossible to consider multiple variables together. High profile technology is, in fact, solving this problem to a large extent. This would make assessments, guidance and mentoring people easier and more accurate, thus the right people would reach the right places in life.
- Another major impact of Ed-Tech in the life of common people is that education becomes more effective through visual aids, augmented reality, virtual reality and videos with meaningful graphics. This will help children and adults to comprehend the conceptual level of knowledge rather than mugging up as used to happen during the early days.

CURRENT TRENDS IN THE ED-TECH INDUSTRY

The current trends in the Ed-Tech industry in Indian can be presented through the following four points:

- The growth of Ed-Tech in India is not a linear or organised graph. It becomes extremely dynamic in nature. Thus only companies who are really agile, open to change and vibrant can sustain in the market.
- Early entrants to the market who could

WE SHOULD AIM AT MAKING INDIA THE HUB OF EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY, WITH THE MOST NUMBER OF COMPANIES, MAXIMUM INVESTMENT AND HIGH MARKET SIZE. THIS NOT ONLY ENHANCES BUSINESS IN THE COUNTRY BUT ALSO TAKES INDIA TO THE NEXT TRAJECTORY OF GROWTH. THIS WOULD BE THE RIGHT TIME TO DEVELOP 'MAKE IN INDIA' AS THE MOST POWERFUL BRAND IN THE GLOBAL ED-TECH SPACE

raise considerable capital, such as Byjus, increased the quality of content, visual treatment and sophistication of technology to a very high level. This demands any new entrant to match the high standards of their products, in order to satisfy the customers.

- Ed-Tech being a very large and broad industry with too many areas to address, a collaboration between non-competing players is becoming a new norm. Assessment companies joining hands with content providers or infrastructure agencies partnering with skill development companies are a few endeavours taking place all across the globe. Organisations have understood the power of co-creation of success.
- The New Education Policy (NEP-2020) sets the tone perfectly for the intervention of technology in education. This would enable the Ed-Tech industry to make India globally competitive.

FUTURE AVENUES FOR START-UPS

The significant areas where new startups can work on and create new horizons of growth will include the following:

- **Vernacular Languages:** 80% of India speaks vernacular languages. The New Education Policy, 2020 (NEP), also emphasises on education through regional languages. In every vertical, ranging right from online tutoring to skills development to assessments, vernacular content is yet to be well addressed. To understand its nature, it is important to note that even a unicorn such as Byjus has not started venturing into the vernacular market yet. Addressing the education requirements through all 22 officials in India would be a great space for start-ups to play.
- **Technological reforms of the 21st century:** Even though many companies claim that they use the technologies of the 4th industrial revolution such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, big data analytics etc., very few companies use them productively, that too on a very small scale. Majority of the brands attempting to amalgamate artificial intelligence in their modules/ approach are yet to tap into its true potential. On the other hand, some companies use augmented and virtual realities mostly to enhance marketability than to manifest its real power. This is where the start-ups can work on and develop cutting edge technology solutions that can power any or all of the 5 segments in the ed-tech industry.
- **Research to blend Technology and Behavior Science:** This is an area where research-based startups can pitch their ideas. Currently, a gap that the

Ed-Tech industry is coming across includes not having alchemists who can blend technology and behavioural sciences seamlessly. Insightful research is one factor that could help in bridging this gap. Multifunctional teams consisting of technologists, psychologists, sociologists and neurobiologists can identify hundreds of areas that require in-depth attention in the ed-tech domain.

- **Assessments, Guidance and Mentoring:** Right people reaching the wrong places causes huge loss. In addition to this, financial loss, lack of happiness, fulfilment, purpose are some vital elements that people largely lack. This can be resolved through addressing assessment, guidance and mentoring techniques in the most appropriate manner. Startups who tap this nerve of the market can become the game changers of the sector while rightly using the modern-day technology and immersive solutions to one's benefit.
- **Skill Development:** National Skill Development Council (NSDC), various Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) and different State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs) are on a mission to bridge India's skill gap. The speed of change in technology is expected to make more than 48% of jobs obsolete in the next ten years, as observed by the Oxford Martin School study. This makes it inevitable to train every student with the best skillset, thus requiring more players to step forward and up-skill a large proportion of our workforce.

