

**ANALYSIS 7**  
PEGASUS AFFAIR IS AN  
ASSAULT ON PRIVACY

**MONEY 8**  
ELECTRICITY BILL MAY COME BEFORE  
UNION CABINET FOR APPROVAL

**SPORTS 12**  
SURYA TAKES  
INDIA TO 164-5

HYDERABAD, MONDAY, JULY 26, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



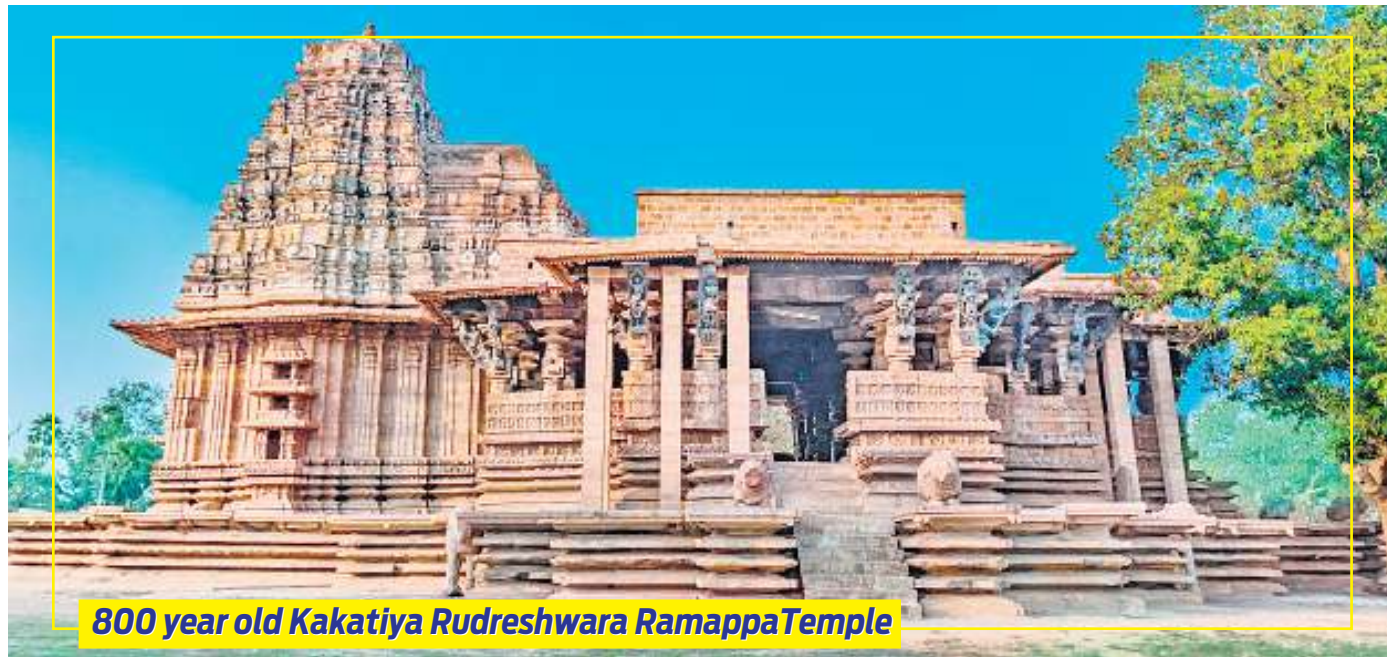
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MADHAVAN ON THE  
IMPORTANCE OF BEING  
KIND, CARING AND  
COMPASSIONATE

Page 11



The majestic Nandi, facing the Lord Shiva shrine in the temple complex, is impressive to this day. Once can discern the veins of this stately animal. Unlike in most of the other Lord Shiva temples in the country, the Nandi here is shown in an attentive posture, as if always ready to execute the command of the Lord



Each pillar of the temple has exquisite sculptures depicting stories from mythology. One can hear musical sounds upon gently striking a pillar or a stone of this temple. The tall, slim and voluptuous nayikas, the Nagini, Madanika or Rati, the gajayalas on the pillars are masterpieces.

## Ramappa gets UNESCO heritage tag



### CM KCR hails UNESCO decision

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday expressed his happiness over historic Ramappa Temple receiving UNESCO World Heritage site status.

The temple is located at Palampeta in Mulugu district of Telangana.



### Happy to share the good news that the 800 year old Kakatiya Rudreshwara #RamappaTemple in #Telangana has been inscribed as a UNESCO #WorldHeritage Site

My compliments to everyone who was involved in the effort

— KT RAMA RAO  
IT and Municipal Minister

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

UNESCO has conferred the World Heritage inscription to the historic Rudreshwara Temple, also known as the Ramappa Temple, at Palampet in Mulugu district of Telangana, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy said on Sunday.

The Rudreshwara temple was constructed in 1213 AD during the reign of the Kakatiya empire by Recherla Rudra, a general of Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and worshiped by devotees.

The presiding deity is Ramalingeswara Swamy.

It is also known as the Ramappa temple, after the sculptor who executed the work in the temple for 40 years, an official release said.

The Union Culture and Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy said in a tweet: "It gives me immense pleasure to share that @UNESCO has conferred the World Heritage tag to Ramappa Temple at Palampet, Telangana. On behalf of the nation, particularly from people of Telangana, I express my grat-

itude to Hon PM @narendramodi for his guidance & support".

**The spiritual and cultural property developed by the Kakatiya Kings with a tremendous creativity, sculptural value has a very special place in the country's cultural heritage.**



The foreground of the temple with the Sabha Mandapa or outer porch.

### Testimony to Kakatiyan architecture

The Ramalingeswara Temple which is popularly known as the Ramappa temple is one such amazing piece of art that stands as a testimony of the royal Kakatiyas. The temple got its name Ramappa because of its chief sculptor Ramappa. It's probably the only temple in the country to be known by the name of its sculptor. The medieval Deccan Ramappa Temple which dates back to 1213 AD, was built by the patronage of the Kakatiya ruler Kakati Ganapathi Deva under the authority of his Chief Commander Rudra Samani at the

place known as Ranakude in the Atakuru province. The Ramappa temple is the right destination for people who admire architectural brilliance and have a panoramic view of true scenic beauty. The temple is situated in Palampet village of the Venkatapur Mandal, in Mulug Taluq of Warangal.

The Ramappa temple has been referred as the brightest star in the network of medieval temples in the Deccan region. You can reach the temple via a royal garden, which is now reduced to a lawn with a path paved by trees. Another striking feature of this

temple is that it is built with bricks that are so light that they can easily float on water. The temple which is situated in a valley took nearly 40 years to be completed. Elaborate carvings line the walls and also cover the pillars and ceilings of the temple. The Ramappa temple finds its hold on a 6 feet high platform on a cruciform plan. The temple's chamber is crowned with a shikharam and is surrounded by pradakshinapatha. At the entrance of the temple, we can find a Nandi mandapam. An imposing Nandi vigraha stands on it.

### 9 tourists dead in Himachal

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Nine tourists were killed and several were injured after a massive landslide hit a bridge in Himachal Pradesh's Sangla valley today. In a terrifying video, large chunks of

rocks can be seen breaking off a mountain and rolling down into the valley below. The video shows a section of the bridge crumbling and plunging into a river after a boulder hits it.

### Excise duty on petrol, diesel hiked by 88% and 209% in 6 yrs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Central excise duty on petrol has almost doubled and gone up by 88 per cent in the last six years while excise duty on diesel has gone up by three times and witnessed a 209 per cent hike during the same period, as fuel prices across the country have crossed Rs 100 per litre.

As on July 1, 2021, central excise duty on petrol is Rs 32.90 per litre inclusive of cess,



### Regional parties should form National Front: Badal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Regional parties should come together and form a national front to take on the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Shriomani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal said on Sunday and assert-

ed that his party's story with the BJP was over.

Underlining that issues of farmers are at the core of the SAD ideology, Mr Badal said his party can never compromise on these and,

### 3.2 cr saplings planted on KTR's birthday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 'Green India Challenge', (GIC)-- one of the major green initiatives in the country, planted as many as 3.2 crore saplings across Telangana to mark the birthday of state IT Minister KT Rama Rao.

The GIC, which undertook the task under the Mukhti Vriksharchana, (planting three crore saplings) programme said it has reached yet another milestone through this massive plantation drive. "With the help of TRS cadre and volunteers, we successfully organised the mammoth task of planting 3.20 crore saplings on the occasion of KTR garus



birthday (July 24)," Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) Rajya Sabha MP Jogenipally Santosh Kumar and GIC founder said in a release on Sunday.

The Forest department said it took up plantation of 40,343 lakh saplings inside forests as part of the programme on Saturday.

### TODAY

#### ALMANAC

##### Month & Paksham:

Ashadha & Shukla Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Tritiya 26:53

Nakshatram : Dhanishtha 10:26

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

Rahukalam : 7:33 am - 9:09 am

Yamagandam : 10:46 am - 12:22 pm

Varjyam : 5:34 pm - 7:09 pm

Gulika : 1:58 pm - 3:35 pm

Good Time : (to start any important work)

Amritakalam : 3:05 am - 4:40 am

Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:56 am - 12:48 pm

#### HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 29/22

Humidity: 88%

Sunrise: 5:53 am

Sunset: 06:51 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated JULY 25, 2021 5:00 PM



# Monday Mirchi

## One more IAS official joins the 'waitlist'

In official circles, there cannot be a greater torture than to wait in the General Administration Department (GAD) indefinitely for posting. In the TRS government, one more IAS officer has joined the 'waitlist' of those who have been transferred without being given a specific post. Four IAS officers viz. Sandeep Kumar Jha, Abdul Azeem, V Venkateswarlu and Anitha Ramachandran were transferred in November last.

These four IAS officers had been serving as collectors. Till now they have not been given any post. Now, as part of recent IAS transfers, Karimnagar District Collector Shashank has been moved. He too has not been given any post, but simply asked to report to GAD. His wait has just begun. Unfazed, Shashank thanked Karimnagar people, officers and public representatives of the district for their support and affection. He took to social media to share that he would always cherish his experiences and then welcomed new collector R V Karnan.

What is being discussed animatedly in IAS circles is why some IAS officers, especially those loyal to the government, are made to wait for long by the TRS government. Are they going to be groomed for something special? When there is a shortage of IAS officers, we have a strange situation where some are waiting impatiently and indefinitely for posting and others are transferred to inconsequential positions or places. These IAS officers do not know whether they have been given punishment; and, if yes, what was their mistake in the first place.

## Gender disparity in TS

There are very few women IPS officers in Telangana -- just about 22 at last count. When it comes to the number of IPS officers across the country, Telangana occupies the 11th position. On this front, Assam has more women IPS officers than the state, according to data presented in Parliament. Questions are now being raised if this paucity of women officers in leadership roles is the reason for the increasing harassment and violence targeting women. Besides, there are 51 women IAS officers in TS. Here again, at least 10 states have far more than this number.

## Mysterious delay in promotions to Spl CS cadre

It has been close to two months since a release did the rounds about the promotion of two senior IAS officers, Principal Secretary - Finance and Director-General of MCRHRD in the rank of Principal Secretary to Government Ramakrishna Rao and Harpreet Singh respectively, to the cadre of Special Chief Secretary. Since it was deemed to be a routine administrative process, nobody imagined that there would be so much delay in its execution that eventually it would have to be treated on par with 'breaking news'. This is so because the undue delay in promotion to the Special CS cadre of the two gentlemen has become a topic of discussion in many circles.

Employees in various government departments look up to IAS officers heading various departments for smooth promotions. Recently there were large-scale promotions in various

government departments, though some of those promoted are yet to be given postings. Their morale takes a beating when they see that their bosses themselves face inexplicable hurdles even after securing approval for promotions from no less a person than the Chief Minister himself.

There are two clear vacancies in the Special CS cadre, given the retirement of Suresh Chanda on March 31 and of Chitra Ramachandran on April 30. In February itself, the Chief Minister had approved in principle promotions to fill those vacancies. Strangely, the file was sent again to the Chief Minister for approval. Many see this as a deliberate delaying tactic. As the head of the State administration, the onus is on the Chief Secretary. It is of course true that he has been busy with his field visits to supervise vaccination and medical infrastructure in health centres to address 'routine' administrative issues.

## Loyalty to whom also matters

In the administrative totem pole, a lot depends on to whom one is loyal. Let's take the case of 2008 batch IAS officer Vadrevu Vinay Chand, who has been transferred from his current post as Vizag Collector. The shift has not surprised many, considering whispers about his imminent transfer have been going around in the corridors of the Velagapudi Secretariat for quite some time. However, the posting of Aarogyasri CEO Dr A Mallikarjuna as Vizag Collector has raised many eyebrows. For, the names of many other worthies were banded about as the next district collector of Vizag. Not many guessed Mallikarjuna could be the dark horse, though he is going to occupy the 'hot seat'. With Vizag billed as the Executive capital of the state and the only metropolitan city in Andhra Pradesh, loyalty matters more than merit when it comes to picking officials. The eyes of all the state's top political bosses are on the lands in Vizag that have turned invaluable these days. Vinay Chand, given his efficiency, could have been continued for some more time, a little birdie from the Velagapudi Secretariat shared. Vinay's undue loyalty towards a top leader of the ruling party cost him his position. The incoming Collector would do well to take a hint from this to survive in Vizag for a reasonably good period. Incidentally, Vinay Chand served as Vizag district collector for exactly two years.

## Kadapa guy is Vizag Collector

Dr A Mallikarjuna, incoming District Collector of Vizag, has been cherry-picked by Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy from his home district Kadapa. His is a success story of grit and remarkable determination. Coming from a very humble background, he cleared the 2012 Civils after five attempts. He was once selected for the Indian Foreign Service. However, he attempted the Civils exam again and secured All India rank 20. He hails from Narasaramiahgaripalle village under the Kadapa Municipal Corporation limits and was a medical graduate from the Kurnool Medical College before he joined civil service. He initially joined the primary health centre at Y Kota village in Obulavaripalle mandal of Kadapa district.

*Yours truly*

# TS, AP may not fight over water this year

**SNCN ACHARYULU**  
■ HYDERABAD

The two Telugu states may not be fighting over water this year as the rain god has blessed both the states with abundant supply of water till now. Most of the reservoirs of the two Telugu states are approaching full capacity. Experts, therefore are hopeful that there will be no shortage of either drinking water or water required for cultivation in Telangana State and AP this year. Generally water disputes arise between the two states when the required level of water is not there in the reservoirs. However, this year the disputes may not arise as the reservoirs will be full.

