

NATION 5
C'GARH GOVT TO BUY PADDY
TO SERVE ELEPHANTS

MONEY 8
MARKETS AT FRESH HIGHS: SENSEX RALLIES
546 PTS TO SCALE 54K; NIFTY TOPS 16,200

SPORTS 12
ENGLAND ALL OUT FOR
183 ON DAY 1

HYDERABAD, THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2021, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

MEHREEN
SIGNS A
ROMANTIC FILM

Page 11

NOD FOR CONTINUATION OF FAST TRACK SPECIAL COURTS FOR POCSO CASES

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved continuation of 1,023 fast track special courts, including 389 exclusive POCSO courts, as a centrally sponsored scheme for another two years. Union Minister Anurag Thakur said out of 31 States and UTs, 28 have started the scheme. West Bengal is one of the states which has not started the scheme, he said. The scheme would continue from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023 with an outlay of Rs 1,572.86 crore -- Rs 971.70 crore as central share and Rs 601.16 crore as State share, an official statement said.

AIR INDIA ACCUMULATED RS 70,820 CR LOSSES TILL MARCH 31, 2020: CENTRE

Air India has been suffering heavy losses since its merger with Indian Airlines in 2007 and it has accumulated losses of about Rs 70,820 crore till March 31, 2020, Minister of State for Civil Aviation VK Singh said on Wednesday. Financial bids for Air India are likely to be received from qualified interested bidders by September 15 this year. The Centre had invited Expression of Interests (EoIs) for Air India on January 27, 2020. The last date of submission -- after multiple extensions due to COVID-19 pandemic -- of EoIs was December 14, 2020.

MHA FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION ON CBI FORMER DIRECTOR ALOK VERMA

The Union home ministry has recommended disciplinary action against former CBI director Alok Verma for allegedly misusing his official position and violating the relevant service rules, officials said on Wednesday. They said the Ministry of Home Affairs has written to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), the nodal ministry for the CBI, to take necessary disciplinary action against Verma. The action, if approved, may include temporary or permanent forfeiture of Verma's pension and retirement benefits, the officials said.

INDIA BUILDS WORLD'S HIGHEST ROAD IN LADAKH, BEATS BOLIVIA'S RECORD

The Border Roads Organisation has constructed the world's highest road in eastern Ladakh at an altitude of 19,300 feet, the government said in a statement today. The road has been constructed at an altitude higher than the Mount Everest base camps -- the south base camp in Nepal is at an altitude of 17,598 feet, while the north base camp in Tibet is at 16,900 feet. To put this in another perspective, most large commercial aircraft fly at 30,000 feet and above, so this road is at an altitude that's more than half of that.



Lovlina Borgohain, right, became only the third Indian boxer to win a medal at the Olympics when she won a bronze in the Women's welterweight event in Tokyo, while Ravi Dahiya, far right, beat Nurislam Sanayev by pinfall in the men's wrestling freestyle 57kg semi-final, assuring India of at least a silver medal, on Wednesday. India has so far won 1 silver and 2 bronze.

7.59 lakh cases pending in various courts in Telangana

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

A whopping 7,59,285 cases are pending in various courts in Telangana as per information available on National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) as on Wednesday.

Of these, 4.43 lakh are criminal cases while 3.15 lakh are civil in nature.

An astonishing 90 cases have been pending for over 30 years now -- 35 of these are civil in nature. Of these, two cases have been stayed and 11 cases are securing presence. Shockingly, 10,166 cases have been pending for over 10 years of which 7,362 are civil in nature and the remaining are criminal cases. A majority of the cases have been stayed or securing presence.

While 6.59 lakh cases are original, 63,285 are execution petitions, 19,694 are appeals and 14,953 are applications.

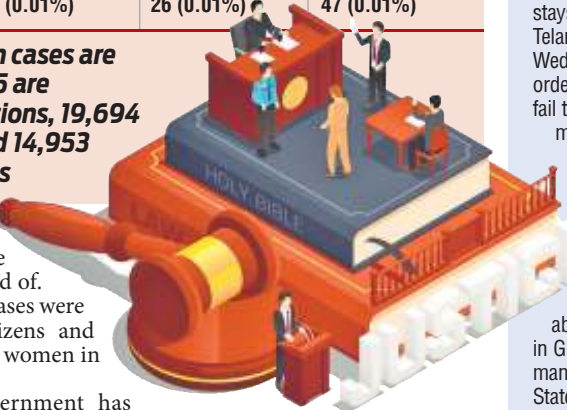
An agonising 26,835 marriage petitions are pending and 1,771 are juvenile cases. About 3.77 lakh cases are warrants or summons related to criminal cases. In July alone, 43,836 cases were filed in

PARTICULARS	CIVIL	CRIMINAL	TOTAL
0 to 1 year	137941 (35.33%)	123983 (39.98%)	267775 (37.44%)
1 to 3 years	145274 (37.21%)	131882 (40.62%)	277156 (38.76%)
3 to 5 years	63337 (16.22%)	46916 (14.45%)	110253 (15.42%)
5 to 10 years	38404 (9.84%)	14834 (4.57%)	53238 (7.44%)
10 to 20 years	5235 (1.34%)	1083 (0.33%)	6318 (0.88%)
20 to 30 years	205 (0.05%)	137 (0.05%)	342 (0.05%)
Above 30 years	21 (0.01%)	26 (0.01%)	47 (0.01%)

While 6.59 lakh cases are original, 63,285 are execution petitions, 19,694 are appeals and 14,953 are applications

various courts of Telangana while 46,307 were disposed of. As many as 54,205 cases were filed by senior citizens and 92,508 were filed by women in Telangana.

The Union Government has approved a scheme for setting up 1,023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) across the country for expeditious disposal of pending



cases of Rape under IPC and crimes under POCSO Act.

1 lakh illegal constructions in GHMC limits: HC

Pointing out that the GHMC was not requesting the court to lift stays on illegal constructions; the Telangana High Court on Wednesday said that such stay orders are granted since officials fail to file objections in a proper manner. The Court said due to lack of proper objections filed by officials, it has no recourse but to turn a blind eye to such cases, in a way facilitating illegal constructions. The High Court noted that there are about one lakh illegal structures in GHMC itself and wondered how many there would be across the State. It said that officials cannot cite Covid-19 as an excuse for not acting on illegal constructions.

KCR gives a shocker to Oppn parties, launches Dalit Bandhu in Vasalamarri



Rs 10 lakh to be credited into bank accounts of 76 SCs

ML MELLY MAITREYI
■ HYDERABAD

In a surprise development, Dalit Bandhu, touted as a prestigious scheme by the TRS government, was launched at Vasalamarri, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's adopted village in Yadadri Bhongir district, without the expected fanfare on Wednesday.

The proposed launch in Huzurabad on August 16 will now only be a formality.

KCR, who visited Vasalamarri village and went round the Dalitwada and all other colonies in the village to understand the problems and grievances of people gave assurances to people and instructions to officials.

He later addressed a meeting of Dalits at Rythu Vedika building.

Giving good news to the Dalits of the village, he said Dalit Bandhu funds would be released to 76 SC families in the district from Thursday onwards.

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao goes around the Dalitwada in Vasalamarri, his adopted village in Yadadri Bhongir district, on Wednesday.

KCR lends a patient ear to woes of Dalits, others

CM promises houses, land pattas in Vasalamarri under Dalit Bandhu

It was a treasured encounter for the residents of Dalitwada in Vasalamarri village in Turkapally mandal of Bhongir Yadadri district with Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao who he went on foot and enquired about the well-being of every family in his adopted village. The Chief Minister on Wednesday spent nearly three hours walking about four km through the colony and stopping in front of each of the 60 houses. Sometimes, he even stepped inside their dwellings to listen to their grievances. He enquired whether they were getting pensions and whether they heard about 'Dalit Bandhu' and what they proposed to do with Rs 10 lakh financial assistance.

Court stops release of Rs 58 crore to fight contempt cases

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday sought an explanation from the State government for sanctioning Rs 58 crore to fight contempt of court cases pending against state bureaucrats, including Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar. Taking up a Public Interest Litigation filed by a lecturer, a High Court bench comprising Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Vijaysen Reddy sought to know from the State government how public money was spent thus and how the Treasury regulations would allow such expenditure.

Rahul Gandhi to visit TS in Sept: Revanth

HYDERABAD: TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy on Wednesday disclosed that AICC former president Rahul Gandhi would participate in the party's 'Dalit Dandora' programme in the first week of September.

WATER SHARING DISPUTE

CJI recuses after AP says 'no' to mediation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana Wednesday recused himself from hearing Andhra Pradesh's plea after it said "no" to the Supreme Court's suggestion to go for mediation over dispute with Telangana which has allegedly deprived the state of its legitimate share of drinking and



irrigation water from the Krishna river. The CJI, who hails from Andhra Pradesh, had said in the last hearing that he belonged to both the states and suggested "mediation" to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for settling their dispute, saying it did not want to interfere "unnecessarily".

BJP got over three times more donations than 5 other parties combined, says ADR

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP has declared donations worth more than three times of the aggregate amount for five other parties, including the Congress, TMC and NCP, according to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms.

The report stated that the BJP also disclosed donations from the Amravati Municipal Corporation, where both the mayor and the deputy mayor are from the saffron party. The party's declarations also

The report stated that the BJP also disclosed donations from the Amravati Municipal Corporation, where both the mayor and the deputy mayor are from the saffron party.

included land received from at least three donors.

"The donations declared by the BJP are more than three times the aggregate declared by the

Survey govt-owned lands, submit reports, HC tells TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a significant direction to the State government, the Telangana High Court on Wednesday ordered it to conduct a survey across the State and identify government lands.

A High Court bench, headed by Chief Justice, Justice Hima Kohli and Justice Vijaysen Reddy, issued orders to this effect on Wednesday.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Ashadha & Krishna Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Dwadashi 17:08

Nakshatram : Ardra Full Night

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

Rahukalam : 1:57 pm - 3:32 pm

Yamagandam : 6:00 am - 7:35 am

Varjyam : 1:35 pm - 3:20 pm

Gulika : 9:11 am - 10:46 am

Good Time : (to start any important work)

Amritakalam : 7:42 pm - 9:27 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:56 am - 12:47 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 29/22

Humidity: 71%

Sunrise: 5:56 am

Sunset: 06:47 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated AUGUST 04, 2021 5:00 PM



TRS working president KT Rama Rao distributes a cheque of Rs 2 lakh insurance amount to the family member of a deceased party worker, at the Telangana Bhavan on Wednesday.

Families of deceased TRS workers are not alone: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a morale boosting gesture to the over 60 lakh member family of Telangana Rashtra Samithi, party working president KT Rama Rao on Wednesday distributed cheques of Rs 2 lakh insurance to the families of 80 deceased workers.

KTR invited the families of 80 party workers who died in acci-

dents to the Telangana Bhavan here on Wednesday, had lunch with them, and handed over the cheques.

Later, he told the families of the deceased party workers that though they had lost their breadwinners in the family, the party and its president K Chandrasekhar Rao would be their support.



High-income countries administered around 50 doses for every 100 people in May, and that number had since doubled, according to WHO.

Stop booster (third) shots for Delta: WHO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The World Health Organisation is calling for a moratorium on COVID-19 vaccine boosters until at least the end of September, its head Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Wednesday. The move was to enable that at least 10% of the population of every country was vaccinated, WHO Director-General Tedros said.

The call to stop COVID-19 vaccine boosters is the strongest yet from the UN agency as the gap between inoculation rates in wealthy and poor countries widens.

"I understand the concern of all governments to protect their people from the Delta variant. But we

cannot accept countries that have already used most of the global supply of vaccines using even more of it," Tedros added.

High-income countries administered around 50 doses for every 100 people in May, and that number had since doubled, according to WHO. Low-income countries have only been able to administer 1.5 doses for every 100 people, due to lack of supply.

"We need an urgent reversal, from the majority of vaccines going to high-income countries, to the majority going to low-income countries," said Tedros.

Some countries have begun to use or started weighing on the need for booster doses.

Hungry for more success, Sindhu now eyes 2024 Olympics in Paris

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The only Indian woman to win two Olympic medals, P.V. Sindhu feels that this is not the end as the star shuttler now eyes 2024 Olympics to be held at Paris.

After arriving in her hometown on Wednesday to a hero's welcome following the bronze medal win at Tokyo Olympics, she made it clear that she is hungry for more.



physical fitness. She recalled that even the recovery session was done carefully.

Varma was all praise for Sindhu for bearing with the torturous training she had to go through. "I worked with other athletes, but Sindhu is tremendous," he said.

He recalled that Sindhu never took a break from the training even for a single day.

The Korean coach said he was very happy as for him this was first Olympic medal as coach. "I will never forget this moment in my life," he said.

Raju said they had the dream of achieving multiple medals at Olympics. He said Sindhu was highly motivated and the coach was equally passionate about success.

He said they received all help from Telangana sports authorities as Gachibowli stadium was made available for training. The stadium was selected because it was similar to what they had in Tokyo.

The authorities switched on the AC and created the same match situation to enable her to practice. At least 20 different players from the Academy sparred with Sindhu on rotation.

Hyd doctor receives patent from GOI for developing unique surgical device

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior interventional gastroenterologist from Gleneagles Global Hospitals, Dr Yalaka Rami Reddy has received a patent from Government of India for developing a unique surgical device 'Composite Polypectomy Snare', which promises to make colonoscopy process easier.

"There are certain complexities in the existing devices used to snare polyps from

inside the colon region in a human body. Such difficulties compelled me to innovate this device which is not just easy to handle, it also reduces the time taken to perform colonoscopy on complicated polyps," Dr Reddy in a press release said.

The device also will enable doctors to control internal bleeding, which is a complicated affair while using other devices. The device will now undergo the rigours of testing

by authorities, and sometime soon it will hopefully be put to commercial use, he said.

This is the second patent won by Dr. Rami Reddy for his product innovations. Earlier, he developed a feeding pipe to provide relief to terminally ill patients suffering from oesophageal cancer. The feeding tube addresses current problems like complete blockage in the oesophagus occurring due to cancers, the press release added.

trainer Srikanth Varma and directors of Suchitra Badminton Academy, she said that while winning the silver medal at Rio Olympics ago changed her life, it was important to keep the momentum going over last five years.

Sindhu said she could get the medal because all of them

worked hard. "We worked very hard. We knew that only hard work and sacrifices can get us there. All of us had the dream of a medal at Tokyo. We knew the value of the medal," she said.

On the rigorous training before Olympics, she said they all knew the importance of

"Before Mission Paris 2024, we want to see her become world number one. Our dream is to see her play next Olympics as number one seed," he said.

GO issued for reducing eligibility age for pensions

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State government on Wednesday issued a GO reducing the eligibility age for Aasara pensions from 65 years to 57 years as promised by Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

GO No. 36 instructed the SERP CEO and other officials that the process for identifying the eligible beneficiaries be started immediately.

"The decision to reduce the eligibility age for pensions was taken keeping in view several representations received from various sections of society," said Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Yerrabelli Dayakar Rao in a statement.

The Minister said that lakhs of new beneficiaries would get old age pension of Rs 2,016.

GO No. 36 instructed the SERP CEO and other officials that the process for identifying the eligible beneficiaries be started immediately

TS EAMCET 2021 begins

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Engineering, Agriculture and Medical Common Entrance Test (TS EAMCET) 2021 has commenced on Wednesday amid Covid-19 safety protocols.

The entrance test for the engineering courses is being held from 9 am to 12 noon, and 3 pm to 5 pm at 105 test centres including 82 in Telangana and 23 in Andhra Pradesh. Students were allowed into the centres after thermal screening and sanitising their hands.

This year, 2,51,606 students including 1,64,962 for engineering and 86,644 for AM have registered. The engineering entrance test will be held for two more days i.e., on Thursday and Friday, while the test for AM stream is slated to be conducted on August 9 and 10.

BJP got over three times more donations than 5 other parties...

Continued from page 1

According to the report, the BJP declared a donation of Rs 4.80 lakh from the Amravati Municipal Corporation.

"No details of address, bank name, PAN, among others, have been provided by the party against this donation. A casual search on the internet shows that the aforesaid donor is a Government of Maharashtra local body (as mentioned on their website). It raises questions on the legality of the contribution made by a municipal corporation which is a governing body (whose mayor and deputy mayor are from BJP) to a political party," the poll rights group said.

"The BJP declared 570 dona-

tions of Rs 149.875 crore, AITC collected 52 donations worth Rs 7.1035 crore, Congress collected 25 donations of Rs 2.6875 crore and NCP collected 20 donations of Rs 3.005 crore having incomplete cheque/DD details where cheque number, bank details on which it was drawn and the date on which the cheque was received/ encashed is not provided. Thus, without the complete cheque/Demand Draft (DD) details, it would be a time-consuming process to link the donors against their donations and hence trace the money trail," the report said.

The report said the BJP declared receiving land from three donors of a total value of

Rs 1.516 crore.

"The three donations are from Jhanjharpur in Bihar worth Rs 36.80 lakh, Rs 50 lakh and Rs 64.88 lakh. Apart from the names, location of donors, PAN details of one donor, no other details have been provided like donors' address, bank details, PAN of remaining two donors, address and khasra' (plot) number of land, type of land agricultural/commercial, among others," it said.

The report added that the CPM and CPI also failed to declare the details of cheque and DD (cheque number, bank on which it was drawn and the date) for a total of 39 donations amounting to Rs 1.0786 crore and 29 donations amounting to Rs 52.17 lakh, respectively.

Court stops release of Rs 58 crore to fight contempt cases

Continued from page 1

In its interim orders, the bench directed the State government not to release the money.

The Chief Secretary had on June 7 issued a Government Order (GO) sanctioning Rs 58,95,63,000 towards contempt cases pending in the High Court. More than 250 contempt

cases are reportedly pending against the bureaucrats.

The High Court issued notices to Secretaries of Revenue and Finance Departments along with CCLA, Treasury Directors on this matter. It also issued notices to Somesh Kumar in his individual status. The court adjourned the next hearing to October 27.

Families of deceased...

Continued from page 1

The party was handing over a cheque of Rs 18 crore to the insurance company towards accidental insurance of party workers, KTR said.

The TRS, with 60 lakh membership, had grown into an invincible power and all the 60 lakh members are the family of TRS, he said. No one who lost their kin should feel insecure and the responsibility of

their families would be on the party general secretaries where they are in-charge of their respective areas, KTR said.

The problems of 80 families would be resolved in 10 days, he said, adding last year, 950 TRS workers died in accidents and their families would also be helped by the party. "It would be the responsibility of the party to take care of workers who were protecting it," KTR said.

Trains cancelled

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Several trains have been proposed to be cancelled and also a number of train services have been diverted due to the commissioning of Vijayawada-Uppaluru doubling and carrying of non-interlocking works in Vijayawada division.