POSSIBLE PITFALLS FOR STARTUPS

Considering that the Ed-Tech industry is hardly 14 to 15 years old in India, its infancy stage does not enable the newcomers to learn from a plethora of successful cases. Thus, there are a lot of chances that lack of understanding of the market or misjudgment might make startups err. Some of the possible mistakes are listed below.

- Online tutoring and test preparation through video content would be a business with fewer obstacles here and there. Thus many people may just take a deep dive, considering the growth of ed-tech experiences. It is a fact that the market still has space for newcomers. But the incumbents have raised the bar of quality very high. Therefore any person who gets into the market with a couple of lakhs investment on a camera, microphone, a bunch of amateur teachers and a website created out of a template in Envato would not be growing further. If the newcomers overcome the current quality players in the market, it will get easier for the sector to grow.
- Many of the start-ups see a captive market inside schools and with gov-

ernments. Even though the cost of acquiring customers would be lesser, compared with the direct to customer strategy, time to close a deal would be very long in the B2B or B2G segment. Time and money would be lost if the newcomers wait to close large businesses with governments or large school chains. Thus it is ideal to start with direct access to students and keep B2B or B2G as a parallel track.- Education is a vertical where human behaviour and mindset carries a lot of significance. Only if technology solutions can consider the behavioural aspects as well, companies can sustain the market. Many players only develop a team consisting of technical experts or some content developers, but miss out on collaborating with behaviour experts. This could serve as one of the common mistakes and should be avoided.
- The pandemic might be serving as a catalyst but it is imperative for us to remember that this scenario would last forever. Education will not travel backwards from the current affinity that it's built with technology. It's essential for one to have a plan when thinking about the road ahead for their venture.

THE WAY FORWARD

In India, the education sector is considered as one of the most stable, robust fields with low-income elasticity. According to the Economic Survey (2018), the income elasticity towards the healthcare sector was 1.95, whereas it was 0.93 for products in the education sector.

This scenario, along with the wide acceptance of ed-tech during Covid-19 would certainly lure more investments in this industry. In this case, the intervention of policymakers, influencers, launchpads and mentoring bodies should be focusing on channelising this growth to the right direction by ensuring entry of companies to the appropriate areas, channelising investment to the organisations attending the right requirement and helping ventures with proper hand-holding. We should aim at making India the hub of Education Technology, with the most number of companies, maximum investment and high market size. This not only enhances business in the country but also takes India to the next trajectory of growth. This would be the right time to develop 'Make in India' as the most powerful brand in the global ed-tech space.

The writer is CEO, Lifology. Lifology is India's first career eco-system for parents

HOME THEATRE

Laugh the American way



OUR CARTOON PRESIDENT
Disney+Hotstar
Season 3, Episodes 10
Animation
Rated: 6/10

Trump roasts Trump with his own signature brand of stupidity, outrage and elan. Season 3 takes off with the Impeachment sham that Trump survived with flying colours. As he puts it: “I can do anything and get away with it as I have been chosen by the people of America.”

The self-deprecating humour, the audacity of impunity that Trump wears brings in a lot of laughter into this very American series much like *The Simpsons*. It will appeal to the people who are in the knowledge of America’s domestic politics, policy blunders and the demeanour that the President sports.

Trump is undoubtedly a globally recognised political

clown so situations around him are insanely funny and the scriptwriter has done well to catch all the nuances to present Trump roasting himself, more specifically roasting the citizens of America for voting him in.

Ticklish subjects like foreign affairs, economy and the upcoming Presidential elections are issues some of the episodes touch upon and that includes the Clintons coming into the picture from their living room television viewing and keeping their hyper candidate in the race who is on a personal high of anxiety, aspiration, scepticism of her prospects and yet compelling optimism in dreaming to be the possible first-ever native American woman President!

Entirely up to you whether you are in a mood to connect to this sort of very American comedy. One thing is there though, Season 3 shows no fatigue whatsoever in pressing the funny bone button.