For the first time in the current season inflows to Srisailem reservoir crossed three lakh cusecs. With this, water storage in the Srisailem

reservoir reached 855.60 feet against total capacity of 885 feet. In the last 12 hours about 8.74 TMC water had reached the Srisailem reservoir. The officials said the storage in the reservoir was changing every hour. At present the inflows into the Srisailem reservoir is 3.72 lakh cusecs and it may further increase. The officials said going by the present inflows, by Monday morning the water storage in the Srisailem reservoir is likely to cross 100 TMC. From Narayanapur reservoir in Karnataka 3.50 lakh cusecs water is reaching Jurla project in Telangana. Due to the continuous heavy rains in the catchment areas of Karnataka and Maharashtra the water flow in the Krishna river and its tributaries is increasing. In view of the heavy inflows in Krishna river the major reservoirs in Karnataka, Almati

and Narayanapur, have reached full capacity level. The Karnataka irrigation officials are reducing the water storage in these reservoirs by releasing water downstream, due to heavy inflows. The Telangana irrigation officials are also reducing the level of water storage in Jurla as heavy inflows are reaching from Karnataka. At present in Jurla the officials are maintaining the water level in the reservoir at 1039.17 feet. From Jurla 3.72 lakh cusecs is being released to the Srisailem reservoir. If the present inflows continue, by next week the Srisailem reservoir will reach its full capacity level.

In the Thungabhadra dam the water has reached 1625.14 feet against the full capacity of 1633 feet. The present inflows into Thungabhadra is 1.2 lakh cusecs. At present the water level at Nagarjuna Sagar is

537.50 feet against the full reservoir capacity of 590 feet. While the out flows from Srisailem is 39 thousand cusecs the inflows into the Nagarjuna Sagar is about 30 thousand cusecs.

Meanwhile, the various projects on the river Godavari are also getting huge inflows. At Bhadrachalam second level warning alert has been issued as the water level there has crossed 48 feet on Saturday evening. In Sriramsagar project the water level has reached 1089.60 feet against the full capacity of 1091 feet. The present inflows out of Sriramsagar is 75 thousand cusecs. The Sripada Yellampally project has also received heavy inflows following which the officials have released 3.75 lakh cusecs water downstream till Saturday. Now the water has been reduced by about one lakh cusecs.

# CM KCR hails UNESCO decision

*Continued from page 1*

The chief minister said that Telangana's spiritual and cultural heritage reflecting the creative and architectural expertise of Kakatiya rulers has a special place in the country.

Chandrasekhar Rao said under the self-rule, the state government is trying to restore Telangana's historical, spiritual and cultural glory.

The chief minister thanked UNESCO's member countries and the central government for helping Ramappa temple get the World Heritage site status. He congratulated the state's public representatives and government officials who

made the efforts in this regard.

Earlier, minister for tourism, culture and archaeology V. Srinivas Goud shared the good news on Twitter. "Happy to announce that the 800-year-old architectural marvel of Kakatiya era Ramappa Temple is inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site," he tweeted.

Minister for municipal administration and urban development K.T. Rama Rao also took to Twitter to compliment everyone involved in the effort. "This is the first world heritage site from Telangana. Next aim is to get world heritage city status for our capital city Hyderabad," he wrote.

## Chalukyan style

*Continued from page 1*

But many books refer to this temple as Eka Kuta or 'single shrine', which is atypical of the Kakatiya style. However, it is not known whether neighboring temples were demolished in the centuries that followed or whether the Ramappa Temple was meant to be a single shrine. The most striking feature of the temple is its jaw-dropping carvings. The shrine boasts massive pillars with elaborate carvings and life-size sculptures that capture movement with great elegance. The most common depictions are dancing figurines.

## 3.2 cr saplings planted on...

*Continued from page 1*

Rama Rao, son of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao is also referred to as KTR.

Santosh Kumar had launched the Green India Challenge, a green campaign, which has now stepped into its fourth year and as part of it crores of saplings have been planted.

## 9 tourists...

*Continued from page 1*

"All the 11 victims were tourists whose vehicle got hit by boulders," said Saju Ram Rana, SP Kinnara, adding the injured have been rushed to a nearby hospital.

A team of doctors is at the spot, he said. The rocks can be seen hitting cars at the foot of the mountain, kicking up a massive cloud of dust.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹259
Without Skin	₹279
Broiler at Farm	₹144
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	465
VIJAYAWADA	524
VISAKHAPATNAM	557
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.65

# Prez Kovind completes 4 years in office

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday completed four years in office, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said, highlighting that he gave assent to 63 Bills of the Union and state governments, besides lauding frontline Covid warriors for saving countless lives across the country among others initiatives.

Kovind, aged 76, was sworn in as the 14th President of India on 25 July, 2017.

"President Ram Nath Kovind completes four years in office today," the Rashtrapati Bhavan said in a tweet and shared an e-book highlighting activities during his fourth year of presidency.

As "Everyone's President",

Kovind visited 13 states and two union territories and met 780 people during these visits, according to the e-book.

As the custodian of the Constitution, the president administered oath of office and secrecy to the members of the council of ministers and the chief justice of India, and gave assent to 43 Bills of the Union government and 20 Bills of the state governments, it said.

For the At Home reception on Independence Day at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, Kovind invited some frontline corona warriors working in Delhi as special guests and lauded their courage and dedication in saving countless lives across the country, the e-book said.

He also celebrated Raksha

Bandhan with nurses of the Trained Nurses' Association of India, Military Nursing Service and the President's Estate Clinic, it said.

The president accepted credentials from 23 foreign heads of Mission via video conferencing.

As the supreme commander of the armed forces, he visited the National War Memorial and paid tributes to the martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice to defend the nation, inaugurated the General Thimayya Museum at Madikeri in Koodagu, Karnataka, and witnessed Joint Services Operational Demonstrations by the Andaman and Nicobar Command at Swaraj Dweep.

Kovind attended a Governor's Conference on the 'Role of National Education Policy (NEP 2020) in Transforming Higher Education' in virtual mode and presented national awards to teachers via video conferencing.

As many as 34,293 people visited the Mughal Gardens during Rashtrapati Bhavan's Annual Udyanotsav in Feb-March 2021, the e-book said in a chapter titled 'an accessible Rashtrapati Bhavan'.

About 4,817 people visited the Rashtrapati Bhavan between February and April 13, and 7,458 visited the Rashtrapati Bhavan Museum between January 2021 and April 13, 2021, it said.

shared photos on twitter of Domino's team in Imphal delivering pizzas to her family.

"Even as we prepare to give #MirabaiChanu a hero's welcome and let her eat pizzas to her heart's content, our Imphal team went to her house to congratulate her family with what else but Domino's Pizza @dominos\_india. Congratulations @mirabai\_chanu you have done India proud!" he tweeted.

JFL, part of Jubilant Bhartia group, is Domino's Pizza franchisee for India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal.

It presently operates a network of 1,380 restaurants in 298 cities in India.

# India registers 39,742 new cases, 535 deaths

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

India added 39,742 new cases of coronavirus infection taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,13,71,901, while the death toll rose to 4,20,551 with 535 fresh fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Sunday.

The active cases have declined to 4,08,212 and comprise 1.30 per cent of the total infections and the national Covid recovery rate has been recorded at 97.36 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed. A decline of 765 cases has been recorded in the active Covid caseload in a span of 24 hours.

## Regional parties...

*Continued from page 1*

Therefore, severed its decades-old alliance with the BJP and moved out of the government at the Centre over three contentious farm laws.

"SAD is a farmers' party and their issues are core of our ideology. Whatever may happen and whatever cost we may have to pay, we would not let these laws be implemented in Punjab," Badal said.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19. India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23. As many as 17,18,756 tests were conducted on Saturday taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far for detection of COVID-19 in the country to 45,62,89,567.



**FLORAL BEDECKING**

Goddess Vanadurga Bhavani of Sri Yedupayala temple appears to devotees in a special decoration with flowers in the month of Ashada Masam in Medak district on Sunday. Devotees thronged the temple from Hyderabad, Karnataka and Maharashtra and fulfilled their vows.



# Sec'bad comes alive with Bonalu

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Thousands of devotees flocked the Ujjaini Mahankali temple in Secunderabad here on Sunday as the annual Lashkar Bonalu was celebrated with traditional gaiety.

Devotees, especially women, queued up at the historic temple and other Mahankali temples in Secunderabad since early morning to offer 'Bonam', containing cooked rice, jaggery, curd and neem leaves to goddess Sri Mahankali.

A festive atmosphere prevailed in the area as people from various parts of the state descended to participate in the traditional festival being celebrated with Covid-19 protocol. Animal Husbandry Minister T. Srinivas Yadav along with family members presented first 'Bonam' and silk clothes to the goddess on behalf of the state government. Endowments Minister A. Indrakaran Reddy also offered prayers.

The ministers said they offered for an early end to Covid-19 pandemic and for the welfare and prosperity of people. Yadav said that the govern-



ment has made all arrangements for the smooth conduct of the Bonalu festivities. He appealed to people to follow all Covid-19 precautions while participating in the celebrations.

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's wife Shobha, along with family members, visited the temple and offered 'Bonam' and silk robes. She was accompanied by Rajya Sabha MP J. Santosh Kumar.

Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, Labour Minister Malla Reddy, Telangana Congress chief Revanth Reddy and filmmaker Dil Raju were among the prominent personalities who offered prayers.

Union Culture and Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy, who is a Lok Sabha member from Secunderabad, greeted people on the occasion of Bonalu.

Police made elaborate arrangements for smooth pas-

sage of devotees during the darshan. Vehicular traffic was diverted at several points in Secunderabad to facilitate smooth movement of devotees. Additional police personnel were deployed as part of the elaborate security arrangements.

Senior police officials were monitoring the festivities through CCTV cameras. Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and other civic departments made necessary arrangements for the devotees.

Darshan and offering of Bonam will continue till early hours of Monday. The festival will conclude on Monday with famous 'Rangam' where predictions about the state's future will be made by an unmarried woman, followed by the Ghatam procession.

This will be followed by a procession of a caparisoned elephant carrying a portrait of the deity. Smeared with turmeric and vermilion, potharaju dance to rhythmic drumbeats in the procession that will pass through various areas. Bonalu in Secunderabad, or Lashkar Bonalu as it is

called, is the second phase of the nearly month-long traditional festival.

The traditional folk festival began on July 11 at the Jagadambika Temple on Golconda Fort here.

Public events during Bonalu were cancelled by the state government last year in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, with the lifting of Covid-19 related restrictions last month, the government allowed people's participation this time.

This year, the festivities are being organised with mass gatherings and traditional procession. The organisers have been directed to ensure adherence to Covid-19 protocol, including wearing of masks and social distancing.

Ashada Bonalu is a festival held in the month of Ashada, according to the Hindu calendar, celebrating goddess Mahankali. Devotees, especially women make offerings in the form of food to goddess Mahankali in specially decorated pots. During the nearly month-long festival, people also hold 'rangam' or forecast- ing the future, organise processions and cultural events.

# Continuous rains bring back potholes on roads in GHMC

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The incessant rain in Hyderabad caused massive damage to the city's roads. Many low-lying areas are flooded with rainwater causing potholes on the roads which are perilous to vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Four days of continuous rain caused more than 3,900 potholes which are in a bad shape. An official of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) informed that the corporation will undertake road repairing work soon.

The people are facing great inconvenience due to these potholes. The condition of the roads at Chandrayangutta Flyover, Mallapur, Nacharam, Kawadiguda, Aramghar, Mehdiptnam, and other areas is extremely bad.

Deep potholes are also cropped up at important lanes like Moosarambag, Begumpet, Indranagar, Langarhouse, Malakpet, Saidabad, Chadarghat, Bundlaguda,



Falaknuma, Karwan, Ziaguda, Amberpet, Puranapul, Bhadurpura, Kishanbagh and other areas.

The GHMC official said that the city roads are in a bad shape due to the heavy rains this week. Either the black top-pings of the roads or even the whole roads were washed away in some places due to the rainwater.

The digging work undertaken by various utilities such as Telecom cables, drainage, and water pipelines which are not leveled on time is also causing great inconvenience to the

traffic. The GHMC is currently undertaking road patch-work in response to public complaints. The Telangana high court too expressed its displeasure over the bad condition of the city's roads and sought zonal road repair reports.

Meanwhile, activists criticized the quality of the work. "The roads were not able to resist three days of moderate rain. I urge the civic body to keep a vigil on contractors and ensure that the roads last longer," said Sai Teja, an activist.

# Worker threatens builder using abusive 'porn video'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Banjara Hill Police on Sunday have registered a case against a Kerala-based construction worker for threatening a building owner in the city to pay pending dues by sending an abusive video.

The worker has not only sent the video to the owner of the building but also claimed that the person in the video is the wife of the latter.

Irrked over the issue, the couple has registered a complaint with the Banjara Hills Police.

According to the police, the couple engaged in construction business for almost 16 years has started construction of a new building in the year 2018. They have engaged workers from Kerala to complete the construction of building.

A few problems including GST approvals and others have pushed them into financial trouble. The couple could not make payments to the construction workers due and the workers went back to Kerala.

The workers have tried to get their payment by following up through phone calls and messages. Not getting a response from the couple, a worker has sent an abusive porn video to the builder and claimed that the woman in the video is the wife of the builder. He started threatening and blackmailing the builder for money showing the video.

The couple has registered a complaint with the police against the worker and submitted the video sent by the accused. The police have registered a case under 354c and 503 and started investigating the case.



**GO GREEN**

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) organised a tree sapling plantation drive at its unit campus at NFC Hyderabad on Sunday. During the plantation program, the CISF personnel and their families planted around 400 saplings of various varieties of food bearing plants. The CISF is taking up sapling plantation program across the country at its facilities to advocate the significance of afforestation, said A Yamini Priya, DIG/ DAE Headquarters - I Hyderabad. A total of 180 CISF personnel and 80 members of Sanrakshika participated in the programme.

# HMWSSB closes two gates of Himayat Sagar, Osman Sagar

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) on Sunday closed two gates each of Himayat Sagar and Osman Sagar.

Presently, five out of 17 gates of the reservoir are open with all the gates of Osman Sagar being closed. The gates

were lifted to drain the flood water into Musi and keep water level in the reservoirs under control. As the rains have stopped in the last two days, the gates were closed.

The water bodies in Hyderabad have received abundant inflows due to continuous rains that lashed the city for more than a week.