Accordingly, Train 08561 Visakhapatnam-Kacheguda special train leaving Visakhapatnam on August 12 and 13 will be cancelled.

KCR lends a patient ear to...

Continued from page 1

Moved by their plight, KCR announced 2BHK houses to those who did not have a dwelling of their own and sought to know what they would do if they get Rs 10 lakh per family under Dalit Bandhu.

Some responded that they would utilise the amount to set up a dairy farm, others said they would buy a tractor and some said they would start a business.

The Chief Minister asked if all the eligible received Aasara pensions and instructed district Collector Pamela Satapathy to sanction pensions if anyone was left out.

Moved by the dilapidated condition of houses in the Dalitwada, KCR, who went inside some houses and spoke with residents, advised them to think of good options to utilise

funds under Dalit Bandhu.

He also visited other colonies besides Dalitwada and assured that everyone would be sanctioned a house and they should not despair.

He was attentive when elderly women recounted their problems and he gave on the spot instructions to the officers to address those issues. Many said that their houses were below the road level, and got flooded during rains.

He told the Collector that as 2BHK houses would be constructed for all, roads and drains should be constructed as per a plan. When it was brought to his attention that 20 women beedi workers were not getting pension, he directed the Collector to sanction pensions within two days.

He told a beedi worker that he studied by staying in the house of one such worker and he was aware of their problems.

KCR gives a...

Continued from page 1

"By 11 am, Rs 10 lakh would be credited into the account of each Dalit family," he said.

"Vasalamarri village would be immediately sanctioned Rs 7.6 crore under Dalit Bandhu scheme," the Chief Minister declared. Along with Dalit Bandhu, they would also get 2BHK houses and the village would be reconstructed with all amenities, KCR said. Similarly, surplus government land would be distributed to SCs. The Chief Minister advised the Dalits to choose good vocations, trades and utilise the Dalit Bandhu funds judiciously.

Pseudoephedrine bound for Oz from Hyderabad seized

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Wednesday said it has seized one kg of Pseudoephedrine here and arrested two people from Tamil Nadu while they were allegedly sending the courier parcel containing the controlled substance to Australia.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, the NCB, Hyderabad, made the seizure at a courier office here on August 2, the NCB said in a press release.

The consignment contained bundles of lace and along with other embroidery items and was destined to Australia. On thorough examination, the NCB officers found a transparent pouch with a white colour crystal

powder concealed in the cavity of the wheel of the bundle. The extraction and testing of the hidden material revealed that it was Pseudoephedrine, a controlled substance under NDPS (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances) Act, 1985," said the release.

The arrested two were identified by the NCB team with the help of CCTV cameras and were arrested on Tuesday in connection with the seizure.

Precursor chemicals like Acetic Anhydride, Ephedrine and Pseudoephedrine are chemicals which are used as intermediary for the manufacture of dyes, paints, textiles, pesticides, said the release quoting Amit Ghawate, NCB, Zonal Director, Bengaluru.

CJI recuses after AP says...

Continued from page 1

The bench, also comprising Justice Surya Kant, on Wednesday took note of the submissions of G Umapathy, the counsel appearing for Andhra Pradesh, that the state wanted adjudication of the case by the apex court bench instead of going for the mediation.

"Then let the matter be listed before another bench. We are not forcing you, if you don't want mediation. Place it before another bench," the CJI ordered.

"They don't want mediation, and I don't want to hear the matter," CJI Ramana said during the brief hearing.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said the government has no objection if the CJI-led bench heard the plea of Andhra Pradesh.

"I do not have any objection, neither does the Government. We have full

faith," the law officer said.

"Thank you," the CJI said while politely refusing to hear the case of Andhra Pradesh.

On August 2, CJI Ramana had said: "I don't want to hear this matter legally. I belong to both the states. If the matter can be settled in mediation, please do that. We can help with that. Otherwise I will transfer this to another bench."

The counsel for Andhra Pradesh had taken time till Wednesday for apprising the bench of the view of the state over the apex court's mediation offer.

In July, Andhra Pradesh government had moved the top court claiming that the Telangana government refused to follow the decisions taken by the Apex Council constituted under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014, directions of KRMb, and directions of government of India," it said.

"This has caused immense hardship for people of Andhra Pradesh as availability of water has been seriously prejudiced by depletion in Srisaikal Dam project as well as other projects such as the Nagarjuna Sagar Project and the Pulichintala Project," it added.

directives.

The petition said the fundamental rights including right to life of the people living in Andhra Pradesh was "seriously impaired and infringed" upon as they were being deprived of their "legitimate share of water" due to "unconstitutional, illegal and unjust" acts of the Telangana government and its officials.

"The present petition is being moved because the state of Telangana is refusing to follow decisions taken in the Apex Council constituted under the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014, directions of KRMb, and directions of government of India," it said.

"This has caused immense hardship for people of Andhra Pradesh as availability of water has been seriously prejudiced by depletion in Srisaikal Dam project as well as other projects such as the Nagarjuna Sagar Project and the Pulichintala Project," it added.

Long-lasting Covid symptoms rare in kids: Study

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Most children with Covid recover within a week, only a small percentage have long-term symptoms, according to a study published in the journal Lancet Child and Adolescent Health.

The study showed that less than one in 20 children with symptomatic Covid experienced symptoms lasting longer than four weeks, and almost all children have fully recovered by eight weeks.

The most common symptoms reported in children were headaches, tiredness (fatigue), a sore throat, and loss of smell (anosmia).

Reassuringly, there were no reports of serious neurological symptoms such as fits or seizures, impaired concentration or attention, or anxiety, the findings showed.

"It is reassuring that the number of children experiencing long-lasting symptoms of Covid symptoms is low. Nevertheless, a small number

of children do experience long illness with Covid-19, and our study validates the experiences of these children and their families," said Professor Emma Duncan.

The team looked at daily health reports logged in the ZOE Covid Symptom Study app by parents or carers on behalf of more than 250,000 children aged 5-17, with nearly 7,000 having symptoms consistent with Covid and a positive test.

The team focused on the

period from September 2020 through to February 2021.

During this time, 1,734 children were reported who had a clear start and end point to their symptoms and a positive Covid PCR test.

On average, the illness lasted for five days in younger children (5 to 11 years old) and seven days in older children aged 12 to 17.

Fewer than one in 20 experienced symptoms for 4 weeks or more, while only one in fifty had symptoms lasting more

than 8 weeks.

The researchers also assessed the children who tested negative for Covid-19 who may have had other childhood illnesses, such as colds and flu.

To do this, they randomly selected a group of age-matched and gender-matched children with symptoms reported through the app who were tested at the same time as the positive children.

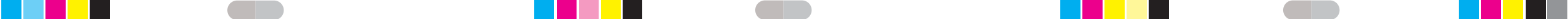
Children with Covid-19 were ill for longer compared

to children with other illnesses who tested negative for Covid-19 (an average of 6 days' illness with Covid-19 v/s 3 days with other illnesses) and were more likely to be ill for more than four weeks.

However, at four weeks, the small number of children with other illnesses tended to have more symptoms than those who were ill with Covid-19 (average 5 symptoms in Covid-negative group v/s 2 symptoms in Covid-positive group).

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PROJECT MADAD

Post first dose of all residents TS village now Covid-resilient

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A citizens' collective has said that all eligible residents of a village in Telangana have been administered the first dose of Coronavirus vaccine making the hamlet 'Covid-resilient'.

Project Madad, a collective of doctors and volunteers from India and the Indian diaspora working together to provide Covid education and health-care assistance to rural India, said it has developed a model to make India's villages Covid-resilient.

In coordination with the government, Project Madad has achieved a Covid-resilient village - Rajannapet in Sirilla district of Telangana - it said. "On July 31, Rajannapet achieved Covid-resilience sta-



tus with first dose vaccination of 1,328 eligible adults," it said. The group has used a five-pronged model to progressively bring about a behavioural change among the villagers

who, according to the organisation, will not just be vaccinated, but also be better prepared in time to tackle any possible future wave. The model consists of five elements -- empow-

erment and equipping of rural healthcare workers, active countering of Covid misinformation in the vernacular language, innovative methods to encourage socially responsible behaviour and increase vaccine acceptance, use of technology to address specific dimensions, and targeted delivery of vaccines to achieve universal coverage. While there are several villages in Tripura, Goa, Maharashtra, and Jammu and Kashmir that have successfully vaccinated all its eligible residents with both doses of vaccine, Project Madad claimed that Rajannapet was India's first "Covid-resilient" village and that their model was one of its kind.

According to the Project Madad, achieving a state of

Covid resilience involves a lot more than just vaccinating the population.

"The five-pronged 'Rajannapet model towards Covid resilience in villages' is not just about overcoming vaccine hesitancy. It is about achieving a social and behavioural transformation that makes the village impervious to seasonal outbreaks, reduces these outbreaks to a few isolated cases and does not let the virus acquire pandemic proportions.

"Even if complete and immediate vaccination of every eligible adult in India were somehow possible, vaccination alone is not enough to counter the Covid menace and its impact. It needs to be part of a composite strategy," the group said.

T'gana is now an educational hub: Minister

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

Education Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy and Labour Minister Ch Malla Reddy on Wednesday launched road widening works near Santa Bio-Tech and ITI in Medchal Malkajgiri district.

The Minister said that the credit for establishing 1,000 residential schools, realising the importance of education, goes to the Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

The state government incurs an expenditure of Rs 1.20 lakh on each student, she said pointing out how Telangana became an educational hub with the setting up of universities, degree colleges and polytechnic college. Malla Reddy said that the government is encouraging to set up industries and providing employment to youth. Under Pattana Pragathi, the government will develop municipal corporations and municipalities at a cost of Rs 2,000 crore.

Wine shop worker held for stealing Rs 22.3 lakh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



The Kushaiguda Police of Rachakonda Police Commissionerate on Wednesday have apprehended a worker of a wine shop for stealing Rs 22.3 lakh from Sai Durga Wines at Moulali on Wednesday.

The accused identified as Bodge Sunil, 34, a native of Pochampally in Yadadri District was residing at Chithalbasthi, had committed the theft on July 31. After receiving the complaint from the owners of the wine shop, the police have searched for the accused and got him within four days. Police officials have recovered Rs 22.1 lakh from him.

According to the police, the accused, an engineering dropout, who was working in Sai Durga Wines for over three years now used to collect the earnings of the day from the shop and hand it over to complainant's business partner Ramachandra Reddy, at

Chaitanyapuri. According to the police, being a 'dry day' on August 1 and 2 on account of Bonalu, the shop did big business on July 31. That day, at 10.30 pm Sunil has taken the collection amount of Rs 22,38,000 from the Wines to handover it to complainant's partner, but did not reach Chaitnyapuri.

Sunil fled away with the cash and took shelter in Yadadri-Bhongir district for two days spending Rs 28,000, later he returned to Hyderabad with the remaining cash on August 3. On reliable information, the special team of the Kushaiguda Police led by investigation officer Gurva Reddy apprehended him on Wednesday.

SI accused of raping trainee cop remanded

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

P Srinivas Reddy, Sub-Inspector of police, who was accused of attempting to rape a woman Probationary Sub-Inspector of 2020 batch in the early hours of Tuesday, was sent to judicial remand for 14 days by a local court on Tuesday, said Mahabubabad Superintendent of Police N Koti Reddy in a statement here on Wednesday.

Srinivas Reddy, who was working as the SI at the Maripeda police station in the district, was placed under sus-

pension on Tuesday by the North Zone IG and Warangal Range DIG Y Nagi Reddy, as the victim approached Warangal Police Commissioner Tarun Joshi.

In her complaint, the officer stated Srinivas Reddy had been sending messages to her phone and been deleting them quickly. He used to question her as to why she was not responding to his messages. According to the FIR, Srinivas Reddy had committed sexual assault on her and bit on several places on her body, and dropped her back at her residence.



Since the woman S-I belonged to the downtrodden SC community, a case of SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act was also booked against Srinivas Reddy besides IPC sections including 354, 354 (A), 354 (B), 354 (D) and 376 r/w 511. SP

Koti Reddy said that Thorur DSP Venkataramana Motla had been appointed as the investigating officer into the case.

He also added that 'vigilance committee' would also be formed to check such heinous acts in the department in the future and added that gender sensitivity programmes would also be conducted for the police personnel. "Stringent action will be taken against the officers as per the law, irrespective of their rank or designation, if they were found guilty of such offences." Koti Reddy added.

NPA passing out parade on Aug 6

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy's passing out parade for its 72 RR batch will be held here on August 6. The Dikshant Parade will see 144 IPS probationers and 34 Foreign Officer Trainees passing out. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai will be the chief guest. The 178 trainees had joined the academy in December 2019 after completing a 15-week foundation course.

KTR: Fruit beverage firms to give fillip to food processing industry

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana's Minister for Industry, KT Rama Rao, said on Wednesday that French fruit beverages manufacturing company Georges Monin doubling its investment in the state will give a big fillip to the food processing industry.

The Minister took to Twitter to welcome Monin's decision to double investment in its upcoming manufacturing

plant in Telangana to Rs 200 crore. The company had earlier announced that despite the setbacks caused by the Coronavirus pandemic, it is doubling its investment for the plant, targeting completion by 2023. "With the increased investment of 200 crore, India remains a top-priority market for Monin," said Olivier Monin, chairman, Georges Monin.

Monin had signed a

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the state government of Telangana in 2018, announcing an initial investment of Rs 100 crore to set up the manufacturing plant.

The French business has since opened its wholly-owned subsidiary in Hyderabad as Monin India Pvt Ltd and has acquired 40 acres of land for its manufacturing site.

It has also set up an in-house R&D centre in Hyderabad.

Double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu arrives in Hyd to a rousing welcome

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Star shuttler PV Sindhu, the only Indian woman to win two Olympic medals, arrived in Hyderabad on Wednesday to a warm welcome by the Telangana government.

Telangana Sports Minister V Srinivas Goud and other officials accorded a warm welcome to the Tokyo 2020 bronze medalist on her return to her home town. She had won silver in the last Olympics.

Accompanied by her parents and Korean coach Park Taesang, Sindhu reached Hyderabad from New Delhi, where she had landed on Tuesday.

As soon as she emerged out of the passenger terminal building at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, her relatives, friends and well wishers greeted her.



Sporting her trademark smile and proudly displaying the Olympic medal, Sindhu posed for dozens of photo and video journalists.

The reigning world champion Sindhu, who had won silver at the Rio Games five years ago, told reporters that she was very happy over winning another Olympic medal.

"I will continue to work hard in the coming days to win

more awards and rewards," she said.

The shuttler thanked the state government and all authorities concerned for extending all the help to her.

The 26-year-old won bronze medal on Sunday by defeating China's He Bing Jiao. With this, Sindhu became only the second Indian and first woman athlete from the country to bag two Olympic medals.

2 sewage workers feared dead while cleaning manhole

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two workers who were deployed to clean a sewerage line were feared dead after they entered a manhole at Saheb Nagar in Vanasthali puram on Tuesday night. The body of one was recovered while efforts are on to trace the second person.

Anthaiiah and Siva, both residents of Saidabad, were asked by the contractor to clean the manholes in Saheb Nagar. Siva, who first entered the manhole, went missing following which Anthaiiah got down to help him. Two other workers tried to reach out to Siva and Anthaiiah and failed.

Following information, police and fire department officials rushed to the spot and recovered the body of Siva while efforts were on to find Anthaiiah.



There was a time when the River Musi was Hyderabad's lifeline. And then, for a long time, pollution of different forms coupled with inaction from successive governments over decades made her weak. Now, River Musi is preparing for a new chapter, one with which the State government wants to make the historic river a major tourist attraction in Telangana. Members of the Musi Riverfront Development Corporation Ltd (MRDCL), the wing formed exclusively to rejuvenate the water body, say that by 2024, the smoothly flowing waters of the Musi will be dotted with boats. From Purnanapul to Nagole, bushes have been removed, walking tracks were built, extensive greenery has been developed and tonnes of debris were cleared. Anti-larval operations, extensive fogging and spraying of chemicals using drones to check mosquito menace are some of the measures taken to control the mosquito population along the banks of Musi.



SEPARATE DISTRICT Sadhana Samithi protests outside Pragathi Bhavan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Sadhana Samithi leaders from Parakala of Telangana's Warangal district staged a protest in front of the Pragathi Bhavan (Chief Minister Camp Office) on Tuesday and demanded to make Parakala a separate district.

They even tried to lay siege to the camp office in Hyderabad.

The protesters have been protesting for their demand at Parakala for the last 21 days and decided to stage the protest in front of the CM Camp Office in Hyderabad after the local leaders turned a blind eye towards their protest.

The protesters were detained by the Hyderabad Police, and have been shifted to Goshamahal Police Station.

Youth stabs a girl multiple times for rejecting proposal, attempts suicide

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A youngster stabbed a woman multiple times allegedly after she rejected his proposal, at her residence in Bowenpally under the limits of Hyderabad Police Commissionerate on Wednesday afternoon. After the incident, the accused also stabbed himself with the same knife.

The condition of the woman, who is currently under treatment, was said to be out of danger.

According to the police, the victim identified as Chamanthi, 22, a salesperson at a supermarket had become friends with the accused Girish, 24, an assistant chef in Jawaharnagar. Both of them, who were the residents of Yapral had exchanged phone numbers and were in contact over phone for some days until he proposed to her recently.

The victim had rejected his proposal and maintained distance from him. But, the accused didn't leave her and continued to harass her in the name of love.

She also informed her parents about the harassment. They intervened and warned him to mend his behavior.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Police Inspector of Bowenpally Ravi Kumar said, "The accused and the victim are well known to each other. The family members of the girl are saying that the accused is harassing her in the name of love. She has rejected his proposal. Boring grudge against her, the accused attacked her at her residence on Wednesday."

On Wednesday, at around 1.30 pm, the accused went to the residence of the victim and started an argument with her. After heated arguments,

the accused approached her from behind with a knife and stabbed her multiple times in the stomach and hands.

Her family members, who were on the spot, were threatened by him. She fell on the floor, after which Girish attempted to commit suicide by stabbing himself in the stomach. Girish fell on the floor dramatically.

While the victim was rushed to a private hospital in Bowenpally, Girish is undergoing treatment at Gandhi Hospital.

As per the police officials, both the accused and victim are out of danger.

"Both are in stable condition now. The Bowenpally Police booked a case of attempt to murder and took up investigation. Girish will be taken into custody after he recovers," the police inspector of Bowenpally said.

Nigerian held for cheating woman techie

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Cybercrime Police arrested a Nigerian for cheating techie of Rs 10 lakhs through a matrimonial site. The accused Osher Ebuka Victor, a Nigerian was tested Covid positive for and was quarantined.

The complainant, a techie from Begumpet has received a match in matrimonial site from the accused under the name 'Victor Mehal Kumar', a pharmacist from Gujarat. Later after their relationship grew, the accused has taken Rs 10 lakhs from her on different occasions and switched off his mobile. Realising that she was cheated, the victim has lodged a complaint with the police. The police traced out the accused and have arrested the accused in Delhi and brought him to Hyderabad.