Sleep over this one

HOLLY SLEPT OVER
Amazon Prime
*ing: Josh Lawson, Nathalie Emmanuel, Britt Lower, Erinn Hayes, Ron Livingston
Rated: 3/10

Some movies are made out of nothing, conveying nothing and thinking nothing about the amount of waste they produce. *Holly Slept Over* tops in that segment. A thoughtless, disastrous comedy-drama propelling sexual adventurism to save a sagging marriage where sex has become boring and a tool to somehow have babies, it is a romp in the bed by a committed couple and the wife’s lesbian girlfriend who stops over for a night after 12 years of a breakup.

Other than the protagonists being extremely pretty, the house where the action takes place being sexy, the neighbours having their own between the sheets issues with yucky outcomes, there is nothing in the movie that will keep you interested, or let me say not get you irritated.

Holly (girlfriend) breezes into the couple’s home with not even a blink, sleeps straight seven hours, gets up all decked up and her friend’s husband proposing a threesome! They agree and do it without wasting any time or sparing a thought to even their



viewers. And then it is all over, Holly leaves, the couple rocks and the neighbours too learn to live, well, between the sheets once in a while.

Who, how, what, why? Don’t look for answers in this one which much too casually degrades the entire institution of marriage, fidelity and the works.

Can be totally ignored even on a very idle week day or week-end.

Watch it for Holland & Pattinson

THE DEVIL ALL THE TIME
Netflix
*ing: Tom Holland, Robert Pattinson, Bill Skarsgård, Jason Clarke, Eliza Scanlen
Rated: 6/10

Almost all of us find it difficult to see a character that we have followed over years and identify with, see playing another role — definitely not the fault of the actor. But the truth is that the characters that they have played leave such an impact that it becomes impossible to break the mould in which we are used to seeing them. This probably makes the task of the director and the actor tough but the end result is worth it and *The Devil All The Time* is a prime example how actors step out of the mould that viewers put them in and show that at the end of the day, it is job and a role that they stepped into even if it was for a few years.

The psychological thriller based on the novel of the same name by Donald Ray Pollock is directed and co-written by Antonio Campos and produced by Jake Gyllenhaal and Randall Poster. The story is simple enough. But there are many characters

and while it does, at times, become difficult to follow the thread of each character’s journey, they tend to collide with each other from time to time. The way it all comes together is interesting.

What is even more brilliant about this movie is the performance that Tom Holland and Robert Pattinson have given. Holland as a young man trying to protect his family from all the evil gives a stellar performance. However, it is Pattinson who stands out here even though he doesn’t have as meaty a role as Holland. He may have a total screen presence of 30-35 minutes but the way he manages to break away from Edward Cullen is stunning. As the preacher in this one and a high-pitched Southern drawl, he is a surprise.

A report says that the actor had crafted the accent in his room for days and didn’t let anyone hear it — not even Campos. It is riveting to watch him deliver the dialogues in this accent, so different from the extremely polished Cullen.

While the movie itself doesn’t have much to say apart from the good versus evil, God versus the devil, what makes this 138-minute film worth a watch are Holland and Pattinson’s acting.

— Shalini Sakseena

Smashes patriarchy



DOLLY KITTY AUR WO CHAMAKTE SITARE
Netflix
*ing: Konkana Sen Sharma, Bhumi Pednekar, Amol Parashar, Aamir Bashir, Kubra Sait, Vikrant Massey, Neelima Azmi
Rated: 5.5/10

Off late, Bollywood has started making movies that are beyond glam women and having them be an arm candy for the hero and do a song and dance. Not that there is anything wrong with such films, the only problem is that few realise that what they see on the screen is a make-belief world and there is more to life, especially for women — they have aspirations, ambitions and needs.

Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare by director Alankrita Shrivastava and produced by Ekta Kapoor and Shobha Kapoor under their banner Balaji Telefilms is one such film. Shrivastava is known to make films that explore gender roles and the judgement on how women in our society should behave

without questioning the moral values of the men. The film tries to bring out complexities of relationships, questions what is right and wrong as the story progresses.