On Sunday the water level

at Himayat Sagar was recorded at 1,762.25 feet against the FTL of 1,763.50 feet. The reservoir capacity is 2.97 TMC and the water level is 2.65TMC.

Meanwhile, at Osman Sagar the levels were recorded as 1,785.50 feet against the FTL of 1,790.00 feet. The reservoir capacity is 3.90 TMC and the water level is 2.97 TMC.

# Hyderabad docs save 80-year-old with heart defect

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Heart surgeons at Gleneagles Global Hospitals, Lakdikapul saved the life of an 80-year-old woman who had a congenital heart defect and suffered a heart attack.

According to surgeons, instead of the normal left sided, the elderly woman had a right-sided aortic arch, a rare congenital anomaly.

The cardiologists performed angiogram and angioplasty to place the stent, which saved the life of the woman. "Post procedure, we kept the patient under close observation for a couple of days and on realizing she was responding well to the treatment and her vitals got stabilized, she was discharged to return to her daily routine," added Dr Sai Sudhakar. The patient's daughter was elated once her mother was out of danger and was working fine after the procedure, added CEO Gaurav Khurana, Global Hospitals.

# Man, daughter killed in mishap

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a tragic incident, a farmer and his 15-year-old daughter were killed on the spot when the two-wheeler they were travelling on rammed into a bullock cart on the Hyderabad-Nagpur national highway at Mannur village in Gudihathnoor mandal on Sunday.

Gudihathnoor Probationary Sub-Inspector L Praveen said the deceased were identified as Tarade Ganesh (40) and his younger daughter Kalpana, a Class X student, residents of Harkapur village in Indervelli mandal.

Ganesh and Kalpana were gravely wounded when the two-wheeler collided with the bullock cart coming from the opposite direction, resulting in instantaneous death for the duo.

They had fatal head injuries due to the impact of the accident. The rider of the cart Ranga Rao of Mannur was on the wrong side of the road leading to the mishap. A pall of gloom descended over Harkapur village with tragic deaths of the farmer and his daughter.

Based on a complaint filed by Ganesh's wife, a case was registered against Ranga Rao. Police took up investigations.

# OGH gets 50-bed ICU ward

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Principal secretary of Industries & Commerce and Information Technology departments Jayesh Ranjan on Sunday inaugurated a 50-bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU) ward at Osmania General Hospital (OGH), set up by Cognizant, in partnership with Round Table India Trust, at a cost of Rs 1.05 crore.

The ICU ward is equipped with multipara monitors, suction apparatus double jar, syringe pumps, automated external defibrillators, six and twelve channels' ECG machines and a new elevator for patients.

The facility is a significant boost to the medical infrastructure and aims to make state-of-the-art critical care health services accessible to underserved communities of the city. The project is part of 'Operation C3' - Cognizant's Covid nation-wide rapid response programme to combat the pandemic. The new ICU ward would cater to poor patients. Osmania General



Hospital Superintendent Dr Nagender said already the hospital has 250 ICU beds and these 50 beds are added additionally.

Speaking at the event, Ranjan said, "Preparedness is the best way to handle any crisis, including the pandemic. No patient should miss out the treatment due to the lack of medical infrastructure. The effort undertaken by Cognizant and Round Table India Trust in setting up this ICU ward at OGH is commendable and their initiative will enable the government hospital in dealing with any future wave and help mitigate the crisis."

"I am happy that with this facility coming up, even the poor will be able to utilise the most advanced health infrastructure," he said and thanked Cognizant for their support and Round Table India Trust for their coordination.

The IT Principal Secretary also appreciated the services offered by the Helping Hands Foundation for guiding, counselling patients and creating awareness about healthy living.

"Initiatives like these are a step forward in enabling timely treatment to Covid patients and making it safer for health workers to carry on their fight against the virus," he added.

# One injured in explosion

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

One person was injured in an explosion reported at Peddemul in Vikarabad on Sunday.

The injured person was identified as Venkatesh, 19, a resident of Peddemul village in the mandal.

The explosion that took place near the house of B Yadaiah left Venkatesh seriously injured. The police found pesticides and powder at the spot where the explosion occurred.

Vikarabad Superintendent of Police M Narayana, who visited the spot of the explosion confirmed that the police found some powder and other pesticides stored in some bags.

"Our bomb squad collected the material and sent it to the laboratory for examination. An investigation is going on to ascertain the cause of the explosion," he said.

Police suspect that the explosion might have resulted from improper handling of the substances.

# Gutka worth Rs 3.6L seized, one arrested

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

The task force sleuths on Sunday conducted raid on a house in Mandamarri and confiscated banned tobacco products smuggled into the district from Maharashtra. The officials seized tobacco products worth Rs 3,60,000 and the vehicle used for transporting the tobacco products.

On receiving a tip off that a resident of Mandamarri, Pindi Suresh Hussain was smuggling tobacco products in 18 bags, the task force sleuths, led by Sub-Inspectors Lachchanna, Ramesh and Bhupesh, conducted the raid and confiscated the vehicle and tobacco products and took driver Shaik Hussain into custody.

Two others involved in the racket Pindi Suresh, resident of

Mandamarri, and Mahabub, resident of Akola in Maharashtra, are at large.

Task force Circle Inspector Mahender Said the raids were conducted on directions from Ramagundam commissioner of police Satyanarayana.

For the past several days, raids were conducted at Jananaram, Laxetipet, Mancheril, Chennuru, Bellampalli and Mandamarri to check the smuggling of gutka. Shaik Hussain, confiscated tobacco products and the vehicle used for transporting gutka were handed over to Mandamarri police station for further inquiry.

Task force sleuths Sampat Kumar, Rakesh, Srinivas, Shyam, Sunder, Sadanandam Goud, Venkatesh, Omkar and Kiran took part in the raid.

# Suicide preventive steps 'inadequate' in Cherlapally jail

G RAVI KIRAN ■ HYDERABAD

In a worrying trend for prison officials, convicts in Telangana are increasingly resorting to suicide in jails.

The suicide prevention measures in Cherlapally Central Prison draws criticism after the deaths of two inmates in a week. A prisoner, who is under remand, has committed suicide at the Cherlapally Central Prison on Saturday.

The man, identified as Shaik Khaja Miya alias Khaja Baba, 35, of BN Reddy Nagar in Cherlapally, was sent to the prison on July 7 after being arrested by the Kushaiguda police in connection with a case of theft. This incident happened while he was getting treatment in the hospital of the



jail.

On Saturday morning, he was found hanging in the barracks. The jail staff after administering first aid rushed

him to Osmania General Hospital where he was declared brought dead, said A Manmohan, SHO (Kushaiguda).

The Kushaiguda police, based on a complaint from Jailor Ramakrishna Gotte booked a case under Section 176 of CrPC and took up investigation. The higher officials have ordered for an inquiry on the incident.

Meanwhile, on July 18, another prisoner identified as Banoth Srinu Naik a native of Turpu Tanda in Siddipet, who was involved in a case of murder at his native place, also committed suicide at the prison. Just after a week, now Khaja Mia has committed suicide.

Being having the responsibility of protecting prisoners, the jail authorities remained mum on these two incidents. However, they claim that the reasons for both the suicides are not the jail environment

and it could be for personal reasons.

When asked an official about the measures being taken at the jail to prevent suicides, he said, "A prisoner may behave normally in the jail and show no sign of any mental issue."

But the fact they having such problems was revealed by psychologists who conduct the tests through questionnaires. After the counseling, if the prisoners need more help, they will be taken to Institute of Mental Health at Erragadda.

Prison officials do offer help to such prisoners, but it is not enough at times. "We have counselling sessions for the prisoners. Our officials speak to them when they are brought to the jail," said another official.



# Gazette notification by Centre puts Telugu states in tight spot

**PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR**

The Centre has to involve in the water disputes between Telugu states as the two states have been found to be drawing water freely to gain upper hand over the other. The Centre entrusted the management of irrigation projects to the concerned river water management boards. In the gazette issued by the Union Government, it asked the states to put on hold the projects for which there is no permission if they fail to secure the permission within six months. The decision kicked off enough dust in Mahabubnagar district.

In undivided Andhra Pradesh, Ranga Reddy and Mahabubnagar received a raw deal from irrigation perspective. The districts are not getting their due share in inter-state river waters.

The two states lodged complaints with the Centre against each other and fighting between themselves for supremacy. They took mea-



asures that created tension among the people.

The Centre had to use the weapon in its armoury - releasing a gazette notification giving full powers to the inter-state river water management boards. The decision affected Mahabubnagar and Ranga Reddy districts in using their right to use inter-state river water. As the gazette notification did not mention at least one project in the two districts, these districts are not able to draw at least one tmc of water. The two districts are situat-

ed in the catchment areas of Krishna, Tungabhadra and Beema rivers. The people of the two districts are concerned over their inability to get their due share in the water for irrigation.

In erstwhile district, it was conceived to execute Upper Krishna and Beema projects in association with the then Mysore State. Carving out of states along the linguistic lines, the proposals had to be shelved. As a result, the two districts have lost opportunity to draw 170 tmc of water. In the

new states, no projects were taken up in Mahabubnagar and Ranga Reddy districts.

No significant project other than 11.90-tmc Jurala project and RDS Left Canal project was implemented. As misfortune of people of Mahabubnagar district would have it, the successive rulers of the state did not show any initiative in this regard.

Therefore, during the undivided AP rule, protests were staged for allocation of their due share in Mahabubnagar and Ranga Reddy districts. As a result of the agitations, Mahatma Gandhi Kalwakurti LI Scheme, Beema Phase -1 and 2, Nettempadu and Koil Sagar were conceived.

At the height of the movement for Telangana, the then government gave its green signal to Palamuru-Ranga Reddy LI scheme. But the works on the project have been grounded only in the new state of Telangana.

Jurala Project, MGKLI scheme, Koil Sagar project, two phases of Beema project,

Nettempadu project in undivided Mahabubnagar district could not use at least one tmc of water. If the Palamuru-Ranga Reddy LI scheme is completed, another tmc of water can be put to good use.

A glance at the water being drawn to AP from Srisailem project indicates that the AP government is taking 40-43 tmc of water per day for execution of seven irrigation projects drawing water for them through Pothireddypadu project.

In this backdrop, experts have been suggesting the government to take up irrigation projects in Mahabubnagar region to put to use at least 25 tmc of water.

Irrigation experts indicate a project should be conceived at the place of confluence of Beema and Krishna rivers to use five tmc of water per day. The proposed project would fulfil the objective of the government to provide irrigation facility to the lands located in upper reaches in Mahabubnagar and Ranga Reddy districts.

## ZPTC members authorised invitees for MPP meetings, says Agri Minister

**PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL**

Minister for Agriculture Singireddy Niranjan Reddy has directed the officials to invite ZPTC members for the mandal development meeting as they will be treated as permanent members in Mandal Praja Parishads (MPP) henceforth. He said on Sunday that the ZPTC members will be considered permanent members of all development committees held at the mandal level meeting.

The Minister attended the general body meeting of the Nagarkurnool district Zilla Praja Parishad (ZPP) held at Tirumala Function Hall here on Sunday as a chief guest. Speaking on the occasion, he said the ZPTC members have complained to him as they have not been invited to the mandal development meetings. Henceforth, they will be invited to all the meetings such as cooperative, marketing and other departments. The officials have to invite the ZPTCs here onwards. He asked the District Collector to institute the Nagarkurnool district hospital development committee and also directed to



set up 'Mana Isuka Vahanam' in the district introduced in all the districts.

Stating that the members have brought to his notice that compensation has not been paid to the farmers whose lands were submerged in Kalwakurthy and Dindi Lift irrigation schemes, he said he would initiate measures if the complete details are given to him. He directed the agriculture and panchayat raj officials to furnish details of pending bills pertaining to Rythu Vedikas and Vaikunthadhamas.

The officials should make efforts to set up one natural park in every mandal if possible more parks. Funds will be released for protecting and watering the plants planted as part of Harithaharam and

they will be released from March. He suggested the officials make a resolution in the Zilla Parishad to release funds from November onwards.

He also suggested that resolutions must be made for building new village panchayat offices under material components as per NREGS to get funds.

The officials and people's representatives should work with the commitment to gain self-satisfaction.

Zilla Parishad chairperson Peddapally Padmavathi, who presided over the general body meeting, said the officials should take appropriate steps on the issues discussed and problems and same be informed to the members.

## TRS purchased software to tap phones: Uttam Kumar

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy alleged that the government officials are becoming part of sand, land, mines and wine mafia activities. He said that the people will teach a lesson at an appropriate time.

He alleged that the TRS government purchased software like Pegasus from Israel to tap the phones of leaders of Opposition parties. He alleged that the TRS government had been tapping the phones of Opposition leaders since 2014. He criticized the Chief Minister for tapping the phones of MLAs as he has no belief in his own Ministers. Uttam demanded that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar



Rao answer on it.

He alleged that the Chief Minister brought the Dalit Bandhu scheme onto the screen to deceive Dalits another time in the state. He alleged that KCR brought the Dalit Bandhu scheme only for the

sake of the Huzurabad by-poll.

While speaking to the media at Indira Bhavan in Huzurnagar on Sunday, Uttam alleged that KCR didn't give 3-acre land and double bedroom houses to at least one per cent of beneficiaries in the state. However, KCR gave more ministerial posts to the community which has half per cent of the total population.

The KCR government failed to do justice to the 16 per cent prevailing Madiga community based on population. He threw a challenge at KCR to speak on the Dalit Bandhu scheme only after gathering Rs 1.5 lakh crore. He questioned KCR why he had diverted the SC, ST Sub-plan funds to other schemes.



### 'ME TIME'

In Rajanna Sircialla district, with tanks in villages filled, fishes are being washed away along the stream. Hundreds of villagers, familiar with the flow, are spending their recreational time at the village tanks and are trying to catch the fishes. Incessant rains have filled water tanks and bodies across Telangana. For the last one week, the state has been witnessing heavy rains affecting the normal order, but in some villages the rains have come as a boon as the people are trying their hands in fishing



## ZP chief promises to build bridge replacing causeway

**PNS ■ MULUG**

Zilla Parishad Chairman Kusuma Jagadeeshwar has directed ITDA engineers to prepare plans to take up construction of a bridge replacing the causeway where rainwater is overflowing causing inconvenience to the tribal people in the agency areas.