Moving police SUV vehicle catches fire

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A moving vehicle caught fire near the busy Khairatabad junction here in the city on Wednesday morning. No casualties were reported.

Fire erupted from the engine of the SUV, believed to be a police escort vehicle, when it reached near the junction. The alert driver noticed flames and immediately stopped the vehicle. All those inside the car rushed out of the vehicle and informed the fire services department.

All the occupants in the

moving police escort vehicle escaped unhurt when the vehicle caught fire.

A fire engine rushed to the spot and the fire was doused immediately. The car was gutted in the fire.

A short circuit in the engine of the SUV is suspected to have led to the fire.

Traffic was disrupted for some time due to the burning vehicle on the busy road during the peak hour. The burnt vehicle was removed from the road.

The Punjagutta Police are investigating.

Community rivalry: Three persons held for physical assault

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Shalibanda Police arrested three persons who was accused of physically assaulting an individual owing to community rivalry between the two parties on Wednesday. On August 2, the victim along with his friends was heading towards the Laldarwaza temple on their two-wheelers, when the three accused C Vamshi Yadav, C Rakesh Yadav and C Krishna Yadav stopped the vehicle of the victim, wrongfully confined and physically assaulted him.

Police officials remarked that the assault was a result of enmity between the two communities from Mekalabanda.

The victim suffered a head injury in the tussle as a result, he has been hospitalized. The case was registered the next day.

Cops register case against Teenmar Mallanna

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyberabad Police have registered a case against Naveen Kumar (Teenmar Mallanna) for allegedly collecting and storing the personal information data of employees on Wednesday.

Based on a complaint received from a former employee of Q News, the police have raided the office and found that Naveen collected personal data of employees and stored them in office computers. They have registered a case against Naveen under the

sections 67 IT Act, 506, 509, 417 IPC and started the investigation. The complainant claimed that Naveen has collected photos and other details of all the employees through an app. She worked in that office till August 2020 and resigned due to discomfort in office.

Recently, the ex-employees of Q News have conducted a press meet and made allegations against Naveen, that he has collected crores of money from the political parties. In counter, Naveen has telecasted a few videos in his Q News and Youtube channels.

As per the complainant, he has shown a video in the name 'Lodge Matter'. In the video, he showed pictures of her and other employee and narrated a story like they had illicit affair. Objecting to that video, she has filed a case. The police raided office and booked a case.

NIJAMABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Tender Notice No. ME/NMC/17/2021, Dated: 03.08.2021
Tender is invited for 11Nos Works i.e., Monsoon Maintenance Works, MS Pipe Line Work and Other Developmental Works in Nizamabad Municipal Corporation etc., under General Fund and SCSP Last Date for submission of bids, Dt. 07.08.2021 @ 3.30 PM For further details see on e-procurement platform i.e <http://tender.telangana.gov.in>. For Further Details, Contact: 9849906768.
R.O. No.: 14560-PP/CLAD/NT/1/2021-22 Sd/-COMMISSIONER NMC

73,465 farmers to benefit from loan waiver in combined Medak district

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

The farmers are jubilant over the State Cabinet decision to waive farm loans below Rs 50,000 by the end of August. Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has made an announcement over the second phase of waiver of farm loans fulfilling the election promise.

However, a section of farmers, who did not renew their loans is not happy as they have to pay the interest amount. The officials are persistently announcing that the farmers have to pay the interest if they did not renew their loans not depending on the government policy decision.

As many as 73,565 farmers have taken loans below Rs 50,000 in the combined Medak district and they will be benefited to the tune of Rs 261.2 crore in the form of loan waiver. Now, the officials are on the job of listing out the details of the farmers who have taken loans. The loan waiver amount will be deposited into the bank



accounts of the farmers, who had taken below Rs 50,000 from August 15. The majority of the farmers who had taken loans below Rs 50,000 will be small and marginal farmers and they will have great relief with the Cabinet decision.

About 5.11 lakh farmers are eligible for the loan waiver scheme in the combined Medak district and the govern-

ment is spending Rs 3,286.8 crore to right off the loans. Already, about 62,746 farmers have received loan waiver amounts to the tune of Rs 91.79 crore in the first phase. In the second phase, about 73,565 farmers have been identified as eligible persons and the total value of the loans will be Rs 261.2 crore.

In Sangareddy district, about 1.89 lakh farmers are going to

DETAILS OF LOAN WAIVER		
DISTRICT	NO OF FARMERS	LOANS TO BE WAIVED (IN CR)
SANGAREDDY	24,765	89.20
Siddipet	24,600	87.00
Medak	24,200	85.00
TOTAL	73,565	261.20

get benefits up to Rs 1800 crore. In the first phase, 11,462 farmers have taken loans below Rs 25,000 and the government waived Rs 18.29 crore. The officials estimated that there will be 24,765 farmers who have taken loans below Rs 50,000. They may receive Rs 89.20 crore as a loan waiver.

In Medak district, there are 2.35 lakh farmers out of them, 12,334 farmers received loan waiver amounts in the first phase of below Rs 25,000. A total of Rs 19.35 crore worth of loans had been waived in the first phase. An estimated 24,200 farmers may get benefits in the second phase and Rs 85 crore will be

deposited into their accounts.

In Siddipet district, as many as 20,148 farmers had received Rs 27.14 crore as loan waiver in the first phase and 24,600 farmers have been identified in the second phase with a loan waiver of Rs 87 crore.

Expecting the crop loan waiver, the farmers have not repaid their loans and the majority of farmers have not evinced interest even to renew their loans. Now, the farmers who did not renew their loans have to pay the interests accrued on the principal amount. The officials said the process of loan waiver will commence from August 16.

Take steps to prevent seasonal diseases, says Minister Srinivas

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Minister for Excise, Sports, Culture and Tourism Dr V Srinivas Gowd has directed the officials to take measures to prevent seasonal diseases like Malaria and Dengue due to mosquito bites.

Launching the programmes to prevent malaria and dengue at the municipal office here on Wednesday, the Minister told the sanitation staff to alert people against water stagnation in the houses as mosquitoes will breed and cause the spreading of diseases like malaria and dengue.

Water may stagnate in the abandoned tyres, utensils and coconut shells. The sanitary staff should educate the people to clean the environment and surroundings. He asked the Malaria special officer to focus on anti-malaria steps in the colonies and villages. He said a super-speciality hospital is coming up in Mahabubnagar at Rs 300 crore in the old collector office.

The Minister said there is severe water scarcity and power cuts before 2014, now people are getting drinking water daily and



uninterrupted power supply. The government is releasing funds to municipalities every month and it is an example for the growth of the civic bodies, he added.

Srinivas Gowd said the government will provide double bedroom houses to all the eligible poor people and there is no necessary to reapply for the houses again as it is a continuous process.

Stating the Mahabubnagar has entered into Guinness Book of world records by preparing huge word with two crore seed balls and Similarly, Ramappa temple in Warangal secured UNESCO tag.

Municipal chairman KC

Narsimhulu and others spoke on the occasion. Municipal vice-chairman Ganesh, DM&HO Dr Krishna, District Malaria Officer Vanjay Kumar, Municipal Commissioner Pradeep Kumar and others were present.

Special prayers at Bonalu: Minister Srinivas Gowd said with support from people and blessings from the God, Mahabubnagar district will be taken into the growth path. He participated in Bonalu at Tankara village in Hanwada mandal of Mahabubnagar district on Wednesday. He inaugurated a water tank at the Pochamma temple built with support from the donors.



People's role in curbing crimes underscored

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Warangal Police Commissioner Dr Tarun Joshi has called upon the people to take part in protecting the law and order and controlling the crimes.

The Commissioner launched the CC cameras established in the limits of Hanmakonda police station with support from the people on Wednesday. The people contributed to setting up 33 CC cameras at Bus stand centre, Congress Bhavan junction, Ashoka Hotel Junction, Maxicare Hospital, Asian Mall and on the main thoroughfares en route to JNS Ground. All these cameras have been linked to the Command Control Centre in the control

room in Hanmakonda.

Speaking on the occasion, the Police Commissioner said the role of CC cameras is vital in curbing the crimes and identifying the criminals. They are very crucial in submitting proof in the courts over the crimes apart from catching the culprits within hours after the crime incident. arun Joshi said the incidents of chain-snatching, thefts and other crimes have declined in the state over the past three years and it was possible only with the CC cameras, which were established with the partnership of the people. Central zone in-charge DCP Pushpa, Hanmakonda ACP M Jitender Reddy, Hanmakonda Inspector Venumadhav and other police personnel were present.

Multi-level health camp for Chenchu tribes organised

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

A medical camp is organized for Chenchus as per the wish of Telangana state Governor Tamsilai Soundararajan at Bhourapur Chenchupenta in Lingala mandal of Nagarkurnool district under the aegis of Palamuru University and Red Cross Society on Wednesday. District Collector L Sharmam participated in the multi-level medical camp as a chief guest.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said the Governor has directed the Palamuru University and Red Cross Society to adopt Chenchupenta in Nallamala forest in Nagarkurnool district to provide better medical care to the Chenchu tribes. The Red Cross Society and several NGOs have conducted an in-depth study on the lifestyle of the Chenchus to provide them better opportunities by conducting meetings for their upliftment. About 29 specialist doctors from Nagarkurnool, Mahabubnagar and Hyderabad attended the medical camp. Cardiologists,



own villages as sarpanches. Though there are laws for the growth of the Chenchus, people need to create awareness among them over the laws.

Palamuru University Vice-Chancellor Lakshmikanth Rathod said Chenchupenta has been adopted as per the directives of Governor Tamsilai Soundararajan and NSS camps were being conducted through social activists of the varsity.

Governor's office Liaison Officer Seetharamulu said Chenchupenta hamlets have been adopted by the Governor in various districts and steps will be taken to provide their nutritional food, quality education and proper medical care. Apart from medical tests, Chenchus are given blankets, mosquito nets, fruits and vegetables.

Indian Medical Association state president Dr Lavakumar Reddy, secretary B Narendar Reddy, senior Prof Dr Guttu Srinivas, DM&HO Dr Sudhakara Lal, Mahabubnagar hospital superintendent Dr Ramkishan and others were present.

Pediatric, gynaecologists, ortho, eye, dental and general physicians have conducted tests on the Chenchu tribals.

The doctors advised the people to have their job to prevent the Covid-19. Achampet MLA Guvvala Balaraj, who participated at the camp said the Telangana government has taken up various measures to protect the culture of Adivasis and Chenchus which is on the verge of extinction. Some of the children are shifted to Chevela and admitted to the schools. All the Chenchupenta hamlets have been upgraded as village panchayats and steps are being taken to rule their



KCR turned into God for the poor, says MLA

PNS ■ PEDDAPELLEY

Chief Minister K Chandra sekhar Rao has turned into a God for lakhs of poor people as he introduced many welfare schemes for their upliftment, Ramagundam MLA Korukanti Chander said on Wednesday.

The MLA disbursed cheques to the Kalyana Lakshmi beneficiaries in the 37th division in the limits of Ramagundam Municipal Corporation on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, he said people use to sell the female babies in the tribal thandas earlier and under the rule of KCR, people are celebrating if the girl child is born

in the house with immense happiness. Terming KCR as a great person, Chander said though the state is facing a severe financial crisis with the corona pandemic, the government is continuing the welfare schemes uninterrupted thinking the poor should not be suffered.

The Kalyana Lakshmi is giving strong support to the poor families as the state government is giving Rs 1,00,116 for the wedding of the daughter.

Deputy Mayor Nadipelli Abhishek, corporators Penta Rajesh, Pamukuntla Bhaskar Addala Gattaiiah, TRS leaders Boddu Ravinder, Ch Srinivas, Jaheer Basha and others were present.

CIVIC HONOUR



Zilla Parishad chairperson Manjusri and other leaders felicitating Legislative Council Protem Speaker Bhupal Reddy at ZP meeting in Sangareddy on Wednesday.

Entries sought for Amrutha Mahotsav

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

As part of the second phase of the Swatch Bharata Mission, the government is inviting entries for a national short film competition in the name of Swatchata Filmos - Amrutha Mahotsav, District Collector P Hanumanta Rao said on Wednesday.

He said competitions will be conducted by the drinking water and sanitation department and people can prepare

videos by choosing one out of four ODF plus activities. The issues for films may be from wet and dry waste maintenance, managing plastic waste and liquid waste, change in attitude and others.

The Collector said the short film duration should not exceed more than five minutes and the shooting should be done in rural areas. The voice-over, dialogues, music, songs and dialogues should be clear

NTPC ICH staff felicitated

PNS ■ PEDDAPELLEY

India Coffee House employees of the NTPC Ramagundam project were felicitated on Wednesday. Canteen Management Committee led by its Chairman A K Desai, GM (Operation) and other members felicitated ICH staff in recognition of their best services during the Covid pandemic. At a programme held at the plant canteen on Wednesday, Desai presented a memento to each of the 139 ICH staff and appreciated them for their selfless service during the Covid-19.

Mayor tells officials to speed up petrol bunk works

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Warangal Mayor G Sudharani who inspected the petrol bunk site on Wednesday ordered the officials to complete the construction within a month. The Mayor inspected the HPCL petrol bunk works taken up mat the Municipal corporation office. She said arranging tanks underground was completed and asked the officials to concentrate on developing the island. The works of the underground slab, levelling, sales building were at various stages of construction and asked the officials



to speed up the construction. Municipal Corporation Superintendent Engineer Satyanarayana, DFO Kishore, Executive Engineer Srinivas, Deputy Engineer Sanjay Kumar, Assistant Engineer Ranjith, HPCL site engineer Naresh and others were present.

Dalit leaders demand resignation of Minister, MLA

PNS ■ RANGAREDDY

The Dalit unions have demanded the resignation of Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy and LB Nagar MLA and Musi river Front Chairman Devireddy Sudhir Reddy. The Dalit unions from the Rangareddy district staged a protest recently at the Dr B R Ambedkar statue and submitted a memorandum to the Ambedkar statue demanding the resignation of MLA.

The Dalit unions have a stepped-up campaign on social media in the wake of Dalit Bandhu announced by Chief Minister KCR in the wake of Huzurabad by-elections. The unions said that funds pour in into the constituency if the by-elections are held. Hence, they launched a campaign seeking the resignation of the minister and MLA.

Fund crunch stalls Asia's biggest SLBC tunnel works

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

The Government's apathy and lack of funds and technology in deploying huge machinery have stalled Asia's biggest and longest SLBC (Srisailem Left Bank Canal) tunnel construction works. Even after completion of the deadline, the officials have failed to complete at least 40 per cent of construction. With an intention to provide quality drinking water to the fluoride-hit villages in Nalgonda district and cater to the drinking water needs of Hyderabad city apart from providing irrigation water to 3.5 lakh acres in 516 acres, the SLBC project was proposed in 1985. Since the project required huge funding, it is taken up on the lines of the Elimineti Madhava Reddy Lift Irrigation scheme and finally, it shaped into SLBC project.



The YS Rajasekhara Reddy government had decided to execute the project as part of Jalayagnam in 2004. With a strong commitment, the then Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy had approved it under Jalayagnam and the responsibilities of the project had been handed over to JP Associates for executing the project. As per the plan, a head-regulator would be built at 4 km ahead

of the upstream of the Srisailem project and a balancing reservoir would be built at Nakkalagandi.

From Nakkalagandi, water would be taken through a 7.25 km-long second tunnel and later another 25-km-long tunnel-1 would be dug to shift the water to the Elimineti Madhavareddy LI scheme.

Though the project was initiated 16 years ago, even 40 per



cent of the tunnel 1 and 2 had not been completed. Two TBMs (Tunnel Bore Machines) were on the digging job from both ends. As one of the TBM machines has got stuck in the recent rains and the government has to spend Rs 50 crore. The engineering officials forwarded proposals worth Rs 60 crore four months ago for replacing TBM's bearings and belts damaged due to frottage.

The SLBC works came to a standstill as there is no response from the government to release the funds. The tunnel engineers and labour left the project site as there is no lull in the execution of the project. The huge equipment of the TBM has to transport through seaway, the officials estimated that it may take another 5-6 months to receive the import. The site engineers said the work may be

further delayed as technocrats from Japan, Germany and America should be summoned to take up the repair work of TBM machinery.

As against the total tunnel of 43.9 km, tunnelling of 29.9 km has been completed another 14 km has yet to be dug. The SLBC is the only way to supply irrigation water to eight lakh acres spread over in the three zones if the project is completed. Even a single pie had not been sanctioned for the project by the governments headed by Kiran Kumar Reddy and Konijetti Rosaiah in the united AP.

The project's engineering experts observed that fund crunch and heavy expenditure for the project and technical trouble given by the heavy machinery were the major reasons to be attributed for the delay in the project works. About 30 TMCs of water could

be supplied through the tunnel to cater to the drinking and irrigation water needs of the Nagarjuna Sagar and Nalgonda districts. Apart from the SLBC project, the Dindi LI scheme was also going at slow pace in Telangana.

The cost of the SLBC project, which is achieved after the movement for two-and-half decades, was escalated than the cost of cultivation due to the apathy of the successive governments. The Opposition party leaders have alleged that the government is showing step-motherly treatment towards the SLBC to release just Rs 60 crore for bearings and belts of TBM machinery, while it was liberally investing about Rs 80,000 crore for the Kaleswaram project. They said it is not fair on the part of the government to neglect the project which costs around Rs 20,000 crore.

INDIA CORNER MAN ARRESTED IN UP FOR COMMENTS ABOUT RSS CHIEF

A young man has been arrested for making alleged objectionable comments about RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on a WhatsApp message in Sambhal district of Uttar Pradesh, a police officer said on Wednesday. A case was registered against the man under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and he was arrested based on a complaint filed by the district coordinator of the RSS-backed student organisation Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the officer said.

"Vishal Maurya of Ganesh Colony here made some objectionable comments about Bhagwat. A complaint was filed by ABVP district coordinator Akash Kumar stating that his comments hurt their feeling and that the youth also misbehaved with him," Superintendent of Police Chakresh Mishra said. The man's mobile phone has been seized and a detailed probe into the matter is underway, the officer said.

PRIYANKA GANDHI SLAMS YOGI GOVT OVER DOCTOR'S KILLING

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Wednesday attacked the Yogi Adityanath dispensation over the killing of an Ayurvedic doctor in Sitapur, saying the security system for the common people is in a poor state and the Uttar Pradesh government is not doing anything except indulging in false propaganda. "In Sitapur, UP, a doctor was hacked to death by criminals who stormed his clinic," she said. "Such incidents are creating fear in the minds of the people of the state. The security system for the common people is in such a poor state and the government is not doing anything except indulging in false propaganda," the Congress general secretary said in a tweet in Hindi. Munendra Pratap Verma, an Ayurvedic doctor who ran his own private clinic from his home in Mudrasan village, was attacked by accused Achchey Lal Verma with a sharp-edged weapon multiple times on Tuesday, police said. The doctor's father who was present at the time also suffered injuries while trying to save his son. The doctor died on the spot, they said.