The good part is that it doesn’t pass any judgement on the choices the women make. In fact, it goes on as far as saying that it was the choice that they made because there is more to them than needs to be explored. The two-hour running time may appear to be a bit longer than what we are used to, but the story keeps the viewer engrossed.

Konkana Sen as Radha *aka* Dolly gives a great performance as she explores her relationship — with her husband, with her younger son, with her sister, with her a delivery boy and her mother. Bhumi Pednekar as Kaajal *aka* Kitty too gives a brilliant performance. Amol Parashar, Vikrant Massey and Aamir Bashir do justice to their performances.

— Shalini Sakseena

Plan Your Day

Catch your favourite musicians live in an all-star virtual fundraiser event ‘Together, Louder, Stronger’ on September 26, 2020 at 6:30 pm, helping and supporting the performance industry workers and folk artists during the ongoing pandemic crisis.

Hosted by Anahad Foundation and produced by Believe Entertainment, the digital event will be live on Facebook and YouTube and will see a stellar line-up of 20 mainstream, independent and talented artists like Shaan, Mame Khan, Jonita Gandhi, Benny Dayal, Mamta Sharma, Bhuvan Bam, Nithyasree Mahadevan and many more supporting the cause and raising funds during this critical time.

Tune in to this exclusive digital event and provide your support to the entertainment industry — Together, Louder, Stronger!

Log on to <https://www.facebook.com/anahad.ngo/>.

TELLY TALE

MEET THE NEW KOMOLIKA

Nowadays actor Paritosh Tripathi is making the audience love him more by playing various Bollywood actors in the



show *Filmistaan* on Star Sharat. Everyone is already loving the comic tuning between Sunil Grover and Paritosh Tripathi. People are appreciating their work. Paritosh has not stopped here, the actor cum writer is all ready to play the most loved vamp in the *saas-bahu* series, none other than Komolika, this will be a site to watch. He is gathering much popularity in the orange shimmer *saree* draped in Bengali style with perfectly curled hair and make up that is making him look more like the character.

On this new look Paritosh comments: “Initially when my show maker Preeti Simoes, came to me with this idea of playing a popular female antagonist character, I was not very sure about it. But she convinced me, and I was ready to do it. Till date I have played many characters in the show, most of them have been male. I was not very sure that my audience would accept me in this new *avata*r? Will I do justice to the Komolika character. I did my best, and when the pictures were out on social media. I was blown after receiving so much love and comments like: cute, beautiful and charming which I am still receiving. I am loving it.”

We will watch Paritosh doing this fascinating act soon in the show.

SATYAJIT SHARMA’S NEW OUTING

Impressing the television viewers with his power-packed roles, renowned actor Satyajit Sharma is all set to venture into the digital space with ALTBalaji and ZEE5 Club’s upcoming web series *Bicchoo Ka Khel*. The stellar actor will be seen essaying the role of Anil Chaubey, an overconfident lawyer who brags about being the best criminal and civil lawyer in the state. Alongside him, the crime drama will see other talented actors like Divyendu Sharma, Anshul Chauhani, Mukul Chadda, Gagan Anand, Zeishan Quadri, amongst others.

The popular TV actor is a known face amongst the masses, having starred in a host of daily Hindi soaps. *With Bicchoo Ka Khel*, he will be playing the role of a lawyer with top connections to the mafia and the cops who help him to create his empire.

Speaking about the series, Satyajit Sharma quipped: “It feels great to be a part of a crime thriller like *Bicchoo Ka Khel*. I play the character of Anil Chaubey, an overconfident lawyer who’s been a jugaadu since childhood. It has been extremely interesting to act in the series with a talented cast and a great crew, an amazing



storyline. I hope the audiences enjoy and shower their love for my character and the series.”

Bicchoo Ka Khel is a crime thriller that revolves around the story of Akhil, a budding writer whose life is nothing less than a roller-coaster ride with twists and turns to keep you at the edge of your seat.