ZP Chairman Jagadeeswar on Sunday inspected the flood-hit areas in Kothaguda mandal in Mulug constituency. When he received a memorandum from the tribal leaders seeking his support to build a bridge in the existing causeway across Kattara rivulet near Velubelli village, he responded spontaneously

and instructed ITDA SE Shankar Rao over the phone to prepare plans to build a permanent bridge across the rivulet.

The Zilla Parishad Chairman also examined the Ekalavya school which is under construction at Pougullapalli village. He asked the ITDA engineer about the progress of the school. He said various causeways and bridges had been damaged due to floods to the rivulet and it was brought to the notice of district in-charge Minister Satyavathy Rathore. Restoration works will be taken up soon to avoid inconvenience to the agency people, he added.

## MLA inaugurates fertilizer centre in Zaheerabad town

**PNS ■ ZAHEERABAD**

MLA Koninti Manick Rao has inaugurated a DCMS fertilizer centre at Nyalkal in Zaheerabad constituency on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said the farmers of the mandal must utilise the services at Rythu Seva Kendra established by the government. The farmers had faced many hardships to get fertilizers earlier as there was a heavy shortage. But, during the regime of TRS government fertilizers are being supplied at the doorstep of the farmers.

The MLA asked the local in-charge Padakanti Venkatesam to be readily available always to the farmers of the mandal.

## Four from each village for Dalit Bandhu meet

**PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR**

District Collector RV Karnan on Sunday decided to send two women, two men from each and every village in Huzurabad Assembly constituency for taking part in Dalit Bandhu awareness programme to be held at Pragati Bhavan in Hyderabad on Monday with Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao in chair.

The district Collector held a meeting with district officials, MPDOs, MPO at the MLA's camp office in Huzurabad in this regard.

He asked the MPDOs and MPOs to bring people to reach Huzurabad by 6 am on Monday. He asked them to take proper travel arrangements to



send them to Hyderabad.

Government authorities Shyam Prasad Lal, Garima Agarwal, Warangal rural development department officials Srilata Reddy, Srinivas, Mandal level special officers, MPDOs, MPOs and others took part in the meeting.

## TPCC chief to announce new team after Parliament session

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

TPCC Chief A Revanth Reddy has expedited the exercise of selecting the new TPCC vice-presidents, general secretaries, secretaries, treasurer and official spokespersons.

According to sources, the TPCC chief will announce the names for the posts after the ongoing Parliament's monsoon session completing the process.

The TPCC chief has to finalise the leaders for the posts of 10 vice-presidents, 20 general secretaries, one treasurer, 40 secretaries, 4 official spokespersons, 33 DCC presidents as well as organising secretaries for towns and blocks.

### 'KCR's schemes only during polls'

TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy demanded the Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao to give Dalit Bandhu to 1.35 crore Dalits and informed that the Congress party will bugle 'Dalith Girijan Dandora' with one lakh Dalits at Indravelli on August 9 on the day the people observe Quit India Day across the nation. The Dalith Girijan Dandora would continue till September 17. He alleged that the Chief Minister will remember schemes only during by-polls. He questioned KCR to tell whether the latter will bring schemes only when there are by-polls. What about Dalits of 118 constituencies, he questioned.

The TPCC chief has to get the nod from the AICC chief Sonia Gandhi after selecting the members for the posts to replace the old TPCC Committee.

TPCC chief completed 90 percent of the work in selecting the leaders for the above

said names, while the remaining names would be announced after the approval from the High Command. It is learnt that Revanth is encouraging new faces while keeping the higher level leaders intact to make a great combination of experienced and young leaders.

## When Nirmal's people went fishing on roads

**PNS ■ NIRMAL**

It literally rained fish at Nirmal town in Telangana during the recent flood and heavy downpour, making people run on the roads to catch fish.

People caught fish as big as 5 kg which swam out following breaches in three lakes.

"The washed out fish were so plentiful that a few people from the fishermen community even filled up a tractor truck with fish to sell them away," Uma Maheshwar said.

People from the fishermen community, known as Gundla, netted many fish and sold them.

Maheshwar, 45, is from Dilawarpur village near Nirmal, which also experienced a flood of water as well



as fish. He said there are 6,000 voters in his village and each and every household managed to get at least one fish.

Incidentally, kotha cheruvu (water tank) in the village, whose fish were not caught for

more than two years, supplied a good number of the fish after getting washed out.

Maheshwar said he never saw fish swim on the road and end up being an easy catch for the villagers, especially on the

Manjulapur to Nirmal road.

There were so many fishes that the prices came crashing down, disappointing the fishermen community and enabling the villagers with sufficient free fish to feast on for three days.

"I never saw fish coming onto the road. I have been observing floods since 25 - 30 years. This big rain never occurred in July. Generally it would be September or October," he noted.

According to the villager, the breached lakes destroyed almost all the paddy fields and other crops in Dilawarpur village and Nirmal.

As two of the three tanks are empty now, Maheshwar and his fellow villagers are lamenting that precious water which

would have been useful for agriculture has just flowed out waste.

Not just the fields, the flood fury has also totally destroyed roads.

Nirup Kumar Rajaram, a Nirmal native said GNR Colony got totally inundated in the flood waters.

"My plot also got inundated because of a nearby swollen stream," said Rajaram.

Dilawarpur sarpanch lamented that farmers in Sarangpur and Dilwarpur have suffered immense losses due to the recent flood.

Nirmal Collector Musharraf Ali Faruqui said the post-flood relief operations are continuing, ensuring the wellbeing of households and proper sanitation of the affected areas.

"Water has cleared from the inundated houses which are affected by the heavy rainfall that occurred on Thursday at GNR Colony," said Faruqui, juxtaposing images of flooded condition and receded condition.

He thanked the fishermen community for rescuing many people stuck in the flood for their timely support and leadership. NDRF teams have also lent a helping hand in rescuing the colony people.

Along with Forest Minister Indrakaran Reddy, the collector braved the rain and actively went around trying to mitigate the flood damage. The rain and flood may have washed up some fish but they caused extensive damage to the farmers and their fields.

## 'Ensure uninterrupted power supply in state'

**PNS ■ YADADRI**

Energy Minister G Jagadish Reddy on Sunday underlined the need to focus on planting saplings and ensuring cleanliness in villages and towns in view of the incessant rains.

Attending the Zilla Parishad general body meeting of Yadadri-Bhongir district held in ZP meeting hall at Bhongir, Jagadish Reddy said the rains have created favourable conditions for planting saplings under Telangana Ku Haritha Haram. At the same time, there was a need to accord importance to the sanitation and cleanliness in villages and towns during the monsoon season, when seasonal dis-

eases can break out, he added.

Stating that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao took up Pallo Pragathi programme to develop infrastructure facilities in rural areas, he said that every village should get Pallo Pakruthi Vanam, Vaikuntadhamam and dumping yard under the programme.

He also instructed the officials of Transco to ensure an uninterrupted power supply. The officials should alert the people living along with Musi river on the water levels from time to time, he instructed.

Rajya Sabha member Badugula Lingaiah Yadav, Zilla Parishad Chairman Aliminetti Sandeep Reddy and officials were present.



## Actress Gehana Vashishth, two others fail to appear before police

Actress Gehana Vashishth and two other persons, who were summoned by the Mumbai crime branch in connection with a pornography case, failed to appear for questioning on Sunday, a police official said. Notably, the police recently arrested businessman Raj Kundra, husband of Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty, in connection with a case, which it said, related to alleged creation of pornographic films and publishing them through some apps. After Kundra's arrest, Vashishth, who worked in three films produced for Kundra's app, had in a video said erotic content was different from pornography. Gehana Vashishth and two others were recently summoned by the crime branch's property cell, but they failed to reach the police office here on Sunday, the official said. Before the Mumbai crime branch took over the case, there was a complaint with the Maharashtra cyber department about the porn films racket, a senior police official earlier said. The Malvani police had filed FIRs on the basis of complaints received from two women, while another one woman had submitted a complaint at the Lonavla police station, around 120 km from Mumbai, he said.



## Blinken's India visit: Afghan situation, terror havens in Pak to figure in talks

The implications of the withdrawal of American troops on the security situation in Afghanistan and the need for sustained pressure on Pakistan on terror financing and terrorist safe havens will be on the agenda of talks during US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's two-day visit to India from July 27, official sources said on Sunday. In the discussions, India will press for gradual resumption of international travel while maintaining health protocols, and will particularly seek easing movements of students, professionals and business travellers among others, they said. India will continue to push for ensuring open and consistent supply chains for materials and items required for the production of coronavirus vaccines as it ramps up the manufacturing for domestic and global supplies thereafter, the sources said. During his two-day visit, Blinken is scheduled to meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and will call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



## 'No follow-up results' after meeting with PM: Farooq Abdullah

A month after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's outreach to mainstream leaders of Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah said on Sunday that there has been 'no follow-up results' on the ground. Abdullah said this in reference to the prime minister's remarks at the June 24 meeting in New Delhi that he wanted to win the hearts of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and remove 'Dilli ki doori' (the distance from Delhi) and 'dil ki doori' (distance between hearts). "That was a welcome statement but there is no effort on the ground to win the hearts of the people. People continue to be locked up and dissent is not tolerated. We want to see the change on the ground, a visible effort to win back the people who went through the trauma of their state being dismembered, its special status removed in one sudden blow," the three-time former chief minister told PTI here. "...we are yet to see any follow-up results even after a month," he said. "Trust is something that has been missing from both sides (Delhi and Srinagar). Successive prime ministers -- Jawaharlal Nehru, Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee -- made promises but the trust deficit has persisted," he added.



# ISRO's customised programme takes off with 8 firms on board

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation's customised space-themed merchandise programme in partnership with industry has taken off with multiple companies on board.

Now, one will be able to purchase authorised products connected to ISRO's missions and work, such as scale models, T-shirts, mugs, space-themed educational games, science toys, and more.

ISRO believes this brand promotion exercise can play a game-changing role in creating awareness and kindling interest of students, children and public, in the domain of space science & technology, and propagating its achievements.

"Eight companies have so far registered with ISRO on a non-exclusive basis with a registration fee regarding customised ISRO-theme based articles / models", an official of the Bengaluru headquartered space agency, under the Department of Space (DoS), told PTI on Sunday.

They include Indic Inspirations (Pune), 1947IND (Bengaluru), and Ankur Hobby Centre (Ahmedabad), sources said.



"We will soon be launching a whole collection of ISRO themed Merchandise that will appeal to all Indians and Science & Space enthusiasts alike," said Founder and CEO of Indic Inspirations, Sunil

Jalihal, recently. As part of the MoUs, ISRO shares the themes, general arrangement drawings, images or any other design for enabling these companies to use them appropriately "with-

out causing any damage to the pride of the department".

Specific samples of catalogued ISRO identifiers, which will be updated from time to time, would be made available to registered companies which have shared their product details with the space agency.

According to the terms and conditions, the party (registered companies) shall avoid using the ISRO identifier, imagery, etc. on products such as doormats, slippers, or any such items, which affect the reputation/ image of the organisation. "Wherever 3D models and 2D drawings are being used to make scaled models, LEGO sets, jigsaw puzzle, etc., extra care shall be taken to ensure accuracy and ISRO intellect," they read.

"The rates for the merchandise shall be reasonable in line with market conditions, as there is no brand value charged by ISRO to the party," as per the MoUs.

"ISRO never takes any responsibility for the sale or after sale of the items, for the delivery, quality or damages due to sale".

The initiative came from ISRO after many companies interested in creating customised articles and handicrafts approached it for themes.

## Dalai Lama condoles loss of lives, writes to CM showing solidarity

PNS ■ DHARMASHALA

Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama has written to Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, expressing grief over the loss of lives due to rain-related incidents in the state and also donated to the ongoing relief and rescue efforts. The death toll from the torrential rains that have battered Maharashtra's Pune and Konkan divisions over the last three days and triggered landslides in some areas rose to 112 on Saturday, including 52 in the coastal Raigad district alone. Moved by news reports about the loss of lives, damage to properties and suffering faced by so many people in Maharashtra as a result of devastating flooding over the last few days, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written to the chief minister to offer his prayers and condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones, a statement said. "I understand that the state government and concerned authorities are making every effort to help those affected by severe monsoon rains. As a gesture of our solidarity with the people of Maharashtra, I have asked the Dalai Lama Trust to make a donation towards relief and rescue efforts," the statement said quoting the Dalai Lama.

## 'PM must make statement in Parl on Pegasus row'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday said the government should either call for a joint parliamentary committee probe into the Pegasus snooping allegations or request the Supreme Court to appoint a sitting judge to investigate the matter, and demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi make a statement in Parliament clarifying whether there had been surveillance or not.

The former home minister said he was not sure that one can go to the extent of saying that the entire electoral mandate of 2019 was vitiated by the "unlawful snooping" but added that it may have "helped" the BJP to score that victory which has been "tainted" by the allegations.

In an interview with PTI, Chidambaram also said a probe by a joint parliamentary



committee (JPC) can be more effective than an investigation by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, asserting that the former would be more empowered by Parliament.

Asked about Parliament IT panel head Shashi Tharoor's remarks that the subject is "already on the mandate of my committee" and a JPC is not required, Chidambaram expressed doubts whether the IT panel with a majority of BJP members will allow a full investigation into the matter.

## Pak trying to maintain supply lines to terror groups using drones: Police chief

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

The improvised explosive device (IED) dropped using a drone along the Indo-Pak border on July 23 was meant for triggering at a crowded market in Jammu region, and it shows that Pakistan is maintaining its supply lines to various terror groups despite the February ceasefire agreement, Jammu and Kashmir Police chief Dilbag Singh said on Sunday.

Singh, a 1987-batch IPS officer, said terror groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) have been running short of arms and ammunition after the police and other security agencies managed to choke it by arresting many of their modules of Over Ground Workers (OGWs).

"We see that some of the state actors in Pakistan have adopted the use of drones for dropping arms, ammunition and even cash to cater to the



demands of terror groups since September last year," he told PTI here.

The police managed to shoot down a hexa-copter that had come from Pakistan in Kanachak area of Jammu region along the International Border on July 23.

It carried an IED, weighing five kg, that was almost ready to be used and the intelligence suggested that the Jaish-e-Mohammed terror group wanted to trigger it in

a crowded place in Jammu for inflicting maximum casualties, he said.

The police chief said that despite the ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control and the International Border since February this year, some "state actors" have been helping Pakistan-based terror groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir, by trying to maintain their supply chain of arms, ammunition and cash.

The police chief said there was a difference of single digit in the flight controller serial numbers of the drone shot down on July 23 and another brought down a year ago in Kathua's Hiranagar sector in Jammu region.