CABINET NOD TO SAMAGRA SHIKSHA SCHEME FOR SCHOOLS

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved continuation of the 'Samagra Shiksha Scheme' for school education for another five years, Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Anurag Thakur told reporters that the scheme would continue from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026. Education minister Pradhan said the scheme would be called 'Samagra Shiksha Scheme 2'. A financial outlay of Rs 2,94,283.04 crore, which includes central share of Rs 1,85,398.32 crore has been made to implement the scheme. It will cover 1.16 million schools, over 156 million students and 5.7 million teachers of government and aided schools, according to details shared by the government's principal spokesperson on Twitter. The scheme also moots access to quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment with a greater focus on imparting skills among the students.

NIA raids house of ex-MLA's son over alleged ISIS links

PNS ■ MANGALURU

Officials of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) carried out raids at the residence of the son of former Ullal MLA B M Idinabba near here on Wednesday morning. The officials, who arrived at dawn from Bengaluru, began their investigation forthwith, police sources said.

Idinabba's son, B M Basha, resides in the house with his family. The raid has been conducted on the basis of the suspicion that the family has links with the Syria-based terrorist organisation, ISIS.

A team of 25 officials in four cars arrived at Mastikatte in Ullal early this morning. Police personnel from the city have been providing protection. It is suspected that the daughter of Basha had gone missing from Kerala several years back and had joined ISIS. Basha is into the real estate business here. Two of his sons stay abroad. His family members had allegedly subscribed to the YouTube channels pertaining to ISIS and is said to have a soft corner for the outfit, the sources said.

Venkaiah Naidu suspends six TMC MPs for ruckus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Wednesday suspended six TMC MPs for the day for carrying placards while protesting along with other opposition MPs over the Pegasus spying issue. Just as witnessed since the start of monsoon session, slogan-shouting TMC and other opposition MPs trooped into the well of the House, some holding placards, to demand a discussion on the issue of Israeli-made, military-grade Pegasus spyware allegedly being used to snoop on opposition leaders, government critics and journalists. Naidu took exception to the placards, which had anti-government slogans, before adjourning the proceedings of the House till 2 PM.

He first asked members to go back to their seats and then threatened to invoke rule 255 against those holding placards. As the members refused to budge, he ordered that those "disobeying the chair and raising placards shall leave the House under rule 255."

He, however, did not name anyone and said Rajya Sabha Secretariat will give the list.



RS too adjourned

The Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned till Thursday amid continuous protests by opposition parties over the Pegasus snooping controversy, and issues of farm laws and price rise. However, the Upper House passed the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which seeks to encourage smaller airports to expand air connectivity to relatively remote and far-flung areas. The House

passed the bill after a brief discussion amid protest and sloganeering by the opposition over various issues, including the Pegasus snooping controversy and farm laws. The Lok Sabha had passed the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2021 on July 29. When the Upper House assembled after a 15-minute adjournment at 2:56 pm, the opposition continued to protest.

LS adjourned till Thursday amid opposition protests

Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned for the day on Wednesday after the passage of two bills, amid vociferous protests by the opposition over Pegasus snooping allegations and other issues. As soon as the House met again at 3:30 pm, Rajendra Agrawal, who was chairing the proceedings, took up the Coconut Development Board (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which was moved by Agriculture Minister Narendran Singh Tomar. However, the opposition members continued their protest on the Pegasus snooping row as well other matters. Amid the din, Tomar moved the bill, saying the proposed legislation will benefit coconut farmers in different states. Soon thereafter, the bill was passed without debate even as the opposition objected to the hasty approval to the bill.

Delhi government to order probe into death of Dalit girl

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said the Delhi government will order a magisterial inquiry into the death of a nine-year-old Dalit girl following an alleged sexual assault.

The chief minister also announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for the family of the girl.

"Our girl cannot come back. The injustice done to the family is unfortunate and cannot be compensated, but the government will give Rs 10 lakh to them and order a magisterial inquiry into the matter," he told reporters after meeting the family.

"There is a need to strengthen law and order in Delhi. I appeal to the central government to take firm steps in this direction," he said.

In a tweet, the chief minister said that the government will appoint top lawyers to ensure the guilty is punished.

The parents of the girl accompanied by hundreds of locals were staging a protest near the site of the incident in Old Nangal area in southwest Delhi, demanding capital punishment for the accused.



The girl lived with her parents in a rented house in front of a crematorium. On Sunday at around 5:30 PM, she went to get cold water from a cooler at the crematorium after informing her mother, her parents said.

Around 6 PM, the crematorium's priest, Radhey Shyam, and two-three other people, known to the girl's mother, called her there and showed her daughter's body claiming that she got electrocuted while getting water from the cooler. There were burn marks

between her left wrist and elbow, and her lips were also blue, according to police.

It was alleged the priest and the others dissuaded her mother from making a PCR call, saying police will make a case out of it and during the post-mortem, doctors will steal the girl's organs, so it was better to cremate her.

Police had on Monday said that based on the statement of the victim's mother, rape charges have been added in the FIR. Four people, including the priest, have been arrested.

Ruckus in Assam Assembly over boundary clash with Mizoram

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

The Assam assembly witnessed pandemonium on Wednesday as ruling and opposition members engaged in heated exchanges over the boundary clash with Mizoram, forcing the Speaker to adjourn the House for 40 minutes.

The entire opposition, comprising Congress, AIUDF, BPE, CPI(M) and Independent MLAs, rushed to the Well of the House demanding a neutral probe either by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and showed placards with slogans such as 'give protection to border residents'.

In a rare instance, ruling BJP legislators also rushed to the Well of the House to counter the opposition's allegations.

Members of the two sides, separated by the desk of the assembly secretary, pointed fingers at each other and banged the desk several times.

Speaker Biswajit Daimary tried to pacify both sides in



vain and finally adjourned the House for 40 minutes.

Earlier, Congress MLA Kamalakhy Dey Purkayastha raised the issue as a Point of Order and informed the House that problems started with Mizoram from October 2020.

"We had given a letter to the Union government informing it about the issue. Even after that, why did personnel of Assam Police die? Whose fault was this?" he said. Replying to

the question, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pijush Hazarika said that Assam and Mizoram are not two different nations, but two neighbouring Indian states.

"We have to solve our problems through dialogue and the process has already started. But I would like to inform the House that 34 people died in their (Congress) tenure (in inter-state clashes) since 1974," he said.

1,948 arrested, 34 convicted under UAPA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 1,948 people were arrested and 34 others convicted under the stringent anti-terror law Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) in 2019, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said this in a written reply to DMK member Tiruchi Siva's question about the total number of people imprisoned under the UAPA in the country at present.

Covid severity decreasing in Kerala, says Health Minister

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Despite a high number of daily positive cases, Kerala Health Minister Veena George on Wednesday said the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic was decreasing in the state. The number of patients seeking treatment at hospitals and those needing ICU support has dwindled, she said during the Question Hour session in the Assembly.

"The hospital occupancy

and ICU occupancy have decreased in the state now a--days. That means, the severity of the disease is decreasing," George pointed out.

The Health Minister also said the department is now assessing the impact of 'break-through infection' and 'reinfection' among people. "We are examining whether people are experiencing vaccine breakthrough

infection (a COVID case that occurs in someone who is fully vaccinated) and reinfection (a person, who was infected and recovered, is infected again)," she said.

As per a recent survey conducted by the Health Department, the reinfection rate has decreased remarkably.



NHRC seeks report on jail suicides

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NHRC on Wednesday said it has taken a serious view of suicide by two prisoners of jails in Maharashtra and West Bengal.

"The NHRC has taken a serious view of the deaths due to suicide by the two prisoners of Talaja Central Jail, Navi Mumbai and Dum Dum Central Correctional Home, Kolkata, and non-submission of requisite reports in the matters by the concerned authorities despite its notices," the statement said.

There are adequate provisions in jail manuals providing for an atmosphere free from temptations, which do not give an opportunity to any inmate to commit suicide. It is for this reason that ceiling fans and hanging hooks are not provided in the prison cells, the rights panel said.

The suicide by an undertrial prisoner at the Talaja Central Jail happened on May 27, 2020, while the convicted prisoner of Dum Dum Central Correctional

Home, Kolkata, committed suicide at SSK Hospital on April 28, 2020 during treatment, it said.

In both the cases, the commission has asked the Secretary, Legal Service authority, through the registrars of the high courts of Mumbai and Kolkata, respectively, to submit a report within four weeks about the conditions in the jail premises in Maharashtra and West Bengal, which do not give an opportunity to an inmate to commit suicide, the statement said.

"I told them that Rahul Gandhi is standing with them till they get justice and will not back down even an inch," he told reporters after meeting the parents of the victim.

Asked with whom does the responsibility lie in the case, Gandhi said, "I only know that it is my job to help them."

Later, in a tweet in Hindi, he said, "Her parents' tears are saying only one thing - their daughter, the daughter of this country, deserves justice. And I am with them on this path to justice."

Pushkar launches first earthquake early warning mobile application

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Wednesday launched the country's first earthquake early warning mobile application 'Uttarakhand Bhookamp Alert' developed by IIT Roorkee.

Launching the lifeguarding mobile app at the secretariat here, Dhami said considering Uttarakhand's vulnerability to earthquakes, people should be informed about the availability of a mobile application like this.

The application is available in two versions, compatible with both Android and iOS platforms. The project was sponsored by the Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority.

Guj disburses loans to self-help groups

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat government on Wednesday disbursed Rs 140 crore in interest-free loans to 14,000 women's self-help groups under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Utkarsh Yojana (MMUY), a state government scheme launched last year for financial upliftment of women.

Chief Minister Vijay Rupani made the announcement at Vadodara on the occasion of "Nari Gaurav Diwas", organised as part of the nine-day celebrations for the completion of his five years in office.

The scheme was launched by the state government in September last year with a target of covering 10 lakh women (10 per group) and giving them Rs 1,000 crore in interest-free loans by the end of December 2022, Rupani said.

"Today, we will be depositing Rs 140 crore in the bank accounts of 14,000 women's self-help groups that have over 1 lakh members. This is a first-of-its-kind scheme in the country that provides collateral and interest-free finance to women's groups so that they can set up small businesses and contribute to their family's income," the chief minister said in his address.

Claiming that the MMUY is better than the micro-finance model promoted by Nobel Prize winner Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh, Rupani exuded confidence that other states will also adopt the scheme for the economic upliftment of women. The Gujarat government's focus is to ensure that women lead in all sectors and perform better than men, he said.

PNS ■ RAIPUR

As Chhattisgarh's northern region continues to witness human-elephant conflicts, the state forest department is planning to procure paddy and serve it as fodder to jumbos in forests on a pilot basis in a bid to prevent them from entering human settlements, a senior official said.

Elephants generally stray into villages in search of food. Hence, providing them fodder away from human settlements can help reduce the incidents of man-animal conflict, the official said on Tuesday.

However, the opposition BJP in the state criticised the forest department's move, saying it seems the project has been made for "committing corruption".

As per the Chhattisgarh gov-



ernment records, 204 people were killed in elephant attacks while 45 jumbos died in the state in last three years - 2018, 2019 and 2020.

During this period, 66,582 cases of elephants causing damage to crops, 5,047 cases of

damage to houses and 3,151 cases of damage to other properties were also reported.

Human-elephant conflicts in the state's northern region has been a major cause of concern since the last one decade. The menace has fur-

ther spread its footprint to some districts in central part of the state in the last few years.

Surguja, Raigarh, Korba, Surajpur, Mahasamund, Dhamtari, Gariaband, Balod, Balarampur and Kanker districts in the state have been mainly affected by the menace.

"Elephants generally stray into villages in search of food, including paddy, and destroy houses and crops. Such incidents also cause loss of lives. Providing them fodder away from the human habitats can help reduce man-animal conflicts," state Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) PV Narsingh Rao told PTI.

Therefore, the department has decided to keep piles of paddy in forests at some distance away from villages which may distract elephants from

entering the human settlements, he said.

"Initially, it will be done on a pilot basis in some villages and based on the behaviour of elephants, it will be replicated in other areas," the official said.

For the procurement of paddy, the forest department has communicated with the Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Marketing Federation (MARK-FED), and once it will be supplied, the concept will be implemented, he said.

According to MARKFED officials, the agency, which buys paddy from farmers at minimum support price, has offered to supply paddy to the forest department at Rs 2,095.83 per quintal, and has provided the names of storage centres from where the consignments can be collected.

The right way?

Kerala is reporting quite a high number of COVID cases but the reasons are genuine

For a couple of months now, the focus of pandemic watchers was on Kerala and the State has consistently reported the highest share of nationwide, fresh COVID-19 cases. Even on Tuesday, the State's numbers went past 23,500, the highest single-day count recorded by any State in the last eight weeks and grabbing a 56 per cent share in the national figure. The current test positivity rate in the State stands at 11.8 per cent. However, when it comes to the more alarming issue of the R-number — it indicates how many persons one COVID-19 patient can infect — Kerala has company. Eight States and Union Territories returned the reproduction — number of 1.2, meaning that one patient is infecting more than one person. Nine other States have an R-number of 1. The greater the ability to infect fresh persons, the greater is the transmissibility of the virus. The number of cases does not give the real picture. The R-number does that job. The more dangerous the variant, like the Delta Plus variant, the faster the transmissibility. Contract tracing will show the speed of transmission. The combination of testing and contact tracing alone can show if the case trajectory is reaching a problematic level in a region in the country. It is high time the Government accords testing and contact tracing as much primacy as vaccination. The jabs, it must be noted, do not necessarily stop new infections but only mellows their intensity.



Unfortunately, except Kerala, no other State or Union Territory is doing extensive testing and neither the national COVID task force nor the Union Health Ministry has insisted on it as yet. It is in this context that the Kerala example should be emulated by the rest of India. The latest sero survey has recorded low seropositivity of 44 per cent for Kerala as against the national average of 68 per cent. That means the majority of the State's population has remained protected from the virus. Considering that a majority of Kerala's population is urban, the achievement is all the more impressive. Secondly, the State conducts the most COVID-19 tests daily, the figure hovering around 1.4 lakh. A record 1.96 lakh tests were conducted on July 28. The State Government concentrates the testing in localities with high positivity. As a result, there is a high incidence of positive cases. In the absence of heavy testing, it cannot be said that other States reporting fewer fresh cases are safer. Thirdly, reports suggest the Delta variant entered Kerala later than the rest of India and that could explain the current surge in cases. Kerala has also managed to keep the fatality rate far lower than the national average despite the high number of daily cases. As of Tuesday, 39.9 per cent of the State's population is vaccinated. The Kerala model will be complete if the R-number is brought down, contract tracing is increased and localised lockdowns are brought back into force.

PICTALK



People flout social distancing norms at a weekly market, in Mumbai

PTI

The middle path

The Govt and the Opposition would do well to sit together and thrash out their differences

The continued disruption of Parliament is not unexpected. The scale and implications of the Pegasus snooping scandal are so overwhelming that it would have been naive to hope that the Opposition will not use it as a handle to corner the Government. The relations between the Opposition and the ruling BJP have steadily worsened over the alleged misuse of Central probe agencies. The last nail has been the fact that several Opposition leaders are on the list of those whose phones may have been compromised by Pegasus infections. Still, one would have expected that the two sides would find a middle path and Parliament will dutifully take up its legislative business. But sadly, neither side is ready to blink and the country has to witness yet another round of Parliament logjam, the type of which has become routine over the years. From the Opposition's point of view, the demand for a debate on the scandal is justified. After all, Parliament is the right forum where such an issue that poses a grave threat to India's democracy, should be discussed and debated even if the Government were to alto-



gether reject the demand for a probe into the matter.

However, the Government feels that it owes no such favour to the Opposition because it allegedly wants to use the scandal as an opportunity to unite with an eye on the upcoming Assembly polls and presidential elections next year, and the Lok Sabha polls in 2024. Amid such distrust, it will be futile to hope for resumption of Parliament proceedings any sooner, though strategically the Opposition may agree to debate on issues like inflation, fuel price hike and the economic situation — issues that could help it corner the Government. The Pegasus scandal has become a glue to unite the Opposition and those wanting to uproot the Modi Government are working overtime to bring the Opposition on one platform. The unprecedented Opposition unity has emboldened them to stick to the path of confrontation, something which the Government can afford only at the cost of making people further sceptical about the very purpose of the existence of our democratic institutions. It's time both the ruling dispensation and the Opposition leaders sit down and find a middle path to restore the dignity and relevance of the legislature as one of the strongest pillars of our democratic institutions.

India tells Pak to vacate all its areas

Pakistan has coercively been occupying areas in Gilgit-Baltistan that belong to India since the princely State's accession to India in 1947

India has rejected the "cosmetic exercise" of the recent elections in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Traditionally, the ruling party in Pakistan wins elections in PoK and the incumbent ruling party, Tehreek-e-Insaf, won these elections. India lodged a strong protest with Pakistan last week, saying that such exercises can neither hide illegal occupation of the areas of the then princely State of Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan, comprising about 35 per cent of its total area, nor the grave human rights violations, exploitation and denial of freedom to people in these occupied areas. India has called on Pakistan to vacate all the Indian areas under its illegal occupation since 1947, on which it has no *locus standi*. By virtue of accession of the ruler of the then princely State Maharaja Hari Singh to India in 1947, sovereignty of the whole erstwhile State lies wholly and solely with India.

The time appears to have come for Pakistan to introspect deeply and reflect on its illegal actions in these illegally occupied parts of now Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh. Steeped in abject poverty and backwardness, this illegally occupied area is still considered to be the most neglected area in South Asia. Despite violent protests by people at every stage, Pakistan has illegally, forcefully and through underhand means changed frontiers and composition of these areas beyond recognition. After illegally occupying the areas following an aggression on the then princely State, Pakistan established an administrative structure in the occupied area named as Azad Jammu and Kashmir Government. Even though with a nominal legislature, the Government there continues to be under strict control of Pakistan Government.

During the late 1970s, Pakistan started to take steps to bifurcate the subsequently extended occupied area in two parts, one it had already named as Azad J&K and the other as Northern Areas, comprising Gilgit-Baltistan, which it had deemed to be a separate geographical entity to be administered federally by Pakistan. The Northern Areas is mostly inhabited by Shia Muslims and Pakistan also initiated steps for demographic change in the area.



This resulted in violent protests by the people. Even the so-called Azad J&K Government protested tooth and nail this bifurcation and also instituted a suit in its court. But so great was Pakistan's urge to keep the fruits of aggression and to extend the borders of Pakistan illegally that it ignored all opposition and continued to resort to illegal means, including torture, to make it a federally administered area with nomenclature as Northern Areas.