SAMBHAVNA ALL SET TO PLAY MAHUA

Bollywood sensation, performer, and vlogger, Sambhavna Seth has made her mark in the entertainment industry. The actor will be making her comeback to television and is all set to make heads turn as she enters &TV’s *Gudiya Humari Sabhi*



Pe Bhari. Portraying the role of Radhe’s (Ravi Mahashabde) first wife Mahua, Sambhavna is all set to wreak comical havoc in the lives of the close-knit Gupta family.

Adding an extra dose of entertainment and humour to the chaos, Mahua comes with her son that leads to creating an unsettlement in the family to the extent that Sarla (Samta Sagar) goes to stay in the Haveli. The most fun part, however, is that Radhe has no memory of ever getting married to anyone besides Sarla, forget having a child. What unfolds is a comical situation that develops between these three characters.

Expressing her excitement, Mahua *aka* Sambhavna Seth says: “I am excited to back on television to portray the role of Mahua in a light-hearted show on &TV, *Gudiya Humari Sabhi Pe Bhari*. This is the first time I will be exploring a light-hearted genre. As Mahua now enters the show, the audience will now be privy to a higher notch of comical chaos and entertainment. I am sure the audience will enjoy this new role of mine and continue to shower me with their love and support. I am eagerly looking forward to work with everyone in the show.”

DISNEY BRINGS IMAGINE THAT

Disney Channel is all set to treat its young viewers and families with an all new DIY show *Imagine That*. Helmed by every child’s favourite art mentor and friend Rob, the show brings imagination alive through DIY with upcycling as the key theme. One of the pioneering faces of DIY art, Rob promises to take the Imagine That experience to a whole new level for young fans and their families.

The show will focus on a child’s natural creative palette through experiential initiatives, all centred around repurposing. The show will see Rob engage with children as their mentor and friend who encourages their imaginative minds through fun and innovative DIY. It aims at inspiring the young ones to create top quality art out of materials that are usually discarded at home. Be it robots from bottle caps, monsters from egg shells, gorillas from kitchen cutlery, fish out of cables and other home e-waste; *Imagine That* will focus on upcycling everyday items and much more.

“A child’s mind is filled with curiosity and imagination and with *Imagine That*, we are encouraging kids to push the boundaries of their creativity. The show, will take DIY a step further by making innovative and fun artsy products out of simple and easily available day-to-day things. I believe that imagination and creativity together can make a change the world we live in and this show will help kids and their families have lots of fun with DIY while understanding the process of repurposing,” said Rob.

Disney Channel has been consistently bringing fun and wholesome entertainment for kids and families. Post a successful summer with new series such as *Bapu, Guddu and Gadget Guru Ganesha*, the channel now extends a new treat filled with imagination and creativity with *Imagine That*.

‘I love playing Kalyani’

SHEETAL MAULIK, who plays Kalyani in *Pyar Ki Luka Chhupi*, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about how she ended up playing a negative character, her first break and challenges in shooting under the new normal

■ You play a negative character in *Pyar Ki Luka Chhupi* for the first time. How is it going?

I am thoroughly enjoying it and the same can be seen on screen. It depends on how far you are willing to take the role and how you play it out. You know your limitations and playing such a character is tougher since you are not playing just one role. Earlier, I have been part of comedy shows and done lead roles that have been positive. Doing a show where you are playing a negative role, it gives you an opportunity to explore yourself and do something that you would not do in real life. You are portraying something that is opposite to what you are, be negative and yet be funny.

■ Were there apprehensions in taking up the role?

I have always wanted to explore my acting abilities. When I got an opportunity to be part of this show, I had no reason to turn it down. There were two things playing. First, I have been waiting to work with the makers of *Pyar Ki Luka Chhupi*. Second, since I had already done lead roles and comedy, I wanted to take up this project. The only challenge was to train myself for the accent. Kalyani is a totally Kanpuriya woman.

■ You also had to perfect a new language. What was the preparation?