Some parts of the assembled unmanned aerial vehicle brought down last week were from China and Taiwan.

He said since drones have added a new dimension to the security threats from terror groups, more efforts are required to ensure this new

and emerging threat is neutralised effectively.

The police chief had earlier said that the signatures of explosive material used in the June 27 bombing of an Indian Air Force station clearly indicated involvement of the ordnance factory of Pakistan in fabricating it.

"Drones have come recently, say in September last year. First, it came as a big surprise, but we were able to gear up our resources to counter that threat. I am happy to report that in cases of use of drones carrying weapons and narcotics and other explosives... our security grid, intelligence grid of police and security agencies were very effective in taking countermeasures," the Director General of Police (DGP) said.

With the shooting down of another drone, the security agencies have been able to intercept around 33 sorties out of roughly 41 sorties which were made so far, the police chief said.

## Mosque, Kashi temple engage in land swap

PNS ■ VARANASI

The committee governing the Gyanvapi Masjid in Varanasi has given 1,700 sq feet of land outside the mosque to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust in exchange for a piece of land measuring 1,000 sq feet.

Both the plots are equal in value, Sunil Verma, Chief Executive Officer of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple Trust said.

The land given to the temple is part of the property of the Waqf Board. As it could not be bought, a plot which was equal in value was handed over to the masjid committee, Verma said.

In April, a Varanasi court had ordered an archaeological survey of the Kashi Vishwanath temple and the Gyanvapi mosque premises to resolve a decades-old dispute involving the two shrines.

The court had ordered the archaeological survey of a centuries-old mosque complex about



ting the famous Kashi Vishwanath temple, saying the exercise was required to decide on pleas that allege the mosque was built by Mughal emperors after partially demolishing a Hindu shrine.

The suit was filed in 1991 seeking restoration of the ancient temple at the site where the Gyanvapi mosque currently stands.

# Experts: Many now have immunity against Covid, but don't lower guard

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

While a large number of people now have immunity against coronavirus due to previous infections or vaccination, a guarded approach is needed in terms of implementing restrictive measures to avoid a second wave-like crisis, experts said.

Dr Yudhyavir Singh, who has been managing the COVID-19 ICU at AIIMS New Delhi, said it is important to lift a few restrictions to resume economic activities when cases are low.

"However, one should not lower their guard ... Adopt a guarded approach in terms of following COVID-19-appropriate behaviour and implementing restrictive measures," he said.

Dr Singh added that Delhi may have already achieved herd immunity, considering the mas-

sive number of cases seen during the second wave.

However, Dr Pooja Khosla, senior consultant (Department of Medicine), Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said the second wave of the coronavirus has taught us that cases can increase suddenly.

"There are warning signs from different parts of the world. In India too, a small increase in cases has been recorded. Infections can increase exponentially anytime. I think one should not assume anything and make all efforts to prevent a second wave-like crisis, which was a nightmare," she said.

"Opening everything is not appropriate ... everyone has been saying the third wave is a couple of days away," Dr Khosla added.

Pragya Sharma, professor (Department of Community Medicine) at the Maulana Azad Medical College, said a third

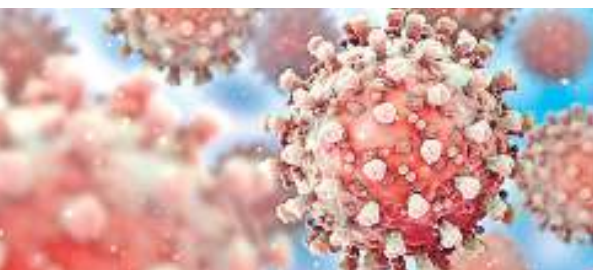
wave is a certain thing but the number of people it will infect will depend on the implementation of preventive measures and the pace of vaccination.

"Even if there are breakthrough infections among vaccinated people, the severity will be less and hospitals will not be overwhelmed," she said.

Sharma thinks the implementation of preventive and restrictive measures is an issue.

"People either don't wear mask or don't wear it properly. Most of them use cloth mask, which doesn't serve any purpose. There is hardly any vigil being maintained in crowded areas," she said.

After a devastating second wave of the coronavirus, people had started taking vaccination seriously. There would be queues at vaccination centres, but things have changed again. There is lax-



ity on the part of the people, Dr Sharma said.

"At the inoculation centre at MAMC, only around 50 people are getting vaccinated a day, while we can vaccinate around 200 people every day. Vaccines are available but people are not coming forward," she said.

Dr Jugal Kishore, head of the Community Medicine department, Safdarjung Hospital, said around 80 per cent of people have

immunity against the virus, either due to previous infection or due to vaccination.

"The Delta variant of coronavirus was responsible for up to 60 per cent of the cases during the second wave. We haven't observed any major difference between 'Delta' and 'Delta Plus' variant. So, a sudden spike in COVID-19 cases is not expected, until a new, more infectious variant emerges," he said.

Still, there is a percentage of people who have not been infected or did not develop enough antibodies despite getting vaccinated, due to various reasons. This set of people, which is almost 30 per cent of the population in Delhi, is likely to get infected.

"Two cases are possible -- first, the virus continues to infect people slowly until herd immunity is attained, and second, a new, more infectious variant leads to an increase in cases till everyone has immunity. But it seems the third wave won't be as severe as the second," he said.

With the lifting of restrictions, people from rural areas have started coming to Delhi or those who have remained isolated so far are stepping out. "If such people go to crowded places, then there is a possibility of a spike in cases," he said.

There is also a possibility that a new variant bypasses the immunity achieved through vaccination and previous infection. If that happens, it will be a huge problem then, Dr Kishore added.

Niti Aayog member Dr V K Paul has also told the Delhi government to remain watchful as the next three months are important and unlocking activities can lead to an increase in COVID-19 cases.

However, a third wave of COVID-19 is "unlikely to be as severe as the second wave", Dr Samiran Panda of the Indian Council of Medical Research had told the Delhi Disaster Management Authority during a meeting on July 9.

He had mentioned that a substantial third wave would be plausible if any new, more infectious variant of the coronavirus emerges

and escapes prior immunity in the absence of adequate lockdown measures.

Dr Panda had suggested that vaccination efforts be ramped up to strongly mitigate the impact of a possible third wave.

Delhi battled a brutal second wave of the pandemic that claimed a massive number of lives, with the shortage of oxygen at hospitals across the city adding to the woes.

On April 20, Delhi had reported 28,395 cases, the highest in the city since the beginning of the pandemic. On April 22 the case positivity rate was 36.2 per cent, the highest so far.

The highest number of 448 deaths was reported on May 3.

The capital has recorded 2,369 cases of the coronavirus in the last 30 days (since June 24), 79 cases a day on an average.



## No laxity

All signs say the third wave of COVID-19 is on its way; India must keep its guard up

The second wave of COVID-19 is supposed to be abating since June 25, but the sense of relief is not reflected in either the total number of cases or the observations of the anti-pandemic strategists. The national count of fresh cases is over 39,000 and rising. And the empowered strategy group tells the Government not to allow the count to cross 50,000 a day. Should this be taken as a warning to the Government that the third wave may well be on the way? Yes, it is. For the first time, the strategists have given an early alert. For the first time, too, the country's anti-COVID policy is being directed by scientific rather than administrative considerations. The earmarked limit sends two messages. One, that the second wave has abated as much as it can in the country though the surge is largely limited to two States — Kerala and Maharashtra. Two, the breach of the 50,000-case limit will mark the beginning of the stress on medical infrastructure. The strategists appear to be playing it safe and assuming that the peak of a future wave would see four-five lakh cases a day, nearly 10 times the new case limit. That should give the Union and the State Governments a clear picture of how much additional infrastructure they should organise in the next couple of months.



The example of the UK should show how they are dealing with a situation where the daily cases have crossed 50,000. People are testing positive at an alarming rate. Nearly 650,000 people are estimated to have tested positive in the second week of July. Admissions are rising in hospitals. And yet, the Government has eased all restrictions. Social distancing is no longer mandatory, face masks are no longer required by law, and the ban has been lifted on large gatherings of people. The British Government is facing criticism for the complete unlock, but its confidence perhaps stems from two sources. One, that over 46 million people in the UK or 87.6 per cent of the adults have received their first dose and 35.5 million, or 67.5 per cent, are fully vaccinated. The high number of vaccinations and the presence of antibodies in the infected unvaccinated is said to reduce the severity of infection and the need for hospitalisation, and lower the chances of death. Secondly, thousands of people using the NHS COVID App are receiving self-isolation alerts every day, informing them they have been in close contact with a positive case. The UK is highly vaccinated and has rid itself of safety protocols and the cases are growing. Indian vaccination levels are low and the protocols are violated more and the cases are growing. This goes on to show that an either-or attitude towards vaccination and safety measures is a sure-shot invite to a third wave of the pandemic. The mandatory requirement is a combination of both and that is what the Indian strategists should emphasise on.

### PICTALK



A submerged Old Sangli area after the Krishna river's level rose following rainfall

PTI

## In a hurry?

The Delhi Govt allowing public transport to ply at 100% capacity raises a number of uncomfortable questions

Another step towards unlocking Delhi would take place today, Monday. Indeed, people will welcome it that buses are plying at full capacity though standing passengers would still not be allowed. Cinema halls are also opening after a long gap. The Delhi Metro would operate at 100 per cent capacity. This would truly bring Delhi closer to normalcy. The Capital has already suffered a great deal due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Though Corona's second wave is ebbing and very few cases are being reported on a daily basis, the threat of the third wave is looming large. In this situation, going for almost complete unlock does not seem reasonable as the experts have warned that the third wave could be here sooner than later. It would have been better had the Delhi Government waited at least three more weeks, until August 15, to open up public transport and recreation centres. The Delhi Government officials say that the restrictions have been eased as the number of cases is falling. But we have seen even in the second wave that the scenario can change very fast and cases can shoot up within a matter of days.

This is certainly not the time to take the pandemic lightly, especially since we are on the verge of defeating the virus. It would not at all be prudent to let the guard down. Apart from these concessions, 100 people will now be able to attend funerals instead of the earlier 20. A similar number of people can now attend weddings instead of the earlier 50. This would indeed expose people to risk. One can understand that people would welcome these steps but the Government should think beyond that. One can understand people's mounting economic hardships but totally unlocking Delhi might not be the solution. That must be dealt with at a different level. It defies logic why the Government is in a hurry to open cinemas, theatres and multiplexes in the national Capital. The Government's first and foremost responsibility is to save lives and, therefore, it should not put people's lives in danger by going for such-scale unlocking at this moment. Mercifully, the Delhi Government has not yet made plans to open schools and colleges, which may have serious consequences. The Government must work for people and should not play to the gallery, making policy decisions to win accolades and public support.

# China's 'friendship' must bother Putin

In 1969, China gained quite a few islands on Siberia's Ussuri river. Now, it has already started claiming the entire Siberia as its territory



PRAFULL GORADIA

Late last month, Russia and China renewed their friendship treaty for a further five years. Comrade Putin appears to be making a dangerous mistake by ignoring the potential threat from China. He was only 17 when the Soviet Union fought a seven-month mini-war across the Ussuri river, which is located in Russia's Siberia (Sleeping Land). How big was Beijing's ambition one does not know, but the Soviets had to convey an implicit nuclear threat to the aggressor. To save face, Mao Zedong, through his Premier Zhou en Lai, threatened a "People's War", which meant that hundreds of thousands of Chinese soldiers would swarm Soviet tanks as they had done with the Americans in the Korean War in 1951-52. The Chinese leader's belief of convenience was the superiority of man over machine. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) did demonstrate its idea of warfare on one of the islands on the Ussuri by ambushing Soviet soldiers.

In the end, China gained quite a few islands on the river, which were a loss for the Soviet Union. Logically, more conflict lies ahead. China is a much bigger nuclear power than it was in 1969. Its ambitions have grown and, by current indications, it wishes to become a superpower. We have to remember that Siberia is over 13 million sq km with a sparse population, whereas China is bubbling with people but is short of arable land. Incidentally, the Yellow Giant gained several hundred islands in the midst of not only the Ussuri but also the Amur and Argun rivers. This gain by China and loss by the USSR were after decades of harrowing negotiations which ended in 2004.

With climate change and the earth getting warmer, Siberia can well become more hospitable. Today, the whole region is considered hostile due to its very low temperatures in winter. With global warming, Siberia is likely to become attractive for China to occupy. The region is rich in coal, natural gas, diamonds, iron ore, gold and aluminum. A possible scenario of China forcibly occupying Siberia can no longer be



looked upon as hypothetical or imaginary. Patrick Princeton, a Western columnist, informs us that a Chinese portal Jinji Toutiao published an article, the author of which calls Siberia "Chinese land". The Chinese media regularly praises Russian ruler Vladimir Putin and how cleverly he puts the West in its place. Simply, from the point of view of Beijing, Russia is not only a good friend but also has an excellent potential prize. "There are no countries around the world that are always friendly or, conversely, always hostile to each other. In the past, Siberia was conquered by the Mongols and, therefore, in fact, is Chinese territory." This is increasingly becoming China's refrain.

Joe Burgess in *The New York Times* column 'Why China Reclaims Siberia' lays out a starker scenario: A land without people for a people without land, Burgess says. The land is as resource-rich and people-poor as China is the opposite. The weight of that logic should scare the Kremlin. Like love, a border is real only if both sides believe in it. And on both sides of the Sino-



CHINA IS A MUCH BIGGER NUCLEAR POWER THAN IT WAS IN 1969. ITS AMBITIONS HAVE GROWN. WE HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT SIBERIA IS OVER 13 MILLION SQ KM WITH A SPARSE POPULATION, WHEREAS CHINA IS BUBBLING WITH PEOPLE BUT IS SHORT OF ARABLE LAND

Russian border, that belief is wavering. Siberia — the Asian part of Russia, east of the Ural Mountains — is immense. It takes up three-quarters of Russia's land mass, the equivalent of the entire US and India put together.

The 1.35 billion Chinese people south of the border outnumber Russia's 144 million almost 10 to 1. The discrepancy is even starker for Siberia on its own, home to barely 38 million people, and especially the border area, where only six million Russians face over 90 million Chinese. With intermarriage, trade and investment across that border, Siberians have realised that, for better or for worse, Beijing is a lot closer than Moscow. The land is already providing China "the factory of the world", with much of its raw materials, especially oil, gas and timber. Increasingly, Chinese-owned factories in Siberia churn out finished goods as if the region already were a part of the Middle Kingdom's economy. Beijing could use Russia's own strategy: hand out passports to sympathisers in contested areas, and then move in militarily to "protect its citizens". If Beijing

chooses to take Siberia by force, the only way Moscow could stop it would be by using nuclear weapons.