Earlier too, in utter disregard for law and territorial integrity and sovereignty of India, Pakistan had ceded Shakasgam track territory in this illegally occupied Northern areas to China when Sino-Pak Frontier agreement was signed in 1963. It has also since annexed Chitral, Hunza and Nagar and other territories in or around Northern Areas including Puniyal, Ishkoman and Yasin which formed a part of the then princely State or were under its suzerainty at the time of its accession to India.

Pakistan again changed the status of Northern Areas on May 21, 2018, when it promulgated the Gilgit-Baltistan Order replacing its earlier 'empowerment and self-government' order of 2009. Under the new order, all powers exercised by Gilgit-Baltistan Council were



AFTER ILLEGALLY OCCUPYING THE AREAS FOLLOWING AN AGGRESSION ON THE THEN PRINCELY STATE, PAKISTAN ESTABLISHED AN ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IN THE OCCUPIED AREA. WITH A NOMINAL LEGISLATURE, THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO BE UNDER THE PAK GOVERNMENT'S CONTROL

given to the Assembly. But the Council was retained as advisory body for federal functions with regard to the Northern Areas. Thus legislative powers on key subjects are vested in the Prime Minister of Pakistan and not in the elected Assembly.

There were protests against this order not only in the area, but at many places in Pakistan. This reform package was seen as a precursor to attempts by Pakistan to make this area as its fifth province as also to change its demographic composition.

This perception was confirmed when last year Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that the territory will be given provisional provincial status. Again in violation of international law and sovereignty of India and amid strong protests by people in PoK, Pakistan permitted China to run the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project which passes through this Gilgit-Baltistan territory. Even the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia Pacific in its report in May 2017 stated that the CPEC project could create geo-political tensions with India and lead to further instability in the region. Though reportedly prepared at the request of the Chinese Government, the report also pointed out concerns about its social and environmental safeguards. Provision

of provisional provincial status to Northern Areas by Pakistan appears to be an attempt to lend legal cover to the much-criticised CPEC project which runs through Gilgit-Baltistan, an Indian territory.

India has already strongly protested against this yet another severe illegality of Pakistan. Last week, the Indian MEA rejected a reference to CPEC in a recent Pakistan-China joint statement. It said that the CPEC lies in Indian territory illegally occupied by Pakistan and that India resolutely opposes it. With regard to reference to J&K in the joint statement, the MEA spokesperson said that the UTs of J&K and Ladakh are an integral and inalienable part of India.

Obviously, if Pakistan still chooses to continue with its illegal actions and material changes in J&K and Ladakh under its illegal occupation, that will mean continued violation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of India. This will lead to more instability in the region. For overall development, India desires peace with Pakistan, but Pakistan's action could lead to one more war over Jammu and Kashmir which could be far more dangerous.

(The writer is a journalist, former IIS officer and producer. The views expressed are personal.)

SOUND BITE

The flood is manmade, the unprecedented release of water from the Damodar Valley Corporation dams is responsible for the situation.

West Bengal Chief Minister — Mamata Banerjee

We've other options if US President Joe Biden continues to ignore the country's leadership.

Pakistan National Security Adviser — Moed Yusuf

You don't sleep the entire night and then record this early in the morning. And you don't get sleep coz it's Kishore da's birthday.

Actor — Ayushmaan Khurrana

It will not stop with this. There will be many more successes going forward. Definitely, I will play in Paris.

Indian shuttler — PV Sindhu

There are only 34 Cabinet berths. Some (MLAs) have been left out. Whenever there is an opportunity, the party will give them responsibilities.

Karnataka Chief Minister — Basavaraj Bommai

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INDIAN WOMEN MAKE US PROUD

Sir — The brilliant performance put up by Indian women athletes sets them apart at the Tokyo Olympics. Although India's total medal tally is modest, the contributions of women athletes is commendable. The silver by Saikhom Mirabai Chanu in weightlifting, a bronze by badminton star PV Sindhu, a bronze by Lovlina Borgohain in boxing and the women's hockey team's spectacular performance which enabled them to enter the semifinals, all these show that women athletes of India have a bright future in international sports events.

When we think about the social discrimination and gender inequality that women face in India, theirs is indeed great achievement. It must be understood that of the 15 Olympic medals that India has won since 2000, women have won seven. Considering that India ranks 112 out of 153 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index 2020, women's achievement is so great. Given the fact that women in general and professional women in particular face gender discrimination and prejudice in India, their achievement is tremendous when compared with that of men. Indian women's achievement at the Tokyo Olympics is certainly an inspiration for prospective women athletes in the country and for women in general who want to prove their expertise in different fields.

Venu GS | Kollam

CREATE JOBS FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Sir — Candidates at job interviews after the lockdown will have an additional challenge at hand. It could be a fresher graduating out of a college or people at different stages of their career seeking a job either for better prospects or as a fall-out of unfortunate job loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first challenge is that there may be fewer jobs for them to grab. Too many candidates may be chasing too few jobs. How does a candidate stand apart in such a situation?

Apart from evaluating candidates for their fitness for the job, the companies

Slum children need special care



A holistic approach is to be taken in case of street children and there must be a concrete scheme for the uplift of children as help will not come from heaven as in *Slumdog Millionaire*. We want to protect the children from COVID-19 but what is the use if they die of hunger instead unless timely help is not given. The family cannot even apply for a ration card as they do not have any residence proof or any identity documents. The Government has plenty of schemes for slum redevelopment, but most of these are on paper. Importantly, sanitation is not on the agenda. Clean atmosphere and

civic amenities can make them healthy children. The way things are, there is no collective vision; no rules either. Nearly 60 per cent live in slums in most of the metro cities, but a good chunk of the municipal corporation's agenda is devoted to gardens, roads, parking and so on; the slums don't feature. In our lopsided system of political representation, slum dwellers have been relegated to a vote bank. They are patronised, and encouraged to live in deprivation. Poor sanitation and environment, contaminated drinking water and crowded conditions all make the matter worse. Everyone is talking about Swachh Bharat, but how many toilets have been constructed in slums under this project? The politicians always look at how many votes they can garner in an area. They don't look at problems like housing or their poor living environment. Even yearly allotment of funds to MPs or MLAs can help out the cause of slum children in the best way possible.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

are going to evaluate them on how they coped with the uncertainties posed by the pandemic. In one way, this is actually a great opportunity for both candidates and companies. Companies will look for in the candidates the ability to adapt to uncertain conditions. Candidates can stand apart from others if they prove that they can think and act differently in such uncertainties. Facing pay cuts, job losses and rising costs, many people grit their teeth and made the most of an extremely rough year. This, then, is as good as it gets. It is time to create more jobs opportunities.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

PUNISH THE SAVAGES OF DELHI

Sir — Shocked to know that a Dalit girl was sexually assaulted and murdered in Delhi and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's Government will order a magisterial inquiry instead of an CBI investigation. The Chief Minister announced a compen-

sation of ₹10 lakh for the girl's family. But the girl cannot come back. The fact of the matter is that there is a need to strengthen law and order in Delhi and the Union Government must take firm steps in this direction.

The Delhi Government must appoint top-notch lawyers to ensure that the guilty are punished. The victim's parents, accompanied by hundreds of locals, staged a protest near the site of the incident in Old Nangal area, southwest Delhi. The police, based on the statement of the victim's mother, added rape charges to the FIR. Four people, including the priest of a nearby crematorium, have been arrested. It is high time all the four accused must be severely punished in the shortest period of time and their trial must be in a fast-track court.


Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

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SWIFT bridges financial inequalities by offering financial services to the underprivileged



GOBHANU SASANKAR KORISEPATI

An Indian student has developed an innovative microfinance concept for women, inspired by Bangladesh's Grameen Bank — the world's largest microfinance institution — which made banking more accessible to the poor. SWIFT- Sustaining Women in Financial Turmoil — was formed in September 2020, when its founder, Gobhanu Korisepati, launched a microfinance social business platform. He spent over three months in an internship with Grameen Bank to learn the logistics. SWIFT was founded to bridge financial inequalities in India by making financial services accessible to the underprivileged. The need was felt because he witnessed the complexities accompanying traditional loans such as mandatory collateral and proof of income firsthand and found that financial services tend to discriminate against the poor directly. The institution is based on an adapted version of micro-finance that best targets women who lack access to financial services. It brings women financial stability and human dignity by




providing them micro-loans to start their entrepreneurial adventures. A loan can change the life of any individual, especially for a woman coming from an underprivileged background. To date, SWIFT has loaned to over 1000 women, working with a focus on sectors such as agriculture, clothing, and food services. The largest loan SWIFT has lent individually is worth ₹20,000. The borrower is a young woman, Magali, and the loan helped her buy wholesale fabric, thread, elastic, yarn, and maintain her sewing machine. The loan was unique as it was aimed at reaching vulnerable populations in an isolated region. SWIFT's many loans are targeted to help the women who need it the most, and they have been successful in lending over ₹19 lakh so far. Another borrower from SWIFT is Meela, a rural farmer who aspired to be an entrepreneur, and the loan provided the perfect opportunity to do so. Meela has a family of three and a monthly household income under the poverty line. By providing her a loan, SWIFT helped her buy seeds and fertilizers to increase agricultural production. SWIFT currently selects the needy based on criteria that are constantly being adapted to fit the best interests of Indian women.

The criteria currently considered are based on the community impact a loan would have: how many people the loan can positively affect and risk evaluation factors, loan duration, and repayment schedule. It is important to note that SWIFT does not charge any interest on the loans as its goal is only to better the livelihoods of the borrowers and their communities. When asked how SWIFT has raised funds, Gobhanu says that SWIFT is fortunate enough to have gained a following on social media platforms and its website (swiftmfi.org), which primarily allocates its funding addition to local fundraisers such as bake-sales and charity games. What makes SWIFT unique from other charities is that it is run directly by children. A few months after founding SWIFT, Gobhanu sought out help and was overwhelmed by the support of youth he could find online. Today the SWIFT team consists of over 20 high school students who donate their time and efforts to make the world a better place. SWIFT is also currently inculcating the habit of microfinancing throughout schools as the organization believes that financial literacy is a fundamental step for India's development. Gobhanu says that his vision is for SWIFT to reach developing and developed nations worldwide, not just India. In the coming years, he hopes to create a sustainable student-run organization that works to create equality of opportunity for marginalized communities.

(The writer is a student from Andhra Pradesh and founder of the SWIFT initiative. The views expressed are personal)

Maldives and Indian relationship

There have been a few untoward incidents that led to the Maldivians harbouring anti-India sentiments



PK VASUDEVA

(The writer is retired Senior Professor, International Trade and Member, Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

The MDP believes that the anti-India campaign run by Azaan is a well-funded, tailor-made, and intricately choreographed political campaign to bring ties between the Maldives and its closest ally, India, to breaking point. The reason for the 'India out' campaign was the military presence in the Maldives, which according to the locals, is a threat. The 'India out' campaign started in 2020 and spread across social media like a wildfire. The co-founder of the Dhiyares media, Shifxan Ahmed, clarified that they had only one issue - about the Indian military presence. It is not the first time that an anti-India campaign had reared its ugly head. Back in 2013, when the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) was in



power, international relations between India and Maldives took a hit. PPM, led by Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, had tilted towards the Chinese. To please the Chinese, the Yameen government indulged in anti-India slogans and policies. Researcher Dr. Gulbin Sultana, an analyst at Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), shares the same sentiment about the anti-India rhetoric of 2013. But even if the Yameen government had a biased that

favoured the Chinese, they engaged in an India-first policy as well. There have been a few untoward incidents that led to the Maldivians harbouring anti-India sentiments. The first incident was when India gifted two Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters (ALF) in 2010 and 2015. These helicopters were to be operated by Indian officers and to be used for ocean search and rescue operations, airlifting patients across the islands, and Maritime weather surveillance. They were based in Addu atoll and at Hanimaadhoo but the pro-China stance of the Yameen government let it interpret them as proof of the Indian military's growing presence in the Maldives. In 2016, when the agitation reached its peak, the Yameen government requested

India to take back their choppers and the defence personnel. The Indian refusal to take back the choppers added fuel to the fire. In 2018, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih came to power and scrapped agreements that proscribed the use of choppers and he extended the stay of Indian personnel stay in the Maldives. Solih's friendly stance towards India and its choppers again fuelled anti-India sentiments in the Maldives. The Maldivian government believed in keeping terms of contracts about defence, sovereignty, and national security secret. Some groups of people interpreted this secrecy as a threat to democracy. The domestic players in the Maldives opposed agreements with India because of this lack of transparency. According to Maldivian law, any agreement has to be tabled in Parliament and needs parliamentary approval. It is only after the approval the government can engage in bilateral treaties. But the Solih government, in the name of national security, does not share any data with Parliament. The idea of keeping everything under wraps in the name of national security angers the people and fuels protests. The second incident was the signing of Sifvaru-Uthuru Thilafalhu (UTF) harbour project agreement between India and the Maldives in 2021, under which India will be developing a Maldives National Defence Force Coast Guard Harbour. This project was initiated under the Yameen government. The dockyard is an atoll located near Malé, the cap-



AMRITA BHINDER

Youth and radicalism: Search for cannon fodder

The so-called movement for Khalistan checks all the necessary boxes to be an 'ideal' issue for agencies like Pakistan's ISI to attack India

William Faulkner's observation that "the past is never dead, it is not even the past" holds for issues that enemies of India exploit to fuel unrest. The resurgence of the talk surrounding 'Khalistan' indicates how those interested in harming India never stop sowing seeds of discontent. For any strife to continually 'catch the fancy' of the people, it has to appear personal and immediate. Such issues can find easy access in India with many societal, caste, religious, and sectarian fault lines. The abundance of youth is a bonus for those looking to take advantage. The radicalisation of youth to be used as cannon fodder is commonplace across strife-driven regions like in Syria where the social unrest originated from college campuses. The JNU protest is another illustration where sloganeering against a fee hike soon transformed into a demonstration of whatever was the 'flavour of the month protest'

The so-called movement for Khalistan checks all the necessary boxes to be an 'ideal' issue for agencies like Pakistan's ISI to attack India. It is well-documented that ISI pumped monetary and arms resources and provided a haven for extremists who propagated the demand for a separate State of Khalistan.

In the last few years, long-standing issues like left-wing extremism or Islamist terror are being called out or are past their sell-by date. The significant churn in the United States and Australia, and the United Kingdom against Chinese influence in college campuses has shaken things up. The crackdown by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman in 2017 on Islamist terrorists unleashed significant changes in how Jihadist terror operated across the globe. Vowing to galvanise an Islamic military coalition that aimed to counter "terrorism and extremism," Mohammed bin Salman led a series of high-level meetings of an alliance of Muslim nations against terrorism funding and the day-to-day disruption of al-Qaida, the Islamic State, and like-minded jihadists. In this atmosphere, global entities that benefit from strife, such as the military-industrial complexes, need to fan new issues to survive.

One of the reasons why Khalistan is a red-flag issue unlike ever before is the global support that has come its way in the recent past, with significant ramifications. In a recent Club House chat, a young person of Indian origin based in Europe and dedicated to the Khalistan cause claimed that the movement aimed at the physical separation of Punjab from the Indian union in less than two generations. The support for the separatist elements of the Khalistan movement, especially amongst the second-generation Punjabi youth based in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, has gained momentum as it ostensibly seeks to correct a historical wrong. However, the danger has increased manifold due to a suc-



KHALISTAN WAS NEVER A DOMESTIC ISSUE, AND THE SOONER THE AVERAGE INDIAN REALISES THAT IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CHANGE THE WORLD, THE FASTER WE CAN COUNTER IT. THE REASON THAT WE CANNOT TAKE ALL OF THIS TO BE AN OVERSTRETCHING OF ONE'S IMAGINATION IS STARING US IN THE FORM OF A SIMPLE FACT — THE WORLD HAS SHIFTED FROM 'CONVENTIONAL WARFARE' TO THE UNCONVENTIONAL

(The writer is a lawyer and columnist. The views expressed are personal.)



cessful shift in the perspective. The anti-Sikh pogrom of 1984 is not attributed to Congress but the 'Indian State'. As a result, the Khalistan issue now targets the Indian government and propagates a 'revolt' as the only way out. This status transition is strategically designed and it would be foolish to think otherwise. It is similar to the Israel-Palestine issue and the desire of vested parties to replicate the model where a narrative would constantly stoke fires of how the Indian state has unleashed a flurry of horrors upon the ordinary citizens of Punjab. The narrative-building machinery is also in place, with socio-cultural events such as literary jaunts with authors and think tanks disseminating ideas and information to that end. One can see how global concepts such as critical race theory, a 40-year-old idea that believes racial division to be a social construct instead of a personal bias, are promulgated locally. The ongoing farmers' protest is a testimony to the same, where a broad idea - farmers opposing the three laws - has been rejigged to make it region-specific - how the state has primarily targeted the farmer of Punjab. The Khalistan issue is also being pitched as a shared narrative at a global level, claiming to echo the sentiments of the Sikh community, even though the citizens of Punjab rejected the very idea of a separate State. The local view is routinely, and even vehemently, dismissed on public platforms and social media by radicalised elements based outside of India. While

Indians wave off the issue as bunkum or pointless wishful thinking of a handful of wavered NRI youth, global media picks on that point of view and furthers it. The physical or virtual protests also have many Pakistan-sponsored implants disguised as Sikhs. The cycle is then completed when such news is peddled for domestic consumption as the local view that an authoritarian government has suppressed. The propagators of Khalistan are quick to portray Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the all-powerful fascist responsible for the subjugation of Punjab, even though the actions of the current Indian government tell a completely different story. In 2018, a Delhi court awarded the first death penalty to two persons in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots in the cases that were probed and re-opened by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up by the Modi government in 2015. In 1994, the two had gotten away due to lack of evidence, and their conviction became possible only due to the evidence provided by the BJP state government. The Khalistan issue is a testing ground for other pan-India strifes that can be used against the country. It is in tandem with a 2016 Pakistan Senate recommendation to the then Nawaz Sharif government to play up caste and religion issues in India to curb India's global influence. A 13-member committee of the Senate, Pakistan's equivalent to the Rajya Sabha, asked the government to talk about 'Dalits, unhappy Muslims, and encourage those opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi' to destabilise India. It also made some tactical recommendations to "hire International lobbyists and strategic communication firms and reactivate Pakistani community living abroad to change the global narrative". The narrative-building efforts to push Khalistan or any exploitable local fault line to the forefront as a global agenda cannot be ignored or undermined. One is reminded of how the US attack on Iraq in 2002 also resulted from a complex narrative-building exercise. India's stature as a geopolitical player on the global stage has only increased in the recent past. Whether it is Asia or the Indian Ocean Region, India's significance is now key to shaping the world as it has also emerged as a natural counter balance to China. This reality does not suit traditional foes such as China and Pakistan and their new supporters, namely, Turkey and Iran. Rest assured, any narrative that thwarts India would be ready to pick for them. Khalistan was never a domestic issue, but its play has only increased, and the sooner the average Indian realises it has the potential to change the world, the faster we can counter it. The reason that we cannot take all of this to be an overstretching of one's imagination is staring us in the form of a simple fact - the world has shifted from 'conventional warfare' to the unconventional. While we might not comprehend the severity of unconventional warfare, it surely is at play around the world by those interested in it.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT AFRAID OF DEBATING ON PEGASUS IN PARLIAMENT? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO HIDE? — AIMIM CHIEF ASADUDDIN OWAISI



WITH CHECKS AND BALANCES IN PLACE, ILLEGAL SURVEILLANCE IS NOT POSSIBLE. THOSE REPORTS HAVE NO FACTUAL BASIS. — ELECTRONICS AND IT MINISTER ASHWINI VAISHNAV



Markets at fresh highs: Sensex rallies 546 pts to scale 54K; Nifty tops 16,200

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex rallied 546 points to finish above the 54,000-mark for the first time on Wednesday, tracking strong gains in financial stocks amid positive cues from global markets.