When I gave the auditions, I knew that I didn’t have the accent correct. The only reason why I got the role was because they felt that I could act. But after that the team really helped me. The script comes in the language that I am supposed to speak. The only thing that I had to perfect the accent correctly for the dialogues. For this, I heard a number of jokes from the region. An assistant, Prem, who is from the area, would tell me how to speak certain words. This helped.

■ How did you get interested in acting?

I am a trained Bharatanatyam dancer. I have been dancing since I was three. I still practice it and Kuchipudi. There was a contest but I couldn’t participate. The organisers asked me to open the contest. I performed. Sachin Pilgaonkar, who was there, told me to take up acting. I told him, I couldn’t act. He said not to worry and took me for a role in an episodic show of his. Once the make-up is on, it has been on. I have done Hindi and Marathi theatre. I have worked with the likes of Bhavana Balsavar and Shubha Khote. My journey has been that of a learner. I have not taken any acting lessons. I am able to emote and understand the character because I have done theatre.

■ How did you get your first break with *Akkad Bakkad Bambe* Bo?

Actually, I did *Hello Dolly* before this. I had played a kleptomaniac for production house Sagar Films Pvt Ltd. When they came up with *Akkad Bakkad Bambe* Bo, they knew I could act and that is how I came on board for this



project as a lead. It was a different role. I played a student.

■ You have now been in the industry for over a decade. How has the journey been thus far?

It has been good. One has to go with the flow. Yes, there have been changes. But if we don’t move forward, we won’t be able to move past the negatives. The good is that we are paid better. Then, there were actors, today we have stars. It is important to understand that change is a reality. To accept it is necessary. When I was young, I played roles according to my age. Now I am doing roles that fit my age.

■ What is the toughest thing about being an actor?

Everything that comes your way is

tough. Even with Kalyani’s role, I still get butterflies when I am on camera. There is always the fear that I may not be able to remain the skin of the character. The good is that it makes me more determined to do my work better.

■ How tough is it to shoot under the new normal?

When we first started, I was afraid. I have a four-year-old daughter. My father lives with me. The fear was very high. I was not sure whether I should get back to work or not. But the makers have been thorough with precautions and I am doing the same.

■ What next?

I am concentrating on this show. I work 25 days a month. The rest of the days I want to spend with my family and catch up spending time with my daughter.

Undaunted by failure humbled by Success



A MISCHIEVOUS CHILD
hail from Mahabubnagar. Although I studied in Hyderabad till fifth standard, my family moved back to Mahabubnagar. My father was a businessman and my mother a housewife.

I was the most mischievous of my siblings. I was good at studies, but I really liked spending time with my friends. So after school, we would go out and play cricket or football. We were a naughty bunch, so we would do some badmashi as well. It was a great time, I don't have many pictures of those times since taking photos everyday wasn't so much popular as today, but I cherish those memories even now.

I was ambitious right from my young age. I remember at that time, students would opt for either engineering or medicine. I was inclined towards becoming a doctor. So, after completing my schooling and Intermediate, I came to Hyderabad, rented a small room and dedicated my heart and soul into clearing the medical entrance exam. I gave the examination twice, but somehow couldn't get a very good rank.

That was the first time in life I realised, by experience, that we have to face failures at some point or the other in life. No matter how careful one is, everyone faces failure once in a while - it's natural.

A successful entrepreneur Since I couldn't do well in the medical entrance test even after putting in two years of hard work, I was in a bit of a dilemma about what to do next. A friend of mine informed me about this course in Osmania University, that students could take in one

sitting instead of three years. I don't think it's in practice anymore.

But I thought that was a good way of getting a degree in a year and not wasting valuable time. So, I got a Bachelor of Arts from OU and started looking for work opportunities.

It was then that I got to know about the mining sector booming in Karnataka. So, I and three of my friends started a mining company in Karnataka and we dealt with manganese ore.

Most people get shocked when I tell them that at the time when we started the company, I was just 21 years old.

Fortunately, within just a few years, the company was thriving. We had a very handsome and stable income. It was very gratifying to know that at this small age I was able to amass so much and was running a successful company.

But, there was certainly something amiss. I wanted to do more, but at that time did not know how.