In a meeting with the press on May 20 this year, Putin, using a bit of colourful language, threatened to "smash the teeth of anyone who tried to bite off even a piece of Siberia". He surely could not have been thinking of the US or the West. Chinese dictator Xi Jinping only last year described Putin as his "best friend".

But despite all the nice sounding rhetoric, the reality of the China-Russia relationship is a shallow one. The US and friendly countries have grown closer by a set of common values or structures like the Quad. There is nothing even remotely comparable in the case of Russia and China; in this partnership, which is purely transactional without any real political integration, Russia is very much the junior partner, with China eyeing its geographically vast, resource-rich but under-populated Eurasian neighbour.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### MIRABAI CHANU IS OUR NATION'S PRIDE

Sir — The sight of Mirabai Chanu lifting 87kg in snatch and 115kg in clean and jerk, an astonishing 202kg in total, in the 49-kg category at the Tokyo Olympics and the visuals of her standing on the podium showing the silver medal with a huge smile filled us with pride. Obviously, success in sports is a source of national pride. It was natural and legitimate for us to bask in the reflected glory of our compatriot bagging the silver medal.

Recognising the determined effort, dedication and hard work, everyone speaks of her remarkable performance in glowing terms. The daughter of a humble Government employee and a street samosa vendor, Mirabai started her "career" with wood-lifting (she, like most children in her village, used to fetch firewood from nearby hills). We salute the gutsy weightlifter for opening India's medal account on Day 1 of the Games.

On a different note, considering our population and the potential for developing a medal-winning talent pool, we should send a bigger contingent to future Olympics and hope for even more medals than we do.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

### MONSOON FURY BATTERS MAHARASHTRA

Sir — Heavy rains in Maharashtra have delivered a huge blow to those residing in the coastal areas. Incessant rains have triggered landslides and floods, leaving over 140 dead and thousands of people displaced. The destruction appears irreversible in cities, districts and villages. Districts like Raigad and Ratnagiri have been among the many worst-hit areas of Maharashtra, the coastal areas have been battered by torrential rains. Since the torrential rains started, 140 individuals died in tragic incidents in Maharashtra like floods, landslides and so forth. Satara in Maharashtra reported at least 21 deaths as a consequence of rain-related incidents and landslides.

The cities of Chiplun and Khed in Ratnagiri district have been devastated

## Rid the Ganga of pollution



In spite of the launch of the Ganga Action Plan (GAP), the river continues to be highly polluted. More impetus is required to rid the river from pollution which the Government targets to achieve by 2030. Rejuvenation of the Ganga project is now faced with a new challenge. A new study by Toxics Link has found that the Ganga is polluted with multiple kinds of plastic.

Plastic products and waste materials in the river break down to micro particles. The river transports this into the ocean. This brings into sharp focus the poor state of both solid and liquid waste management. As the river flows through densely populated cities, untreated sewage, industrial waste and religious offerings

wrapped in non-degradable plastic add large pollutants. Micro plastics that get into our body are a serious health hazard. Plastic waste causes marine pollution with profound consequences for marine life and their habitats. It has been reported that over 663 species are badly affected by marine waste and 11 per cent of them are related to micro plastic. Micro plastics drained into the ocean cause serious imbalance in the marine ecosystem.

Micro plastic pollution in the Ganga has huge ramifications. The water from the river is used for various purposes. The river provides drinking water to several cities. Hence, micro plastic pollution has severe impact on the environment and human health. Implementation of plastic waste management must be strengthened. Single-use plastics must be banned. There must be more data and research on micro plastics and their impact on rivers. The threat of plastic on aquatic life must be addressed more realistically. Various stakeholders must join hands and work towards improving plastic waste management and reducing micro plastic pollution.

Venu GS | Kollam

after heavy rainfall and cut off from land routes, according to the State Disaster Management Authority. More than 25 NDRF groups are working on the ground or are on the standby mode, three teams each of the Indian Military and the Indian Coast Guard have been pressed into service, besides seven teams of the Indian Navy and one of the Indian Air Force. Apart from all these arrangements, the local authorities are engaged with the rescue operations nonstop for over 24 hours now. Maharashtra is in deep trouble due to the heavy rains.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

### HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT MUST END

Sir — India's high rate of urbanisation has caused a hasty expansion of human settlements into areas that were once exclusively wildlife habitats. With vaguely defined boundaries for fauna, human-

occupied areas in the country have increasingly become the hangouts for wandering wild animals ("The human-animal conflict on the rise", July 24).

The conflict with wildlife has reached unprecedented levels, with predators attacking livestock, thus leading to retaliatory animal killings. The deadly human-animal conflict has largely been the consequence of a fast growing human population's inability to find sustainable ways to coexist with the bustling wildlife. As a result, humans and wildlife compete for the same diminishing resources. It is, therefore, necessary to address the issue in a holistic manner and co-create palliative solutions with full engagement of all the relevant stakeholders.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

I'm very happy to win the first medal for India... I don't belong to just Manipur, I belong to the whole country.



Olympic silver medallist — Saikhom Mirabai Chanu

The Opposition led by the Congress has got no issue to raise that is related to people. Therefore, they raise such issues (snoopgate).

BJP national president — JP Nadda

Latin American States should do something similar to the European Union, but attached to our history, our reality and our identities.

Mexican President — Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador

It is okay to be boxed. I am fine with it because eventually people will box you with what they see and like.

Stand-up comic and actor — Sunil Grover

I will come to Rajasthan on July 28 and 29. I will talk to each Congress MLA; we feel that the AICC should know the opinion of the MLAs.

Congress in-charge of Rajasthan — Ajay Maken



FIRST COLUMN

ADMINISTERING INDIA

The British administered India with the help of Indian Army and an institution called the ICS



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

India as an entity has existed for several millennia. The concept of a unified territory from the 'seas to the horizon' has been documented at least from the time of the Gupta Empire in the 4th century AD). India has seen different models of administration, including those of the Mauryan and Harsha empires, the Cheras, the Cholas, and the British. India came under the British Crown in 1857 and was known as 'British India'. The rule lasted 90 years. There is a notion that this imperial state unified India administratively. It is a myth. British India was initially ruled from Calcutta and then the capital moved to Delhi. Besides the territory under direct British rule, there were hundreds of princely states with various degrees of administrative and revenue autonomy: Travancore-Cochin, Baroda, Jammu and Kashmir being among them. The British withdrew from India with a strange term that the princely states could secede to either of India and Pakistan. It was an attempt to restore the status quo ante to 1857.



The British administered India with the help of the Indian Army and an institution called 'The Indian Civil Service'. After Independence, the service metamorphosed into the Indian Administrative Service. The story of Indian unity post-independence is a saga that many have testified to. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the chief architect of the merger of the princely states with India. Some territories also merged with Pakistan by a wafer-thin majority. The first few years of Indian independence were also spent on reorganising the Indian Union into linguistic states and the states into districts. The story still continues with new states emerging and the districts of the states being reorganised. Two administrative reforms commissions have been set up since independence and their recommendations used to carry out administrative restructuring. Appraisal systems of IAS officers have been thoroughly revised and the writer has been involved with some of these efforts. It is not sufficiently recognised that every IAS officer does not automatically graduate to the level of Secretary to the Government of India. There are institutional filters, evaluations, barriers, and in-built learning opportunities. After 1947, the nascent Indian Administrative Service, through special recruitment, spread across India. However, a few thousand civil servants, definitionally, could not fully administer all aspects of a nation's life. Their expansion no matter how planned was bound to leave gaps. One of the first felt needs was for an 'Indian Foreign Service' which would handle external affairs. An all-India competitive examination was conceived and the Union Public Service Commission was entrusted with the task of holding it and selecting recruits depending on their need. Administering India is not just a simple function of civil administration. The railways have to run, health and education need policy attention, information needs handling, etc. So, separate services like the Indian Railway Service and the Indian Information Service were created while IRS and IPS became essential collaterals of the Indian administration. Over time, administrative groups were created, with IAS, IPS, and Indian Forest Service officials coming under Group A. However, because of their coordinating role, IAS officers remain prima donnas. Their perks and salary structures are also superior. Gradually, the states developed their own civil service to look after their administrative needs. Provision is there for movement from state service cadre to central service cadre after due evaluation. Domain specialists began to occupy specialised administrative positions, especially in the departments of science and technology, biotechnology, taxation, and customs. The message is simple: the Indian Administrative Service, in its fullness, is amongst the powerful sections that administer India. (The writer is founder Director, IIM-K and a management thinker and practitioner. The views expressed are personal.)

# Pegasus affair is an assault on privacy

Anyone defending this will be slipping down a steep slope of undermining the basic rights of an individual



PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI

In a sensational international news break last week, it was revealed that over 300 Indians were being surveilled through an Israeli spyware called Pegasus. This software had the ability to hack into phones and be able to access files, documents, voice calls, and videos of the hacked individual. Those on the list were journalists, opposition voices, activists, and cabinet ministers. Most of the names were anti-establishment and their investigative stories uncovered the various failures of the government.

The Pegasus scandal has once again opened the floodgates of the notion of privacy and to what extent can the state abuse privacy rights. While the history of snooping is not new in India, this is the first occasion of sophisticated technology meant for defence and national security purposes unethically used to get access to all the communication of those who are anti-government. Anyone defending this will be slipping down a steep slope of undermining the basic rights of an individual and also the democratic principles of the nation.

Ever since the controversy has broken, the IT Minister's only defence has been that there is a law in place to protect the privacy of individuals and for the government's need to surveil. The surveillance in India takes place under two laws - the Telegraph Act and the Information Technology Act. While the Telegraph Act deals with audio call records and interception, the IT Act deals with all electronic communication. However, loopholes exist in both Acts and they have not yet been addressed by the Centre and that gap is exactly what it uses for snooping and silencing opposition voices.

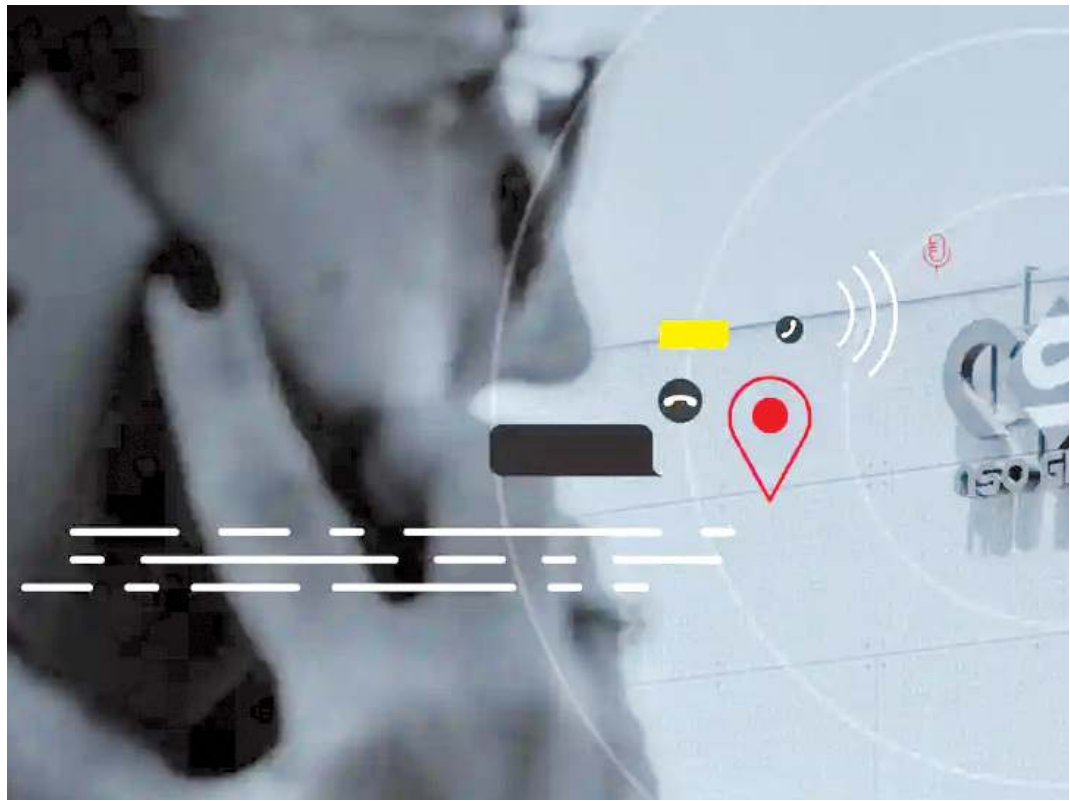
India is a democratic nation. At the heart of democracy are its people. When incidents like this (Pegasus snooping) happen, it infringes on the basic fundamental rights of the citizens. The right to privacy, though not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, is inherent under various provisions of the Constitution. The unanimous Supreme Court of India Judgement in 2017 recognised the Right to Privacy as a fundamental right despite the Union government asserting to the contrary. Article 21 of the Constitution of India includes the Right to Privacy which is mentioned in the Puttaswamy Judgment as "the right of an individual to exercise control over his personal data and to be able to control his/her own life would encompass his right to control his/her own life and his/her existence on the internet".

In the surveillance issue, the absence of privacy impinges on the ideals of liberty and dignity as envisioned in the Constitution of India and hinders the growth of the individual as a citizen of this country. In these times of digital communication, the "zero detectable"



THE ISSUE HAS BECOME POLITICAL SINCE THE NAMES OF MANY OPPOSITION LEADERS CROPPED UP IN THE SURVEILLANCE INVESTIGATION AND ROCKED EVERY SINGLE DAY OF PARLIAMENT SINCE THE MONSOON SESSION BEGAN. THE GOVERNMENT, INSTEAD OF AGREEING TO LOOK INTO THESE CHARGES, IS BUSY REJECTING THE REPORT ALTOGETHER

(The writer is Deputy Leader of the Shiv Sena in the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)



form of surveillance has engulfed the notion of privacy. The Pegasus allegations threaten the very ideals of democracy our nation is based upon. It threatens the sovereignty of the nation and forms a grave concern for our nation since an accountable institutional framework and mechanism for the protection of citizen's data and privacy is absent. An absence of a credible, sovereign, and accountable framework puts the whole nation at the mercy of such cyber exposure. The Personal Data Protection Bill, which is supposed to be the framework designed to ensure accountability and bring in transparency, is marred by many discrepancies and is still under scrutiny by the Standing Committee.