After scaling its lifetime peak of 54,465.91 during the session, the 30-share index ended 546.41 points or 1.02 per cent higher at a record 54,369.77. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty surged 128.05 points or 0.79 per cent to its all-time peak of 16,246.85. It touched a lifetime intra-day high of 16,290.20. HDFC was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging around 5 per cent, followed by Kotak Bank, ICICI Bank, SBI, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank.

On the other hand, Titan, Nestle India, Ultratech Cement and Sun Pharma were among the laggards. Domestic equities extended gains with benchmarks Sensex and Nifty scaling fresh high mainly on the back of sharp rebound in heavy-

- January 21, 2021: Touches the momentous 50,000-mark in intra-day trade
- February 3: Closes above 50,000 for the first time
- February 5: Crosses 51,000-mark in intra-day trade
- February 8: Ends above 51,000-level
- February 15: Rallies above 52,000-mark
- June 22: Reaches 53,000-level in intra-day trade
- July 7: Closes above the 53,000-mark for the first time
- August 3: Market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies jumps to a record high of Rs 2,40,04,664.28 crore
- August 4: Sensex goes past the 54,000-mark for the first time in intra-day trade, also closes above this mark



The BSE benchmark has gained 6,618.44 points or 13.86 per cent so far this year.

weight financials, said Binod Modi, Head - Strategy at Reliance Securities. He noted that financials were the sole driving force for the market rally,

which was triggered after better-than-expected June quarter performance reported by SBI. The country's biggest bank posted a 55 per cent rise in

standalone net profit at Rs 6,504 crore for the first quarter of the financial year, helped by decline in bad loans. Further, positive cues from global equi-

ties also lifted sentiments, Modi stated. Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Seoul ended with gains, while Tokyo was in red.

SC seeks replies of 11 States for clearing dues to sugarcane ryots

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Wednesday sought responses from the Centre and the eleven sugarcane-producing states including Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra on the PIL filed by a former parliamentarian seeking implementation of a mechanism providing payment of dues of farmers within 14 days from supply of sugarcane to the mills.

A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justice Surya Kant took note of the submissions of senior advocate Anand Grover, appearing for Maharashtra's former Lok Sabha MP Raju Anna Shetti, that the sugarcane suppliers be paid their dues within 14 days of the supply across the country as envisaged by an order of the Allahabad High Court.

"Issue notice. List it after three weeks," the bench said after Grover pointed out cases of states which have been defaulting in big way in ensuring the payment to the farmers.



As per the UP Sugarcane Supply Act, it is mandatory to pay the cane growers their dues within 14 days and interest on the amount if not paid dues within the stipulated time period. Besides the Centre, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, the top court also issued notices to Punjab, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Gujarat, Bihar, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu.

It also sought responses from four sugarcane purchasing firms and they are Bajaj Hindustan Sugar Limited, Indian Sugarmills

Association, Cane Agro Energy (India) Limited and Indian Sucrose Ltd. Shetti, in his PIL, has sought the setting up of a mechanism for payment of price of sugarcane produce to the cane farmers "in order to avoid accumulation of such dues and preventing the farmers from falling in the vicious cycle when a mill is declared sick and their dues of sugarcane produce remained unpaid during the process of resolution or liquidation of sugar mill leading to deterioration of condition of farmers."

Govt holds stakeholder consultations to explore development, says Goyal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is presently holding stakeholder consultations with states, central ministries, and technical institutions to explore the development of freight smart cities in the country," Goyal said. Replying to a question on ONDC, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said it is an initiative aiming at promoting open networks for all aspects of the exchange of goods and services over digital or electronic networks. "ONDC is expected to make e-commerce more inclusive and accessible for consumers. Consumers can potentially discover any seller, product or service by using any compatible application or platform, thus increasing freedom of choice for consumers," Parkash said.



State governments have been requested to identify cities for development as freight smart cities, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. He said that one of the inputs during stakeholder consultations has been to start with a list of 10 such cities, which has not yet been finalised. "The government is presently holding stakeholder

consultations with state governments, central ministries, technical institutions, etc. to explore the development of freight smart cities in the country," Goyal said. Replying to a question on ONDC, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said it is an initiative aiming at promoting open networks for all aspects of the exchange of goods and services over digital or electronic networks. "ONDC is expected to make e-commerce more inclusive and accessible for consumers. Consumers can potentially discover any seller, product or service by using any compatible application or platform, thus increasing freedom of choice for consumers," Parkash said.

SCI shares tumble 3 pc after earnings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Shipping Corporation of India Ltd (SCI) on Wednesday dipped nearly 3 per cent after the company reported a decline in consolidated net profit for the first quarter of the current fiscal.

The stock went lower by 2.62 per cent to Rs 109.55 on BSE. On NSE, it dipped 2.40 per cent to Rs 109.65.

State-owned SCI on Tuesday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 158.51 crore for the first quarter of the current fiscal. The company had clocked a consolidated net profit of Rs 336.87 crore in the corresponding period a year earlier, according to a regulatory filing.

Its total income declined to Rs 1,048.47 crore in the latest June quarter as against Rs 1,178.43 crore in the year-ago period.



SpiceJet, Go First have not paid Rs 2.7 cr for using runway: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

SpiceJet and Go First airlines have not paid approximately Rs 2.74 crore for using the Ahmedabad airport's runway till June 1 this year, Minister of State for Civil Aviation V K Singh said on Wednesday.

Go First was previously known as GoAir. The Indian carriers have taken a big financial hit due to the travel restrictions since March 2020 amid

the coronavirus pandemic.

In his written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha, Singh said that the number of private companies, which includes international operators, that used the runway of the Ahmedabad airport during the last three financial years is 500. "A total of Rs 9,252 by Air Odisha Aviation Private Limited, Rs 1.23 (approx.) by Go Airlines India Ltd, Rs 3,964 by Karnavati Aviation Pvt Ltd,

Rs 1.51 crore (approximately) by SpiceJet Limited, Rs 4,083 by Supreme Transport Organisation and Rs 1.14 lakh (approximately) by Thai Air Asia have not been paid for using the runway of Ahmedabad airport till June 1, 2021," he stated.

All Indian airlines have taken measures -- such as cutting salaries and firing employees -- since March 2020 to conserve their cash flows.

BharatPe raises \$370 mn funding led by Tiger Global, valuation touches \$2.85 bn

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BharatPe on Wednesday said it has raised USD 370 million (about Rs 2,745.8 crore) in funding, led by Tiger Global that has pushed the merchant payment and lending service provider's post-money valuation to USD 2.85 billion.

The series E round included a secondary component of USD 20 million, a statement said. Staff holding vested employee stock option plan (ESOPs) have been given full liquidity in the secondary, it added. "The round, led by Tiger Global, also saw new participation from Dragoner Investment Group and Steadfast Capital," the statement said.

Five out of the seven existing institutional investors participated in the round - namely Coatue Management, Insight Partners, Sequoia Growth, Ribbit Capital and Amplo, it added. Ashneer Grover has been elevated to Co-founder and Managing Director, while Suhail Sameer has been appointed as the CEO. "We now have USD 0.5 billion cash on books and are extremely well capitalised to deliver on

our mandate to build India's first truly digital bank. Rarely does one witness the original thesis play out without any pivot," Grover said. BharatPe will remain maniacally focused on lending as the core business and small merchants as our primary target segment, he added. "At BharatPe, we have a high performing team

attracted to our focussed execution, growth potential and culture of meritocracy.

I am happy to appoint Suhail Sameer as the CEO in recognition of stupendous business growth he has delivered during the last 1 year and his ability to lead from the front," Grover said.

Sameer will also be part of the board of directors.



SBI net profit in Q1 surges 55% to Rs 6,504 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country's biggest bank SBI on Wednesday posted a 55 per cent rise in standalone net profit at Rs 6,504 crore for the first quarter of the current financial year, helped by decline in bad loans.

The lender had reported a net profit of Rs 4,189.34 crore in the April-June quarter of 2020-21. The operating profit of the bank increased 5 per cent to Rs 18,975 crore from Rs 18,061 crore in the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal.

However, interest income of the bank declined marginally to Rs 65,564 crore as against Rs 66,500 crore at the end of June 2020. Net interest margin too slipped to 3.15 per cent as against 3.24 per cent at the end of first quarter of last year.

The bank's gross non-performing assets (NPA) of the total advances declined to 5.32 per cent at June-end from 5.44 per cent at June-end last year.

Similarly, net NPAs also declined to 1.7 per cent in June 2020 against 1.8 per cent a year ago.



Dalmia invests about Rs 80 cr in 2 projects

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Dalmia Nisus Finance has invested around Rs 80 crore in two real estate projects in Chennai and Bengaluru being developed by Puravankara Ltd and Shriram Properties and is in process of closing three more investment of Rs 125 crore.

Dalmia Nisus Finance Investment Managers LLP, an alternatives manager, has invested this amount from its Real Estate Credit Opportunities Fund - I (RECOF - I). Dalmis Nisus is the joint venture fund of Nisus Finance headed by industry veteran Amit Goenka and the Gaurav Dalmia Group. These maiden investments are part of the Rs 500 crore RECOF-1 Fund that primarily invests into structured credit and mezzanine investments across the residential space in India. RECOF-1 fund had announced its first close in March 2020.

Gaurav Dalmia, Chairman, Advisory Board of the Fund said, "On a long-term risk adjusted basis, real estate structured capital remains a very attractive asset class."

Amit Goenka, Managing Partner and CEO of the Fund, said this is a unique time for capital pools to maximize on the opportunities within the real estate sector. "We are excited about our investment with the Puravankara Group and Shriram Properties and believe that in the current environment, top deck players like these will continue to show extraordinary growth and performance," he added.

"Our investments are uniquely structured to create a win-win with our investee companies while significantly mitigating idiosyncratic risks. Our investors will generate a significant alpha due to the uniqueness of our structure and partnership," Goenka said.

About 53K startups benefitted from DPIIT as of July

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 52,732 startups have been benefitted from the department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) startup recognition initiative as on July 21, 2021, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

'Startup India' is a flagship initiative of the government which aims at building a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country. A 19-point Startup India Action Plan was

launched in January 2016 which paved the way for the introduction of a number of policy initiatives. "A total of 52,732 startups have taken the benefit of DPIIT startup recognition, as on 21st July 2021," Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

In a separate reply, he said so far nine incubators have been sanctioned Rs 30 crore under the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS). In another reply, he said the government



is working on setting up a Single Window System for clearances and approvals of industry in the country.

"This will eliminate the need for investors to visit multiple platforms/offices to gather information and obtain clearances from different stakeholders. This will also provide time-bound approvals and real-time status updates to investors," he said.

Replying to a question on gold, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel said that Gold

Dore can be imported by refineries against a licence issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) with Actual User condition.

"DGFT has not issued import licences to any government company in the last three years," she said. In another reply, she said bilateral trade between India and Pakistan, including through ICP (Integrated Check Post) Attari, remains suspended as a result of unilateral measures taken by Pakistan in August 2019.

MONEY MATTERS

Tata drives in Tiago NRG with price starting at Rs 6.57 lakh

Tata Motors on Wednesday said it has expanded the Tiago range with the launch of a new sporty trim, Tiago NRG, with price starting at Rs 6.57 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi). The new sporty version of the hatchback comes with high ground clearance, bigger tyres, body cladding and roof rails to give it a SUV look. The Tiago NRG is powered by 1.2 litre petrol powertrain (86 PS power) which comes mated to five speed manual and AMT (automated manual transmission) transmission. The model has a four star safety rating by Global NCAP. "Truly energetic just like its name, the NRG fits well with the growing trend of bringing to market more SUV like vehicles. It is not only strong on the exterior but is feature-loaded & stylish in the interior, and is an absolute pleasure to drive with enhanced abilities to take over rough terrains," Tata Motors Vice-President (Sales, Marketing & Customer Care) Rajan Amba noted. Crowning the Tiago range, the NRG will continue to help the company increase its brand presence, he added.



Indian service sector stuck in contraction territory: PMI

India's services sector remained in contraction territory for the third straight month in July, as business activity, new orders and employment declined further largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and local restrictions, a monthly survey said on Wednesday. The seasonally adjusted India Services Business Activity Index rose from 41.2 in June to 45.4 in July, but was stuck in the red due to subdued demand conditions amid the COVID-19 crisis. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. "The current COVID-19 environment continued to weigh on the performance of the service sector that is so crucial to the Indian economy. July data was somewhat disappointing, with incoming new business and output falling solidly over the month, but there was at least a slowdown in rates of contraction," Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at IHS Markit, said.



Suzuki Motor Guj to scale down production this month

Suzuki Motor Gujarat (SMG), a 100 per cent subsidiary of Japan's Suzuki Motor Corporation, will scale down production activity this month at its Ahmedabad-based manufacturing plant due to semiconductor shortage, Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) said on Wednesday. SMG, which supplies cars exclusively to MSI, has also decided to scale down production to single shift at some manufacturing lines in the plant. "Owing to the semiconductor shortage situation, the company has been informed by its contract manufacturing company, SMG, that production will be partially impacted in this month," MSI said in a regulatory filing. SMG will tentatively not carry out production on the three Saturdays (August 7, 14 and 21) this month, it added. In addition, some of the production lines at SMG plant may see temporary reduction from two-shift to one-shift working, MSI noted.



Gold gains Rs 123; silver zooms Rs 766

Gold in the national capital on Wednesday rose by Rs 123 to Rs 46,992 per 10 gram amid gains in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 46,869 per 10 grams. Silver also zoomed Rs 766 to Rs 66,926 per kilogram from Rs 66,160 per kilogram in the previous trade. "Spot gold prices for 24 carats in Delhi rose by Rs 123 with recovery in COMEX gold prices," according to HDFC Securities, Senior Analyst (Commodities), Tapan Patel. In the international market, gold was trading in the green at USD 1,815 per ounce, while silver was flat at USD 25.71 per ounce.



GIVING BACK TO OUR ELDERLY

At a time when people have been finding it tough to fend for themselves, Rs. 15 lakh have been raised by an NGO to support elderly, writes RACHEL DAMMALA.

Times today are tough, people are being laid off, being paid meagre salaries, and many others, have been incurring losses. The pandemic has made lives worse for those most vulnerable, those that are trying to hold on to the last bit of everything they have left.

While common people themselves have trouble looking after themselves and their own, here's a heart-touching story of how Jesus Christ Charitable Trust, an NGO in Challapalli, in these unprecedented times, found help in strangers who came forward to bail the out.

This NGO is aiming to raise funds of Rs. 18 lakhs to save the shelter started by J Rama Mohana Rao. The shelter is home to more than 30 senior persons, widows, and even street dwellers. After facing a massive financial crisis during the Covid-19 lockdown, Rao is raising funds through the crowdfunding platform ImpactGuru.com to save the shelter. The fundraiser has done

immensely well and has so far raised over Rs.15 lakhs.

Rao started the shelter with the aim to provide a peaceful, dignified lifestyle to the elders and homeless who were either abandoned by their family or had no place to live. The trust shelters them, cares for their well-being, provides therapy (if necessary), and even counsels individuals who are hooked to harmful behaviours.

The residents are also provided with good meals, a clean place to live, and the promise of a better life, all of which are provided at no cost.

"These are abandoned older people with no other place to live. People who have been saved will spend the remaining of their lives here. Many people have breathed their last here, and I have administered their final rites. They cannot be abandoned on the streets again. And I need people's help to rescue their only home," J Rama Mohana Rao explains the importance of the fundraiser.

The shelter gained immense love and support from the society. Many people from the surrounding communities would come to the foundation to contribute clothes, blankets, and medications, as well as spend time with the people housed there.

However, the foundation has not received any visits since the lockdown. There's more! Today, the landlord demands that the owners evacuate the property. The lonely older folks, on the other hand, have nowhere to go and the cost of saving this shelter home is Rs. 18 lakhs.

"This place doesn't belong to us. This used to be a vacant place which belongs to someone else. J Rama Mohana Rao sir started this Ashram here with his permission. But now, they are demanding extra money and want us to leave the place. In that case we will not have any shelter to cover us. If that happens, we have to live on the streets, at bus stands, and rail-



way stations. We will have no one to look after us. Our kids have abandoned us. We want to live these last few years peacefully. Please help us provide justice for this," cries an 80-year-old resident.

"A little assistance can help in saving the roof of the people residing in the shelter and every donation has the potential to do wonders," Rao tells us.

He has been requesting people to support his cause and help him save the roof of the people residing in the shelter.



More and more people have been donating, you can-

tribute to their cause at ImpactGuru.



HOW TWITTERATI IS CHEERING FOR OUR OLYMPIANS

With the first full week of the Tokyo Olympics now in the books, here are some fresh insights about the topics, trends, and talents that have kept Indian audiences on Twitter talking over the past week.