THE TURNING POINT

One day, I believe it was a Sunday, we four (I and three of my friends, who were also the partners in the mining firm) were at home, and received a call that a few of the workers in the mining company had fought amongst themselves and were taken to the police station. I went there and met the IPS officer posted at the station. He was very supportive. But, the way he carried himself and spoke impressed me a lot.

By the time I returned home, I had already decided that I too wanted to wear the uniform. So, I

sold everything, came back to Hyderabad and put every waking hour into studying for UPSC. I tried a lot of times, but things didn't work again. So, I also competed in the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission, for the post of Deputy Superintendent of Police. I got to know that based on my performance here, I could become an IPS officer. I put in my best, and got through the examination. I was promoted as an IPS within a few years.

RAISED BY A STRONG WOMAN

My mother was my biggest inspiration. I lost her a couple of years back. When I was 10-11 years old, one day the Collector of Mahabubnagar district visited our area. We were facing some water issues then. My mother went to speak to him about it and took me along. But, back in those days, bureaucrats hardly met the general public and my mother wasn't allowed to meet him. She was very bold. So, in front of at least 20-25 people, she held my hand and said that one day my son will become a collector too.

I didn't understand it then, in fact I was confused about how I could become a collector. Even when I ran a successful business she kept prompting me to try for UPSC. In fact, I might have stopped attempting to be an officer, had she not constantly motivated and encouraged me.

She was very happy when I became a police officer, but she would always say that I couldn't become an IAS. She taught me to be a fighter and never to give up. I really miss her a lot.

Not all of us have an easy journey to success, in fact it comes naturally to very few. All others have to work hard to be deemed successful. One such person is Mitte Sreenivas, the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Telangana State who has handled many responsibilities with aplomb, including heading the CID team. His journey towards a successful career hasn't been an easy one. In this candid conversation with **The Pioneer**, Sreenivas speaks to **NAMRATA SRIVASTAVA** about his childhood, becoming an entrepreneur and the hard work behind becoming an IPS officer.



DOTING HUSBAND, DOTING FATHER

My job is such that I am mostly busy, out for duty, sometimes posted out of the city. So, whatever time I get, I love to spend it with my family. My wife, Vasavi Jagannadham, is a Joint Commissioner in Goods and Services Tax (GST) Department. We have a teenage daughter, Sahiti Suhana. I just love spending time with my daughter, she means the world to me.

TIME WELL SPENT

We love to go hiking and camping. And when we are with nature, we make sure we are just there, and absorb in the beauty. Whenever I get some time, I make sure I take out my bike and go for a long ride. I enjoy horse-riding a lot as well.

I also love to design and innovate things. I have designed my house. In fact, I own a car with an open roof that was completely designed by me. Right now, I am trying to make an electric car. I love to make things as simplified as possible.

I read a lot, I consider this to be next to meditation. I have always been a man of science, so reading about new scientific inventions, futuristic technologies and innovative devices really excites me. In fiction, I prefer thrillers and detective novels.

A FITNESS FREAK

I am not so much of a foodie. I love to cook biryani for my family though; my daughter relishes it. I also like using the barbecue to make dishes. I am also a fitness freak. In the Police Department we are continuously dealing with crime and criminals. It becomes very important to take measures and make sure to detoxify your inner self. I think exercising helps me there.

I can't spend hours in the gym due to my work timings. But I make sure that I am working out every day, even for a short time. It helps keep my mind active. Of late, I have also started yoga and meditation. They help me focus better.

RAPID FIRE

Favourite colour:
Blue, it enchants me.

Favourite book:
Many. I would say Sherlock Holmes.

Dream vacation destination:

I love beaches. I would love to spend a nice vacation with my family on an Hawaiian island or even the Andamans.

Favourite movie:
All James Bond movies. I am a huge fan of the franchise.

Favourite actor:
Absolutely love Pierce Brosnan

Biggest stress reliever:
I feel really relaxed when I am with nature and surrounded by it.

Advice to youngsters:
Don't give up. Keep trying, be consistent. Your hard work will pay off.