As India has fast-tracked digital communication and businesses, smartphones have become a necessity rather than a privilege and Covid-19 has fast-forwarded the process of digitisation. The availability of almost everything at the mere touch of your finger makes it an absolute necessity for a sovereign nation to have a blanket institutional framework in place.

The idea of Digital India, with 900 million active internet users by 2025, is afflicted by the threat of cyber warfare weapons being unleashed by any foreign state. Therefore, it becomes pertinent

that the government comes up with stringent data protection and privacy laws and a framework that protects the very people that form the nation. With an increased population that is now using smartphones, we in India have no Data Protection Policy in place. With this very obvious loophole in the system there is no accountability on the issue of who owns the digital data. Imagine you living in the reality show Big Boss where your every movement is monitored and you haven't even signed up for it. Stripping people of their privacy and dignity is what this kind of data invasion does.

The issue has become political since the names of many opposition leaders also cropped up in the surveillance investigation and has rocked every single day of parliament since the monsoon session began. The government, in the interest of transparency, instead of agreeing to look into these charges, is busy rejecting the report altogether and going so far as to say that this is an anti-India conspiracy. This is ridiculous, to say the least; while various countries named in the snooping investigation have launched an inquiry, France has initiated it while Israel has formed a senior inter-ministerial group to look into it but the Indian government continues to tie itself up in knots by defending it.

In governance, the principle of Caesar's wife should be above suspicion rule should apply. However, this government continues to confuse and obfuscate. This controversy is also a reality check of how a missing policy framework can be exploited by those in power to the hilt. Such disregard for constitutional norms will be up for misuse in times to come irrespective of who is in power.

As we find ourselves at the tipping point of losing our freedoms enshrined in the Constitution one by one, it is time to speak up aloud for defending our rights while following our duties. The government cannot shrug itself off all responsibilities, resorting to lies and subterfuge to avoid any accountability. The government should not forget that the seat of power is never permanent and if it bypasses all rules of democratic and constitutional governance, it gives others in power a chance to pay back in the same coin - the only ones who suffer in their power politics are the people of the country who helplessly see their freedoms being trampled upon bit by bit. For those who stay silent and defend even this assault on democracy, I would just repeat the quote of Benjamin Franklin: "They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

POINT COUNTERPOINT

VACCINATION IS AN ONGOING AND DYNAMIC PROCESS AND, THEREFORE, A FIXED TIMELINE CANNOT BE GIVEN FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE COVID-19 IMMUNISATION DRIVE.  
— MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH  
BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR



PEOPLE'S LIVES ON THE LINE, THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ADMITS NO TIMELINE. CLASSIC CASE OF MISSING SPINE. #WHEREAREVACCINES  
— FORMER CONGRESS PRESIDENT  
RAHUL GANDHI

# Small businesses and wealth maximisation

Since surviving is the main goal of small businesses, they are more inclined towards profit maximisation by reducing costs

Any organisation is an ongoing concern and has to make decisions, either big or small, daily. These decisions converge towards its overall goal. So, what should be the overarching goal of a firm from the point of view of financial management? Financial management is a critical branch of economics that makes profit maximization the main goal of any firm.

Profit, as an accounting term, is the excess of income generated by sales over the expenses incurred from the overall operation of a business. Any business is said to be in a loss if the expenses are consistently more than the income. And it is said to be profitable if the income is more than the expenses. Therefore, in the context of economics, the goal



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of a firm should be to maximize profits, or to say in simple terms, to realize a large amount of profit.

Profit maximization can be achieved in two ways: enhance revenue and minimize costs. Therefore, to maximize profits, many firms minimize their costs and boost their revenue. The problem, however, with such a goal is that it is short-term in nature and banks on extreme measures to reduce costs, like cutting down and paring advertisement budgets, employee training, development expenses, research and development expenditure, customer care budget, employee salary, or bonuses.

In some cases, firms, in an attempt to maximize profit, may also neglect the safety,



welfare, benefits of the environment, and their different stakeholders. These knee-jerk reactions are short-term in nature and can be efficient for the near future but in the long run, these measures slow down the sales, which in turn diminishes the profits and dwindles the overall value of the firm. Therefore, the objective of profit maximization has a myopic outlook towards the long-term growth of the firm.

Over the years, when financial management became independent from economics

and became a branch on its own, the objective of the firm witnessed a steady shift from profit maximization to shareholders' wealth maximization. This is a comprehensive approach focusing on the long-term growth, profitability, and the value of the firm. This goal focuses on wider objectives and includes the welfare of employees, communities, and society at large. It is a fact that wealth or value is a long-term concept and for the firms, it is reflected in the market price of its shares that in turn depends on the success and expectations of the future success of a firm. Firms with higher performance receive a higher valuation from investors which is reflected in the increase in the share prices as compared to the initial listed value. Therefore,

the value of a firm is a dynamic function of the overall performance of the firm and the rationality of the firm's investment, financing, and dividend decisions.

In a way, shareholders' wealth maximization is also associated with intangible assets like goodwill, branding, good customer relations, a significant and loyal customer base, committed employees, and intellectual property rights. This concept also overarches and includes community and social welfare. Therefore, firms are moving away from the goal of profit maximization that has a short-term approach, ignores any risk or uncertainty, and overlooks the timing of returns. In comparison, a long-term vision acknowl-

edges risks and uncertainty and considers the overall shareholders' wealth and not just profits.

This concept of shareholders' wealth maximization is mainly applicable to large firms where there are a large number of shareholders, including promoters, financial institutions like banks and mutual funds, foreign investors, and retail investors. The managers' actions should enhance the value of the firm to benefit all shareholders. But does this concept apply to small businesses, where the owners are the managers and there are no diverse set of shareholders, except family members or partners?

The situation for small businesses is also different as they are not listed on the

stock markets. In the absence of external shareholders, the objective of profit maximization appears to be the correct approach. For small businesses, the availability of funding or capital is difficult, which is not a constraint for many large firms and they can invest in other stakeholders and efficient business processes. This improves the overall value of the firm and increases the wealth of the shareholders. Since surviving is the main goal of small businesses, they are more inclined towards profit maximization by reducing costs or enhancing revenue. As and when these small businesses start to grow and achieve a sizable expansion, the concept of shareholders' wealth maximization should be the way to go forward.





## Gold imports jump multi-fold to USD 7.9 billion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold imports, which have a bearing on the country's current account deficit, jumped multi-fold to USD 7.9 billion (Rs 58,572.99 crore) during the April-June 2021 quarter due to low base effect in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to data from the Commerce Ministry.

Imports of the yellow metal had plunged to USD 688 million (Rs 5,208.41 crore) in the corresponding period last year, the data showed. Silver imports, however, dipped by 93.7 per cent to USD 39.4 million. Significant increase in the gold imports has led to widening of the country's trade deficit, difference between imports and exports, to about USD 31 billion during April-June this fiscal.

# Electricity Bill may come before Union Cabinet for approval

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet is likely to take up for approval the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in the next few days, which seeks to enable power consumers to choose from multiple service providers as in the case of telecom services, a source said.

"The Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2021 could come up for consideration and approval before the Union Cabinet in the next few days as the government plans to introduce it in the monsoon session of Parliament which concludes on August 13, 2021," the source in the government said.

According to a Lok Sabha bulletin issued on July 12, 2021, the government has listed this bill as one of the new 17 bills it plans to introduce in the ongoing parliament session.

The bulletin explains that the proposed amendments (in the Electricity Act) entail de-licens-



ing of the distribution business and bring in competition, appointment of member from law background in every Commission, strengthening of APTEL (Appellate Tribunal For Electricity), penalty for non compliance of RPO (Renewable Purchase Obligation).

The RPO is a mechanism by which the obligated entities (mainly power distribution util-

ities or discoms) are obliged to purchase a certain percentage of electricity from renewable energy sources, as a percentage of the total consumption of electricity.

Earlier last month, Power and Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh had said that the bill seeks to de-license distribution of electricity. "We proposed to de-license distribution of electricity just like the generation. The Cabinet note on the bill was

circulated and all concerned ministries have approved it. But the law ministry has one or two queries," Singh had said.

He had exuded confidence that the bill would be sent for the Union Cabinet approval soon, and hopefully it would be introduced and pushed for passage in the ongoing session.

The proposal to seek the Cabinet approval for the Electricity (Amendment) Bill

2021 was circulated in January this year and the draft law was to be pushed for passage in the Budget session.

The bill seeks to delineate power distribution to reduce entry barriers for private players for creating competition in the segment, which would ultimately enable consumers to choose from multiple service providers.

The bill also prescribes the rights and duties of electricity consumers. Last month, the power minister had also said the penalty for non-compliance of RPO would be increased.

Under the RPO, discoms and other large consumers are required to buy a certain proportion of renewable energy prescribed by their respective regulators. They can also buy renewable energy certificates to meet the RPO obligation.

Earlier on many occasions, the minister had expressed dismay over persistent non-compliance of RPO norms, especially by state utilities.



## CII: PMAY needs in-built insurance

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Industry chamber CII on Sunday called for relaunch of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) scheme with mandatory life insurance for all borrowers to ensure that the intent of providing 'Housing for All' does not take a hit due to death or disability of the primary borrower.

The PMAY is the ambitious mission of the government aimed at 'Housing for All' as India completes 75 years of Independence by the year 2022.

The scheme, however, falls

short of covering the risk of death or disability of the borrower as the loans sanctioned under the scheme do not have an in-built insurance provision, the chamber said in a statement.

Addition of insurance component will ensure that in all circumstances, the intended benefit of the scheme of 'Housing for All' is fulfilled, and the families are able to retain their home, it said.

"There is a need for a relaunch of the PMAY scheme with an in-built credit-linked insurance or a mandatory life insurance for all borrowers.

## Audi, Mercedes-Benz upbeat about electrical journey in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Luxury carmakers Audi and Mercedes-Benz are upbeat about the electrification journey of passenger vehicles in India with more states coming up with EV policies that encourage electric four-wheelers, according to company officials.

Although the FAME II scheme by the Centre has not offered direct benefits for personal passenger vehicles, incentives like 5 per cent GST on electric cars will also help, they feel.

While Audi kicked off its electrification journey in India with the launch of three all-electric SUVs under the e-tron brand last week, Mercedes-Benz has been selling its all-electric SUV EQC since October last year.

Audi India Head Balbir Singh Dhillion said while the overall policy at present has focussed primarily on the two-wheelers and three-wheelers, many of the state governments are also coming forward to give incentives to electric cars.

"When the states have already



declared there won't be a registration cost on the cars. You already know the GST on electric cars is 5 per cent. So these are already certain incentives the government has put in place, which will also encourage luxury players to also sell cars in the electric segment and these are definitely positive steps," he told PTI.

Recently states like Gujarat and Maharashtra have announced their respective EV policies.

Gujarat has offered demand incentives of Rs 10,000/kwh for

e2W, electric three-wheeler (e3W) and electric four-wheeler (e4W) over and above any subsidies available from the central government, with the maximum ex-factory prices being capped at Rs 1.5 lakh, Rs 5 lakh and Rs 15 lakh, respectively for the three vehicle categories.

On the other hand, Maharashtra is offering demand incentives of Rs 5,000/kwh on 10,000 electric cars with the maximum incentive per vehicle being capped at Rs 1.5 lakh besides exemption of road tax and registration charges.

## Mcap of 6 of top-10 firms erode by Rs 76,640.54 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Six of the 10 most valued companies witnessed a combined erosion of Rs 76,640.54 crore in market valuation last week, with HDFC Bank emerging as the biggest laggard.

During the last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark dipped 164.26 points or 0.30 per cent.

From the top-10 list, Reliance Industries Limited, HDFC Bank, Hindustan Unilever Limited, HDFC, State Bank of India and Kotak Mahindra Bank witnessed erosion in their market capitalisation. The market valuation of HDFC Bank tumbled Rs 43,578.18 crore to reach Rs 7,97,422.67 crore. The valuation of Hindustan Unilever Limited eroded by Rs 13,004.97 crore to Rs 5,54,326.75 crore. HDFC's market valuation plunged Rs 9,543.39 crore to Rs 4,48,566.27 crore and that of Kotak Mahindra Bank dipped Rs 5,392.88 crore to Rs 3,41,634.86 crore.



## RBI central board short of 9 directors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The central board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is facing shortage of nine non-official directors, including seven from the category of people of eminence from various fields.

The central board is the highest decision making body of the apex bank headed by the RBI governor.

According to the RBI Act, the government nominates 10 eminent persons from various fields to the central board of the RBI, besides four directors (one from each of the four local boards). The government is yet to appoint seven non-official directors from the category of

people of eminence from various fields while representations from local board from western and southern areas are missing.

Currently, only three eminent personalities -- Tata Sons Chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran, seasoned banker S K Marathe and chartered accountant and RSS ideologue Swaminathan Gurumurthy -- are serving the central board. They are nominated under Section 8(1)(c) of the RBI Act, 1934, according to the RBI's website.

With regard to directors from local boards, eastern area is represented by Sachin Chaturvedi and northern area by Revathy Iyer, while nomination of two directors is awaited.



## Firms struggling with climate risks: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Businesses are finding it hard to manage reporting on climate risks and need to take urgent steps to meet the expectations of regulators as well as investors, according to a report.

Leading consultancy EY's report covered over 1,100 organisations across 42 countries, including India, and focussed on efforts made by them to publish their climate-related risks and opportunities based on the recommendations set by the Task Force on

Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

The TCFD was established to improve and increase reporting of climate-related financial information. The scores of companies are based on the number of recommended disclosures that they make (coverage) and the extent or detail of each disclosure (quality).

The EY Global Climate Risk Disclosure Barometer 2021 also showed that coverage and quality of climate-related disclosures remain below global averages in India.

## Expecting pick-up in demand, Ceat lines up investments

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tyre major Ceat is aiming at increasing production capacity to around 1,400 tonne a day over the next 18 months as it looks to cater to the enhanced demand in both domestic and export markets, a top company official said.

The RPG Group flagship expects demand to gather pace in the domestic market in the next few quarters. The company is already witnessing demand recovery in several of its export markets with improvement in COVID situation in those geographies.

The company, which produces tyres for all kinds of two-wheelers, passenger and commercial vehicles, plans to invest about Rs 1,000 crore capital expenditure for various expansion projects this fiscal year.