The biggest trend we're seeing is that women athletes are leading the way, led by Mirabai Chanu (@mirabai_chanu), P V Sindhu (@Pvsindhu1), and other top names. Mirabai Chanu's tweet has been the most Retweeted Tweet of the Games by the Indian audience thus far, while P V Sindhu is the athlete with the most India mentions during the Games. Apart from her, Lovlina Borgohain (@LovlinaBorgohai), Mary Kom (@MangteC), Deepika Kumari (@ImDeepikaK), and Atanu Das

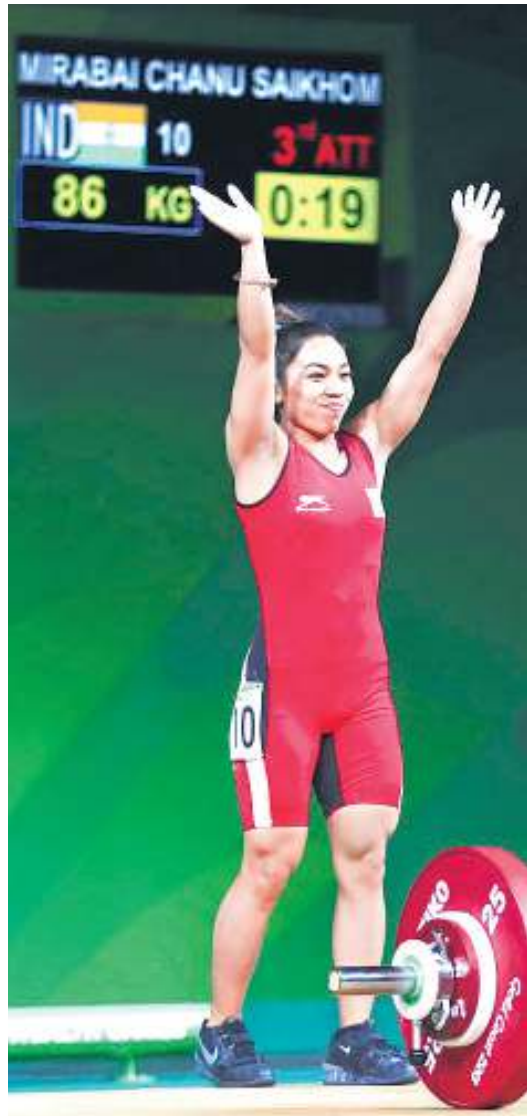
(@ArcherAtanu) were most mentioned in tweets.

The sports that were most talked about include Boxing, Olympic Weightlifting, Badminton, Olympic Field Hockey, and Tennis. Clapping hands, second-place medal, first-place medal, thumbs up, and sports medal emojis were the top 5 most used on Twitter.

Not to forget the hashtags that were most used: #Tokyo2020, #Olympics, #Cheer4India, #TokyoOlympics and #TeamIndia.

Women athletes are topping the Twitter charts globally too.

The three athletes with the most global mentions on Olympics conversations are: Brazilian skateboarder Rayssa Leal, American gymnast Simone Biles and Brazilian gymnast Rebeca Andrade.



AFTERMATH OF COVID ON BONE AND JOINT HEALTH



Covid had a significant impact on bone and joint health and has resulted in increased complications in the joints. In general, bone health has been neglected in the Indian healthcare system.

According to many studies, more than 80% of the Indian population is Vit-D deficient. During the pandemic, due to lockdowns, people have been confined to their houses and were not properly exposed to sunlight, and it further aggravated Vit D deficiency.

Lack of physical exercise has led to increased obesity issues in people, which in turn, raised joint

problems. Due to decreased mobility during lockdowns, there were increased complaints about muscle and bone pains.

On the other side, due to over usage of steroids during Covid, there was a rise in the incidence of conditions like Osteoporosis and Avascular necrosis of joints. Steroids decrease bone mineral density and predispose for weak bones.

Along with that, steroids decrease blood supply to bone and joints and result in the development of Avascular necrosis in joints. The hip is most commonly affected by this condition.

On the alarming side, there has

been a surge in bone and joint infections post the lockdown. Immunity is at compromise with high steroid usage; thus, patients are more prone to infections.

Here's how one can tackle bone and joint issues and keep fit:

Healthy diet:

Diet rich in calcium, Vit D and C and proteins are important for maintaining good bone and joint health.

Calcium-rich foods like milk, cheese, and other dairy products are key for bone health. If you are not exposed to sunlight properly then we need to supplement with Vit-D tablets/syrups.

Regular exercise:

Exercise is a most key factor in keeping our bones and joints healthy. Exercising at least 4 days a week will improve strength and overall fitness. Regular exercises will improve joint movement, strength, and flexibility of muscles. Strength training and weight-bearing exercises are the best ways to build healthy bones and muscles.

Maintaining healthy weight:

Keeping our weight within the normal range of BMI (body mass index) is very important for preventing joint damage. Being overweight puts joints at high risk for

early arthritis, as being overweight will increase stress over joints.

Avoid smoking:

Smoking decreases blood supply to bones and makes them weak.

Avoid alcohol consumption:

Heavy alcohol decreases bone density and also interferes with absorption and regulation of calcium and vitamin D, thus increasing the risk of osteoporosis.

(The writer, Dr Gopi Krishna Reddy G, is a Consultant Orthopaedic and Joint Replacement Surgeon at SLG Hospitals).

One step at a time

Pratik Sud advises caution against exerting yourself too much after recovering from Covid-19

Exercise is an important part of recovery after falling prey to Covid-19. As the number of Covid-19 positive cases is on the rise, remember that irrespective of how restless you may feel after being restricted to your home, if you were stricken by the disease, you should take it easy and remember that it is only natural to take some time to achieve the fitness level you possessed before you got infected. Generally, doctors recommend a break of three-six months, even after the symptoms subside, depending on the severity of the infection in the patient. Provided below are some guidelines to ease your transition to the active lifestyle you once led.

Always warm up

before and cool down after exercising. Begin with breathing exercises and mild walking. You will be shocked to see how you gasp for breath even after walking for 100 metres.

Wear comfortable clothes that circulate air to help you breathe normally. Also, wear comfortable shoes for free movement.

Eat healthy and nutritious food in sufficient quantities an hour before the exercise. Forget about dieting post-Covid19 illness.

Staying hydrated while recovering from the illness is imperative. Ensure that you drink ample water before and after exercising.

Don't exhaust yourself by exercising in hot weather. Try working out early in the morning or in the evening. If by chance you can't work out in the morning, then meditate during the afternoon, but don't indulge in rough workout sessions.

At the same time, avoid exercising indoors with the air conditioner on. Extreme cold weather can leave you breathless which can lead to an uneven flow of blood in the vessels and stressed muscles.

Doctors claim that weakness can last up to six months after recovering, depending on a person's immune system and energy levels. If your friend can run 20-25 laps of the field post-recovery, doesn't mean

that your body can also tolerate the same.

Immediately stop working out if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Nausea
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Breath lessness is common while exercising. However, stop if the breathlessness worsens and doesn't subside even after resting
- Excessive sweating
- Tightness in the chest area
- Increased pain especially in the arms and jaw

The moment you experience any uncommon symptoms, you should stop exercising and contact your doctor immediately. There is no harm in discussing the symptoms with your fitness expert as well. Remember, medical staff and doctors are there for our assistance.

The best way to start exercising is by warming up. Mild exercises can loosen the muscles and increase blood flow. This will help in exercising properly without any room for injuries, soreness or uneasiness in the body.

Few exercising tips that can loosen muscle and increase strength

Warm-up exercise
Roll your

shoulders slowly to loosen the

muscles and increase blood flow. You need to roll them

clockwise and anti-clockwise five times consecutively. Continue this motion for five minutes.

Fitness exercise

We all have marched during the school graduation ceremony, so, it will not be difficult to march on one spot for 10 minutes. You can also



walk/run up and down the staircase for 10 minutes. It helps in improving breathlessness.

Strength exercise

Stand facing the wall and raise both hands and place your palms on it. Now push yourself towards the wall, against the force and then return to your position.

This exercise helps in building strength in arms and joints.

Start with mild exercises. Gradually, increase the frequency, intensity and duration of your workout at your ease. This is the best way of challenging yourself by increasing one level further.

Breathlessness is normal while exercising, but too much of it can be harmful and should be addressed immediately. Increase the intensity of your workouts according to your tolerance.

Fatigue and extreme pain can be signs of over-exertion. It is advised to work out with a fitness expert so that if you feel breathless or are in extreme pain, s/he can provide you with emergency assistance.

(The author is the co-founder of Synqfit, a one-stop solution for your home workouts.)



Marc Kaplan shares how new-age social media platforms are providing users with a revamped experience

Currently, most of the prominent social media platforms have become vehicles that proliferate negativity, drive divisiveness, and enable cyberbullying. While they each have standards for behaviour outlined for all to see, they are at best inconsistently applied, and at worst completely ignored. The sites have become so toxic that not a day goes by where many regular users are not exposed to some level of negativity. People regularly report the loss of interactions with friends, family and colleagues online.

The call for reform has been side-stepped by these companies. The likes of key social media platforms have held up the freedom of expression flag in their defense, though many believe this is just a way to justify a business model that is lucrative to them and their shareholders. There is little doubt that extreme societal damage has been done from these platforms' unwillingness to make meaningful changes to address these issues. To date, the conversation has largely been about the issues with these platforms. However, now is the time for solutions. It is time to

No to negativity

bring about a more positive way to interact online where members can connect in a safe and secure environment openly and freely.

Various new-age networking platforms are focus sing on improving online forums while making concerted efforts to mitigate negativity and cyberbullying. Their sole aim is to bring about a social revolution that counterbalances the online negativity and toxicity that is perpetuated, enabled and perhaps unknowingly supported by major social media platforms today.

These modern social networking platforms enable people to give and receive guidance for free and the members help each other in achieving their respective goals. These targets could be related to fitness, career, health, parenting, hobbies, personality development, or any other topic.

These platforms are a community where like-minded people and those who share common interests and goals come together to support each other and render a helping hand to each other. The members in such a scenario can interact and engage one-on-one amongst like-minded individuals or other communities across the globe instantly and seamlessly. They are devoid of ads, negativity, fake news, trolling, and cyberbullying and work beyond the popularity contest approach of garnering maximum likes and shares.

New-age networking platforms leverage the power of content moderation, identity verification, and technology

mix to come up with state-of-the-art community-enabled solutions that help resolve all the associated issues. People with real identities facilitate an increased level of trust, credibility, and safety amongst the members and prefer platforms that provide a safe and protected environment where their privacy is secured.

Trust, respect and genuine connections form the core of these social networking platforms and they are leaving no stone unturned to ensure that their community is free from negativity and toxicity. All they want is to leave a positive impact on the members' lives.

These new-age networking platforms don't function as the usual social media platforms but rather lend a helping hand to solve the problems faced by people in the social space. They aim to come up with a new social contract so that people can interact quickly, easily, and instantly with each other. They are aware that negativity, divisiveness, polarisation and fake news rule the social media space today. However, they wish to take a bold stance and bet on the goodness of the people. They desire to uplift each other rather than tearing each other down. The broader vision of these new-age platforms is to normalise a different online experience and provide an alternative way to spend your time online which is positive, interactive, engaging, and fosters connections!

(The author is the co-founder & CEO of ChekMarc, a social platform that enables impactful one-on-one connections.)

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



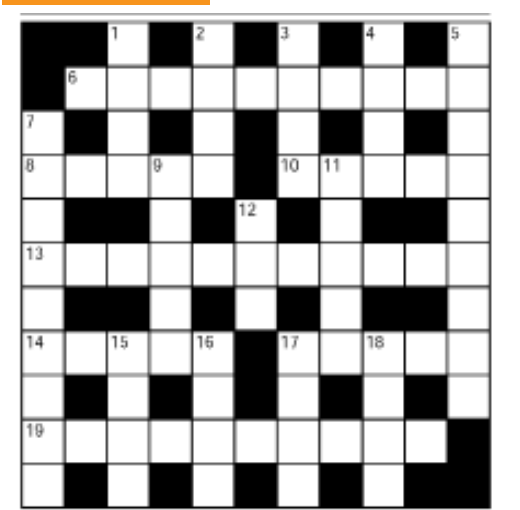
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Someone who writes for a newspaper or magazine
- Rome is the capital of this country
- Listen to music on this
- Thinking over
- A hairdresser works here
- Window pane material
- Giving reasons for

DOWN

- A long seat
- A large group of soldiers
- Not favouring one person or another
- Discover
- The most powerful



TRIVIKRAM TO LAUNCH PK'S SON —AKIRA

Pawan Kalyan's son Akira is going to be launched by director Trivikram Srinivas. Though there is no official statement yet, as per the sources, it is confirmed that Trivikram will be the debut film of Akira.

As we know, Pawan Kalyan and Trivikram Srinivas are the thickest of friends. Pawan Kalyan's upcoming movie in which his character is named 'Bheemla Nayak' is also by Trivikram practically, for it was written by him, Director Sagar Chandra is helming the project. The film is the official remake of the Malayalam hit film *Ayyappanum Koshiyum*. It also stars actor Rana Daggubati.

Pawan Kalyan has arranged for a martial arts trainer for Akira. Akira has been living with his father at Pawan Kalyan's house at Jubilee Hills, where he's



undergoing various forms of training. Recently, Renu Desai had posted a video of Akira practicing martial arts on her Instagram account.

Fans of Pawan Kalyan are more than happy to know that Akira is going to be launched by Trivikram. Everybody believes that Trivikram's movies will be the perfect script and screenplay for Akira's entry. So with Trivikram heading the project, fans believe Akira is on the right path.



'I am bitten by NTR's energy'

Filmmaker SS Rajamouli's *RRR* starring Ram Charan and Jr NTR has been receiving a growing hype across the country for its ensemble cast and the director himself. *RRR* is the much-anticipated film of 2020, which is gearing up for the grand release on October 13. The period drama will see Bollywood actress Alia Bhatt star opposite Ram Charan while international actress

Olivia Morris is paired opposite Jr NTR. *RRR* is being bankrolled by DVV Danayya, the film is being made on a budget of more than Rs 350 crores. Earlier, it was also heard that Kichcha Sudeep has been roped in to play the role of a police officer in Jr NTR and Ram Charan starrer *RRR*, but later the actor refuted the rumor. Recently the *Eega* actor showered accolades on Jr NTR by saying, "I have worked with

Megastar Chiranjeevi, and with due respect to him and others, I consider Jr NTR my favourite, as I am bitten by his energy which is palpable."

Kichcha Sudeep is a popular name in Tollywood as he was seen in Rajamouli's directorial ventures *Eega* and *Baahubali: The Beginning*. He also played the important role in the Megastar Chiranjeevi starrer *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy* co-starring Nayanthara and Tamannah Bhatia.



MEHREEN SIGNS A ROMANTIC FILM

2 girl Mehreen Kaur Pirzada recently announced that she will be seen in more and more films now and has started lining up several projects. According to the latest news, Mehreen signed another breezy entertainer.

Mehreen will be pairing with Havish in this film under the direction of G. Karthik Reddy. Karthik earlier came with films like *Adda* and *Voter* in 2013 and 2019 respectively. The film is touted to be a romantic entertainer and has a unique screenplay.

A source reveals that the characterisations are novel and story-based and informed that the fictional entertainer has interesting twists in the script with a novel screenplay. Script work for the project has neared completion and the film will go on floors at the earliest. Mehreen is currently starring in *F3*, the sequel to *F2*, under the direction of Anil Ravipudi, and *Manchi Rojuju Vachchayi* under the direction of Maruthi.

Hareesh Peradi, Vikram Vedha join *Mishan Impossible*



Taapsee Pannu is making a comeback to Tollywood after many years with *Mishan Impossible*, directed by Swaroop RSJ of *Agent Sai Srinivasa Athreya* fame. The film will see the *Jummandi Naadam* actress playing an unconventional role of a bounty hunter. *Mishan Impossible* produced by Niranjan Reddy and Anvesh Reddy, has Malayalam actor Hareesh Peradi in the role of an antagonist, it is learnt.

Hareesh Peradi is a popular face for Tamil audiences as he was seen in Vikram Vedha. He was also seen in *Sulthan*, directed by Bakkiyaraj Kannan and co-starring Karthi and Rashmika Mandanna. In Tollywood, he was seen in Mahesh Babu and Rakul Preet Singh starrer *Spyder*, where he played the role of CBI Head Officer.

N M Pasha is on board as the associate producer for *Mishan Impossible*. Mark K Robin is the music composer, while Deepak Yeragara is taking care of the cinematography department for the project and the editing is by Ravi Teja Girijala.

On the work front, Hareesh Peradi will be seen playing important roles in Malayalam movies *Muddy* and *Bheeshma Parvam*, which will hit the theaters this year.

tollywood

Acharya likely to release on Oct. 1, before *RRR*

Mega Star Chiranjeevi's upcoming film *Acharya* is going to hit the screens before *RRR* itself! The film may be released on October 1, 2021. The unit, we hear, is almost sure about this date. SS Rajamouli's *RRR*, starring stars NTR Jr and Ram Charan Tej, is going to release on October 13. Just two weeks before that, *Acharya* is going to say hello to Telugu audiences.

Currently, *Acharya* is in its production phase, with shooting underway in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. The film will complete its shoot within the next four weeks, and some post-production works have already started. By the third week of September, everything will be ready, sources tell us.

Apart from Chiranjeevi, Mega Power Star Ram Charan, Kajal Agarwal, Pooja Hegde, and others will be seen playing key roles in the movie.

Koratla Siva is hoping to give another hit with this film. Mani Sharma has composed the music and the two songs that have released have been received with great applause. The movie reportedly revolves around a middle-aged Naxalite-turned-social reformer who launches a fight against the Endowments Department over misappropriation and embezzlement of temple funds and donations. Presented by Surekha Konidela, the film is produced by Chiran himself, and Niranjan Reddy under their Konidela Production Company and Matinee Entertainment respectively.



Digu Digu Digu Naaga hits over a million views

The first lyrical single from the upcoming film *Varudu Kavalenu*, which has actor Naga

lyrics, and especially, Shreya's vocals. Along with the lead cast Naga Shaurya and Ritu Varma, *Varudu Kavalenu* has Nadia, Murali Sharma, Vennela

Shaurya in the lead, has been titled *Digu Digu Naaga*. The song has been picturised on actress Ritu Varma that shows her in a vintage avatar. The lyrics have been penned by Anantha Sriram that has composed by Vishal Chandrashekar and sung by Shreya Ghoshal. The remake folk song has already crossed a million views within hours of its release. Fans have been raving about the



Kishore, Praveen, Ananth, Pammi Sai, Ranga sthala Mahesh, Kireeti Daamaraaju, Vaishnavi Chaitanya, and Siddique Shah will be seen playing important roles. On the technical front, Ganesh Kumar Raavuri wrote the dialogues, Vamsi Patchipulusu handled the Cinematography, Vishal Chandra Shekhar has composed the music, while Naveen Nooli oversees editing. Suryadevara Naga Vamsi is producing the film under the Sithara Entertainments banner.

ARJUN REPLACED BY JAGAPATHI BABU IN *SVP*



The latest update from *Sarkaru Vaari Paata* is that Action King Arjun has been replaced by Jagapathi Babu. Due to the Covid situation, the actor's dates have become difficult to be adjusted to the film's schedule and thus had to walk out of the project. He, right now, has his

hands full with a couple of Kollywood films. Understanding his trouble, Arjun has been replaced by Jagapathi Babu, who is a close friend to Arjun.

Jagapathi Babu had played father to Mahesh Babu in their previous film *Srimanthudu*. Now *Sarkaru Vaari Paata* will have the two share screen space again. Jagapathi Babu has proved himself as a villain with a stylish look in films like *Nannaku Prematho*. The character in *SVP* too, we hear, is going to be similar.

The makers of *SVP* are going to release the film's teaser on August 9, on the occasion of Super Star Mahesh Babu's birthday. Fans are eagerly waiting for it. The makers recently announced the release date to be January 13, 2022. Thaman has composed music for the film that is being directed by Parasuram.





TOKYO
TIMELINE

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Athletics:** Neeraj Chopra qualified for final by topping qualification round in men's javelin throw. Shivpal Singh finished 12th in group B qualification and 27th overall in men's javelin throw; failed to advance to final round.
- Boxing:** Lovlina Borgohain lost to Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey 0-5 in women's 69kg semifinal.
- Golf:** Aditi Ashok at tied second and Diksha Dagar at tied 56th after round 1 in women's individual stroke play.
- Hockey:** India lost to Argentina 1-2 in women's semifinal.
- Wrestling:** Ravi Kumar beat Oscar Eduardo Tigreros (Colombia) in first round, beat Georgi Valentinov Vangelov (Bulgaria) in quarterfinals, beat Nurislam Sanayev (Kazakhstan) in semifinal of men's freestyle 57kg.
- Anshu Malik lost to Iryna Kurachkina (Belarus) in first round of women's freestyle 57kg; will play in repechage round.
- Deepak Punia beat Ekerekeme Agiomor (Nigeria) in first round, beat Zushen Lin (China) in quarterfinals, lost to David Morris Taylor (USA) in semifinals of men's freestyle 86kg; will play for Bronze medal.

IN ACTION TODAY

- Athletics:** K T Irfan, Rahul Rohilla and Sandeep Kumar in men's 20km race walk event. (01:00 pm)
- Golf:** Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar in women's individual stroke play round 2. (04:00 am)
- Hockey:** India vs Germany in men's Bronze medal match. (07:00 am)
- Wrestling:** Vinesh Phogat vs Sofia Magdalena Mattsson (Sweden) in women's freestyle 53kg. (08:00 am)
- Anshu Malik vs Valeria Koblova (ROC) in repechage round of women's freestyle 57kg. (second bout after 07:30 am start)
- Ravi Dahiya vs Zavur Uguev (Russian Olympic Committee) in men's freestyle 57kg final. (ninth bout after 02:45 pm start)
- Deepak Punia in men's freestyle Bronze medal match. (11th bout after 02:45 pm start)

Live on SONY TEN & SIX Network

PTI ■ CHIBA

Ravi Dahiya on Wednesday became only the second Indian wrestler to qualify for the title clash at the Olympic Games, when he sensationally turned around the 57kg semifinal bout by pinning Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev but Deepak Punia was left to fight for Bronze medal after he lost his semifinal, here on Wednesday.

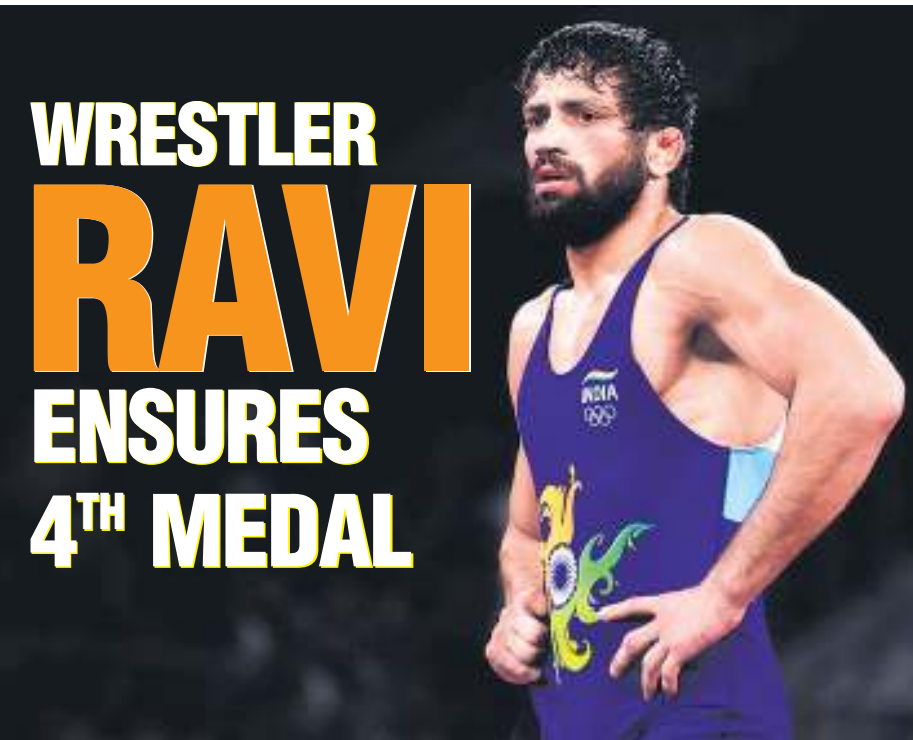
Before Dahiya, Sushil Kumar was the only Indian to make the Gold medal bout at the 2012 Olympics in London where he had settled for a Silver.

The fourth seeded Dahiya trailed 2-9 after Sanayev effected a few 'fitley' (leg lace) but as the clocked ticked away, Dahiya regrouped and got hold of his rival with a double leg attack that resulted in a 'victory by fall'.

"I had no business conceding that much lead against Sanayev. I am not happy with it," Dahiya told *PTI* when asked about his inspiring achievement.

It just shows the kind of standards the Indian from Nahri village in Haryana has set for himself.

"I have beaten Sanayev twice before, so I knew I can pull it off despite trailing by a



Ravi Dahiya reacts after win against Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev during the men's 57kg freestyle semifinal @Tokyo2020hi

hugue margin. I was assured inside, but I should not have conceded lead and made it a close fight. That was pretty bad of me," he said.

"I still have some unfinished business to do. I came with a target here and that is not complete yet (winning Gold)."

In the final on Thursday, Dahiya will face reigning world champion Russian Zavur Uguev to whom he had lost in the 2019 World Championship semifinals.

Despite a huge deficit, the 23-year-old Dahiya did not



India's Deepak Punia, top, and China's Lin Zushen in action on Wednesday *AP*

him thrice to log six points in a jiffy.

Suddenly, Dahiya's lead was gone and he was staring at a defeat but his superior stamina and technical prowess was still at work. The remaining one minute was enough for him to turn the tide and he did it in style.

He got hold of Sanayev with a double leg attack and then gripped him tightly with the Kazakhstan wrestler's back on the mat and finished the bout with a mighty 'pin'.

A dominant Dahiya had won both his previous contests on technical superiority en route the final.

Dahiya outclassed Colombia's Tigreros Urbano (13-2) in his opener and then

outwitted Bulgaria's Georgi Valentinov Vangelov (14-4).

While Dahiya was a live-wire on the mat, Deepak Punia (86kg) made good use of a favourable draw to reach the semifinals but lost to the formidable American David Morris Taylor. He will now fight for Bronze on Thursday against the winner of the repechage round between Myles Amine and Ali Shabanau.

It was always going to be a herculean task for Deepak to trouble the American, the 2018 world champion and the reigning Pan-American champion.

It was hardly a contest as Taylor effected one move after another to win by technical superiority in the first period itself.

Deepak could make only one move on counter attack but the American did not give the Indian any chance to convert that into points.

The 22-year-old Deepak had earlier got past Nigeria's Ekerekeme Agiomor, the African championship Bronze medalist by technical superiority and then prevailed 6-3 over China's Zushen Lin in the quarterfinal.

Anshu Malik, on the other hand, lost her opening 57kg bout to European champion Irina Kurachkina but since the Belarus wrestler has

reached the final, the 19-year old Indian has got a second chance to be in medal round.

She will now compete in the repechage round on Thursday and if she wins, she will also fight for Bronze.

Dahiya will now be only the fifth Indian wrestler to win an Olympic medal.

KD Jadhav had become India's first wrestler and also the first individual Olympic medalist when he won a Bronze during the 1952 Helsinki Games.

After that, Sushil Kumar enhanced wrestling's profile by winning a Bronze at 2008 Beijing Games and bettered the colour of the medal by claiming a historic Silver in 2012 at London Olympics that made him India's only athlete with two individual Olympic medals for nine years.

The feat then has now been matched by shuttler PV Sindhu. In the same 2012 Olympics, Yogeshwar Dutt won a Bronze.

Sakshi Malik became the first Indian woman wrestler to win an Olympic medal when she took a Bronze in 2016 Rio Olympics.

This Tokyo edition could well be a watershed Olympics for Indian wrestling with both Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia also in contention for a medal.

Lovlina ends with Bronze

Tokyo: Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) signed off with a Bronze medal in her debut Olympic Games after a comprehensive 0-5 loss to reigning world champion Busenaz Surmeneli on Wednesday, bringing an end to the country's campaign in the sport here.

Up against quite literally a bully in the ring, Borgohain was completely out-punched by the Gold medal favourite Turkish boxer, who produced a thoroughly dominating performance.

Borgohain also coped a one point deduction in the second round for not paying attention to the referee's instructions despite a couple of cautions.

"I don't know what to say. I could not execute what I had planned. I could have done better," Borgohain said after the loss.

The Indian's start was not all that bad as she stood up to the strong challenge but she came undone after Surmeneli got down to connecting her vicious hooks



India's Lovlina Borgohain, right, exchange punches against Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey during their women's welter weight semifinal boxing match *PTI*

and body shots.

The third round was especially punishing for Borgohain, who faced two standing eight counts during the bout.

Surmeneli was unrelenting in all three rounds after being unsettled only slightly in the opening few seconds when Borgohain tried to keep her at long range and struck only counter-attacking straight hits.

Another heartbreak in hockey

Tokyo: A brave Indian women's hockey team put up a gritty performance but it was not enough to secure a maiden Olympic final berth as it lost 1-2 to world No 2 Argentina in a hard-fought semifinal on Wednesday.

India still have a chance to win the Bronze medal as they will take on Great Britain in the third-fourth place play-off match on Friday.

The Indians fought valiantly and gave Argentina a run for their money by taking the lead in the second minute through a penalty corner conversion by Gurjit Kaur.

But the Las Leonas bounced back strongly with skipper Maria Barriounevo's (18th, 36th minutes) twin strikes from penalty corners to secure the hard-fought win.

The Netherlands will play Argentina in the final on Friday.

The bunch of 18 fearless and determined Indian women had already done the unthinkable when they stunned three-time champions Australia 1-0 on Monday to enter the Olympic semifinals for the first time.



Indian players react after defeat against Argentina in the semifinal match *PTI*

India has learnt to bounce back from losses: Marijne

Tokyo: The Indian women's hockey team has learnt to bounce back from losses, said coach Sjoerd Marijne, adding that the defeat to Argentina in the Olympic semifinal is history as the side focusses on claiming a historic Bronze.

"We came here to win a medal and still there's one (available). It's now about recovery, about the mindset. The good thing is, it's not always good that we lost a lot

in the past but we also have learned to deal with the losses," Marijne said after the match.

"So it's okay, what can we improve on from this match?"

The Dutchman feels India failed to grab their opportunities against Argentina, which eventually made the difference. "In these matches it is about taking your opportunities. Argentina did that better than us. With the PC, the

injection was not always perfect, the trapping was not good and then you can't play exactly the PC you want," he said.

"I can't be angry with the girls or be mad because we don't play these kind of matches so much. It's a whole new experience and you also have to learn how to play these matches. It's all about taking your opportunities. "The intensity we showed in the last quarter, that was really good."

Neeraj into the final with one attempt

Tokyo: Medal contender Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian javelin thrower to enter the finals of the Olympic Games with a stunning throw of 86.65m in his opening attempt that put him on top of the qualification round on Wednesday.

The 23-year-old kept India's hopes of an elusive Olympic medal from athletics alive by earning a direct entry into the finals to be held on Saturday as he sent the spear well past the qualifying mark of 83.50m in his first attempt.

However, Shivpal Singh, failed to make the final cut with a below-par best throw of 76.40m, which he came up in his first attempt, to finish a lowly 12th in the Group B qualification which featured 16 athletes.

Competing in his first Olympics, Chopra took just a few seconds to make the final round. He topped the Group A contest as well as the two qualifications rounds and left the javelin arena after his first throw.

"I am at my first Olympic Games, and I feel very good. In warm-up my performance wasn't so good, but then (in the qualifying round) my first throw had a good angle, and was a perfect throw," Chopra said after his event.

Chopra is, however, under no illusion that the final will be a totally different contest where the world's best will go for podium finish.

"It will be a different feeling (in the finals), since it is my first time in the

Olympics. Physically we (all) train hard, and are ready, but I also need to prepare mentally.

"I will need to focus on the throw, and try to repeat this (performance) with a higher score," said the youngster who came into the Olympics with the fourth best throw (88.07m) this year.

Chopra's performance on Saturday will go down as one of the best performances by an Indian in the Olympics, as he finished ahead of Gold medal favourite and 2017 world champion Johannes Vetter of Germany.

Vetter, who had earlier said that Chopra will find it tough to beat him in the Olympics, struggled in his first two throws before crossing the automatic qualification mark with a 85.64m final throw.

The 28-year-old towering German, who came into the Olympics after having seven monster throws of over 90m between April and June, was lying at a dangerous seventh position after his first two throws but eventually qualified for the final at second overall behind Chopra.

Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who had won a Bronze medal when he topped the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia, topped Group B to earn an automatic qualification to the finals with a second round throw of 85.16m.

He qualified for the finals at overall third behind Chopra and Vetter. *PTI*



Aditi placed 2nd ahead of big names

Tokyo: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok got off to a brilliant start at the Olympic Games, carding a four-under 67 in the opening round for a share of the second spot at the Kasumigaseki Country Club on Wednesday.

Aditi, who caught the golfing world's attention five years ago at the Rio Olympics, shared the position with World No 1 Nelly Korda.

She was one shot behind the leader, Madalene Sagstrom of Sweden, who shot 66.

"I think I played better than I expected today because I had a lot of hybrids into the greens, so I didn't really expect to be like 5-under through 17," Aditi said.

Aditi may well have had a share of the lead but for a bogey on the 18th hole.

While Sagstrom shot a bogey free five-under 66, Aditi



Aditi Ashok and Nelly Korda on the golf course

had five birdies against one bogey and that on the closing hole.

She was placed well ahead of some big names in women's golf, including the formidable defending champion, Inbee Park (69).

India's other entrant in the

Manpreet & Co aim to end India's 41 years medal drought

Tokyo: A demoralising semifinal defeat behind it, the Indian men's hockey team would need an error-free performance from its defence to secure an Olympic medal after 41 years when it takes on Rio Games Bronze-winner Germany in the third-fourth place play-off match on Thursday.

The Indian defence will have to pull up its socks and avoid repeating the same mistakes which it made against Belgium if they desire to stand on the podium here.

The onus is on the likes of Harmanpreet, Rupinder, Surender Kumar, Amit Rohidas and star goalkeeper PR Sreejesh will have to be on their toes to come out triumphant against the might of Germans.

The Indians also need to

avoid unnecessary tackles in front of their circle.

Going by rankings, there is hardly anything to differentiate between the two sides as India are currently on third place and Germany on fourth. But Germany would be a tough nut to crack. Having lost 1-3 against Australia in the semifinals here, the Germans would be determined to prove a point.

Having failed to secure the Gold medal here after two successive yellow metals in 2008 and 2012 Games, the Germans had to settle for a Bronze in Rio 2016 and they would be determined to at least return with a podium finish from here.

In the Olympics, both the sides have faced each other 11 times recording four wins each and three games ending in draw.

India vs Pak on Oct 24

New Delhi: The marquee T20 World Cup clash between arch-rivals India and Pakistan in all likelihood will be held on October 24, which is a Sunday, even though the ICC will be releasing the official schedule of the tournament in few days.

"As of now, Sunday, October 24 looks the likely option as the first week's Qualifying round matches starting October 17 will be held in Muscat, Oman," a source privy to developments in the ICC board said.

"So when the main round robin fixtures are played, it is better to start with an Indo-Pak game which will have the best TRP," India and Pakistan are slotted in Group 2 along with the WTC winners New Zealand and Afghanistan. *PTI*

TTFI to issue show cause to Manika

New Delhi: Table Tennis Federation of India on Wednesday decided to issue a show cause notice to star paddler Manika Batra for her refusal to take national coach Soumyadeep Roy's help at the Tokyo Olympics.

Though Manika's coach Sanmay Paranjape was given access for training sessions in Tokyo, he did not have the accreditation to enter the field of play and a request to upgrade his access card was denied. In a show of protest, Manika had refused help from designated team coach Roy during her singles matches.

"Before she boarded the flight to Tokyo, she very well knew that her personal coach did not have field of play access. Therefore, she should not have acted the way she did. "We will issue the notice tomorrow and Manika will have 10 days to respond and based on that we will decide what action to be taken further," TTFI secretary general said. *PTI*

England all out for 183 on Day 1

PTI ■ NOTTINGHAM

England were all out for 183 in their first innings against India on the opening day of the first Test here on Wednesday.

Having reached tea at 138 for four, England lost their remaining six wickets for just 45 runs in the day's third and final session.

Skipper Joe Root made 64 off 108 balls, even as the others failed miserably to stand up to the Indian pace bowling attack.

For the visitors, Jasprit Bumrah picked up four wickets for 46 runs, Mohammed Shami had 3/28, while Shardul Thakur bagged 2/41.

England scored 77 runs in 25.2 overs bowled in the afternoon session for the loss of two wickets, after scoring 61 in the first session.

The pitch had enough for the pacers in the first hour of play with the ball swinging and seaming around.

With India going in with four pacers, Shardul Thakur came into the side but the one



Indian players celebrate after England batsman Jonny Bairstow was declared out on Day 1 of first Test *AP*

spinner picked was Ravindra Jadeja, who didn't bowl in the first session.

Dropping premier spinner R Ashwin was a big call as he had been well prepared for the series opener with his prepara-

tion including a county game.

Earlier at tea, Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow frustrated Indian bowlers with solid Test match batting in challenging conditions before Mohammed Shami broke their 72-run stand by dismissing

thwart their attempts.

Shami was finally able to break their threatening stand by having Bairstow leg before at the stroke of tea. Shami got one to jag back in and India reviewed the umpire's decision successfully. England scored 77 runs in 25.2 overs bowled in the afternoon sessions for the loss of two wickets.

India had their tail up early on in the session when Shami had Dom Sibley caught at short mid-wicket in the third over post lunch. Shami made Sibley fall into a trap set for him with the full ball on his pads which the England opener flicked it straight to KL Rahul, leaving the hosts at 66 for three.

Bairstow joined Root in the middle and they ended up batting the rest of the session.

While the Indian pacers kept asking questions with the ball constantly moving around, Root seemed to find answers more often than that. He played with soft hands and close to his body, and was quick to latch on to the loose balls.