"Our total production capacity is around 1,100 tonne per day and we will be looking at taking this up to 1,300 to 1,400 tonnes per day over the next 1.5 years," Ceat Managing Director Anant Goenka told



PTI in an interaction.

He noted that the company has already initiated a slew of investments to enhance production capacities across its various plants.

"We had announced a Rs 3,200 crore investment in the passenger car facility in Chennai. The plant is ready for the last one year and we are at good levels of capacity utilisation there.

"We have also done around Rs 100 crore investment in the

off highway tyre segment expansion and another Rs 1,200 investment on truck radial tyres. So various investments are underway," Goenka stated. In the ongoing fiscal year, the company would be investing about Rs 1,000 crore across various plants to enhance capacities, he added.

Goenka noted that the first quarter was challenging for the company as demand dipped due to the second wave of COVID-19.

## IFC lends \$250 mn to HDFC to promote housing finance

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

International Finance Corporation (IFC), a private sector investment arm of the World Bank Group, has decided to provide loan of USD 250 million (about Rs 1,875 crore) to promote affordable green housing finance for low-income borrowers.

Low and middle-income borrowers will be able to own homes with improved access to finance, thanks to a new investment aiming to boost affordable housing finance in India, a joint statement said.

Aligned with the government of India's goal to provide 'Housing for All', the funding will also help generate jobs, it said. At least 25 per cent of the financing has been earmarked for green affordable housing, which is likely to encourage this market in India, it said.

## ‘Quarterly earnings, global trends to drive equity market’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets would be guided by the ongoing quarterly earnings season and global trends this week and may witness volatility amid the scheduled derivatives expiry, analysts said.

Investors would also keenly track the US Fed interest rate decision, they added.

"We expect volatility to remain high due to the scheduled derivatives expiry of July month contracts. Besides, the earnings season would gain pace and some of the promi-



nent names like Axis Bank, Kotak Bank, LT, Tata Motors,

Maruti, Colgate, Tech Mahindra, BHEL, IOC, Sun Pharma and Indigo will announce their numbers during the week along with several others.

"Besides, update on the global COVID situation and US Fed meeting outcome on July 28 will be in focus. Markets will first react to the results of index majors like Reliance, ICICI Bank and ITC in early trade on Monday," said Ajit Mishra, VP Research, Religare Broking.

Reliance Industries Ltd on Friday reported a 7 per cent

drop in its June quarter net profit as retail business got hit by the second wave of COVID infections.

"This week, markets will first react to results of Reliance Industries, ITC and ICICI Bank on Monday. It will track global cues for further market direction," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd said.

ICICI Bank on Saturday reported a 52 per cent jump in its June quarter consolidated net profit at Rs 4,747.42 crore. FMCG major reported an

impressive 30 per cent growth in Q1 net profit and 35 per cent increase in revenue on the back of rebound in segments.

"The week will be driven by global sentiments and expectations of firm quarterly results," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. During the last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark dipped 164.26 points or 0.30 per cent.

This week, investors would also track other major market drivers -- Brent crude movement, rupee trend and foreign institutional investors.

## MONEY MATTERS

### 90% consumers willing to pay a premium for buying EV

With global electric vehicles (EVs) sales expected to boom in the next 12 months, nearly 90 per cent of consumers in India are willing to pay a premium for buying an EV, according to a survey by consultancy firm EY.



The EY Mobility Consumer Index (MCI), a survey of more than 9,000 respondents from 13 countries, including 1,000 respondents from India, also found that 40 per cent of the respondents were ready to pay a premium of up to 20 per cent. The survey concluded in the second half of July. "Among the car buyers in India, 3 in 10 respondents would prefer to buy an electric/hydrogen vehicle," the survey said. A majority of the respondents surveyed in India consider a driving range of 100 to 200 miles from a fully charged EV, EY said. It further said, "Nearly 90 per cent of consumers in India are willing to pay a premium for buying an EV and over 40 per cent of respondents are ready to pay a premium of up to 20 per cent."

### MCX posts 29.47 pc drop in Q1 net profit

Leading commodity bourse MCX has posted a 29.47 per cent drop in its consolidated net profit at Rs 39.80 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal. The company had clocked a net profit of Rs 56.43 crore in the same quarter previous fiscal, according to a late night BSE filing.



Income declined to Rs 108.94 crore in the first quarter of the 2021-22 fiscal from Rs 122.70 crore in the same quarter previous year. Expenses remained higher at Rs 57.47 crore as against Rs 51.35 crore in the said period. According to MCX, "Based on current assessment, the management is of the view that impact of COVID-19 on the operations of the Group and the carrying value of its assets and liabilities is minimal." With regard to a dispute with a software vendor that was to develop a trading system for the spot market, MCX said, "...the holding company and the software vendor are in the final stages of reaching an amicable out of court resolution whereby the holding company would be provided the rights to the trading software on the payment of the outstanding invoices."

### Yamaha: Investments on e-mobility depend on stable policy

Japanese two-wheeler major Yamaha is working on an all-new electric vehicle platform for India and other global markets but the company's investments on electric mobility in the country will depend on the government laying down a clear road map and a stable policy, according to a senior company official.



While the government has pushed for electric vehicles (EVs) with the FAME II scheme under which it had last month increased incentives for electric two-wheelers (e2W), Yamaha believes that the larger issue of availability of infrastructure, charging stations, battery production and swapping infrastructure needs to be addressed. "We already have a dedicated team at our Japan Headquarters, working on an all-new electric vehicle platform for India and other global markets," Yamaha Motor India Group Chairman Motofumi Shtara told PTI.

### UNIQLO to launch online store, aims 15% e-com sales

Japanese apparel retailer UNIQLO will launch its official online store for the Indian market to strengthen its presence in the country and is looking at cornering 15 per cent of overall sales from e-commerce, a top company official has said. Besides, the company, which is presently operating six stores in Delhi NCR, is also looking to expand its network of offline stores and exploring some other cities here as well, UNIQLO India Chief Executive Officer Tomohiko Sei said. "Customers are developing an affinity towards our high quality and functional LifeWear essentials and we are confident that with customer support from all over the country, our e-commerce sales ratio would easily surpass the average sales of each store in the coming times," Tomohiko told PTI. He further said that the first goal is to achieve 15 per cent sales volume from e-commerce.





## ‘LEAD’ING ALL THE WAY

YAMINI KRISHNA BANDLAMUDI

**W**ear a torn shirt, rather buy yourself a good book, goes the quote of Kandukuri Veeresalingam, which was duly respected and implemented by Kasula Ravi Kumar of Warangal district in Telangana. The teacher-turned-samaritan believes that education is the most powerful weapon to face most of the problems in life, and stands by his motto, despite hardships. Speaking to *The Pioneer*, the teacher who turned his home into a library with the noble idea of imparting knowledge to thousands of students, shares his journey thus far.

Having born in a poor family to father Narendra Chary, who was an auto rickshaw driver, and mother Sarala Devi, a beedi roller, Kasula Ravi Kumar, a resident of Narsampet town, was once a school dropout but his passion for education earned him a gold medal in MA English, a second rank in EdCET and finally the post graduate teacher post at a government model school in Jawahar Nagar.

Usually, libraries are meant for reading in silence. But the scenario is different at the ‘LEAD’ library. ‘Let’s make noise’ is the slogan with the priorities of reading, thinking, discussing and exploring. Not only students of primary and high schoolers but also graduates and post graduates from poor and underprivileged backgrounds studying at government schools and colleges in Warangal and nearby villages come to ‘LEAD’ (Leadership qualities, Education to the poor, Aim in life and Development of rural youth). It was founded in 2007 with the intention to inculcate the habit of reading in children and youth. Those preparing for competitive entrance exams also come here for proper guidance and material. ‘LEAD’ now offers online classes and finds trainers for poor students. They also have a children’s library now!

Ravi allocated a major portion of the ground floor and whole of the first floor of his house for the library. He has collected almost 6000 books until now, from earnest friends and various sources. Further, small libraries in three nearby villages were also set up by LEAD at government



schools. LEAD also reaches out to people via the ‘Mobile library’. Major initiatives taken up by LEAD since 2007 are English, Education and Environment (EEE).

‘LEAD’ has conducted almost 20 batches of spoken English sessions for the last 15 years where Ravi Kasula trained around 10,000 students, 1500 teachers and even a batch of police personnel under probation. Every summer, students from almost 17 villages prefer to stay back in Warangal for a month and throng to attend his Spoken English sessions that helped



many to secure better positions. This passionate teacher trains the students in reading English news, writing, mind-storming sessions, group discussions, personality development and speaking skills. Ravi Kumar compiled a book on English grammar, ‘Global English Grammar’ and distributed 2,500 copies bearing printing cost from his own pocket!

“Due to the meagre income my family earned, I, along with my brother and sister, had to go through tough times. Though I secured a good rank in ECET, I had to give up the hope of join-

ing B.Tech due to financial issues. But I went on to pursue BA English at Dr BR Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, and earned MA English at Nizam College of Osmania University, but I preferred joining a private college in my native place since I wanted to continue with my service to students and the youth. All my sacrifices would be fruitful if these efforts can make more people realise the value of education, which would immensely benefit them financially, intellectually and ethically as well,” shares Ravi.

“I have been conducting sever-

al awareness programs to the children and youth on the need to protect the environment for the last 15 years. I have distributed around 10,000 pamphlets on the need to protect the Ozone layer and conducted rallies, besides conducting essay writing and drawing competitions in association with the Forest Department,” he adds. He recently released his anthology of poetry *Mugimpu Leni Vakyam* in 2018 and also writes features to vernacular newspapers on different subjects.

“Since I worked as a paperboy, at a telephone booth, before entering the teaching profession, it wasn’t hard for me to get into the shoes of Covid-hit families that lost their livelihood. ‘LEAD’ distributed essential commodities to over 265 families during pandemic. We also keep responding to the local news when there’s somebody seriously in need of something. Though I had to give up the dream of preparing for civil services due to time constraints, I am quite satisfied with doing my bit to the needy in my limited capacity,” shares he. Those who wish to teach children or send new/old books can reach out to ‘LEAD’ at 9908311580/ 7981068048.



## Efficient, ethical and green

**A**lmost everything is used and reused. SEWA organisation is helping to organise some of the people engaged in such work. One such group works in the textile waste sector! These are women workers who exchange old clothes for utility items, wash and repair these and sell them. Such old pieces of cloth are not thrown away, unlike in developed economies which has a very positive environmental impact in terms of saving landscapes and water bodies from pollution and refuse.

Alongside, this has an important social impact that is this work gives employment to women who then employ others. There are small factories in their homes where people are busy stitching, washing and packing garments which are brought by the less privileged. Young men from poorer families educate themselves but for professional work they need formal clothing! From these vendors, they can buy this for two hundred rupees.

The recyclers work at multiple levels. Apart from whole garments, they deal with waste from textile manufacturing units — larger pieces of fabric are sold to merchants who give these to women to stitch into children’s clothing. Even ‘katrans’ and fragments of fabric aren’t wasted, women make these into quilt covers. Historically, these vendors were often stopped, fined and sometimes even faced physical violence. In many instances, the SEWA organisation confronted the authorities and stopped vendors from being intimidated.



There are other challenges too! As micro entrepreneurs need capital, most of the banks don’t give them this. Therefore started SEWA bank with this! It gives loans to poor women easily at reasonable rates. Consumers must recognise this essential work for without it, our cities would be landfills drowning in the products we simply throw away!

*The Pioneer* catches up with actor Meezaan Jaffrey, ahead of the release of his new film, *Hungama 2*

**M**eezaan Jaffrey, son of the versatile Javed Jaffrey, who made his Bollywood debut in 2019 with *Malaal*, exudes a quiet confidence as he goes about things in a matter-of-fact sort of way. Before our interview, we witnessed him politely declining to comment, with subtle laughter, on a somewhat controversial query by a mediaperson. While we did not know what to expect when our turn came, he appeared to be at ease with himself and was quite frank with every question we posed.

He shares his thoughts on *Hungama 2*, ahead of its release on July 23 on *Disney+ Hotstar*.

**From a romantic drama by Sanjay Leela Bhansali in *Malaal* to a comedy directed by Priyadarshan, how vastly different were the preparations for these two projects?**

When we were working for *Malaal*, I had to strenuously prepare for my role. It would

be safe to say that I was on the edge, to a certain extent. However, for *Hungama 2*, there was no preparation at all. That came as a total surprise going by the fact that I was working on a film by Priyadarshan, alongside Paresh Rawal and Shilpa Shetty. When I asked Priyan sir how would he like me to prepare for the character and the film, he simply said, ‘I don’t want you to prepare at all. I just want you to come on set, listen to what I have to say and then just try to have fun’. That’s exactly what I did and it was something different from what I had expected. Not many people have this way of working, but Priyan sir does, and I must say it works in his favour and that of *Hungama 2*. The spontaneity and the improvisation that comes along with it, bring so many nuances to the screen that would have been missed if we turned up prepared.

**How does one prepare for a comedy flick? Is that even a thing, preparing for a comedy role?**

I don’t think so. But to be honest, I can’t really say; it’s not like I have done a lot of



com-

edy films, I am still learning and exploring my interests. I regard comedy as a very difficult genre and I suppose the amount of preparation for such projects depends on the kind of comedy it is, how the filmmaker has envisioned it and their style of working. Personally, I think it is very difficult to make people laugh.

**Did working with a veteran of comedy roles, such as Paresh Rawal, provide you any input with respect to preparation?**

Paresh ji improvises on the spot and improvises a lot. That is something he is incredibly good at. I think we all know without me mentioning it that he is extraordinary at his job. His performance causes a chain reaction of sorts as his

improvisation coaxes better performances from us, the actors around him. Your reactions are bound to be different and original when someone like him throws something fresh at you, with every take of each shot. He is very reserved otherwise, but the moment the camera is focussed on him, he transforms into something else. His experience is out there for everyone to see, with each one of his performances. Some time in the beginning I remember thinking, ‘why is he not preparing his lines?’ But the truth is he does not need to. He has honed his craft to such an extent, that he does not prepare for a role the way, I think, I would.

**Your thoughts when you were filming for *Chura Ke Dil Mera 2.0*?**

I don’t think I am much of a dancer. While I do enjoy dancing, I think that dad’s genes probably played a huge role. I was extremely nervous filming that song because it was a big deal. Showing my moves for the remake of a prominent song which was filmed over 25 years ago, with Shilpa ma’am of all people, the leading lady from the original song, a lot of things were going on in my mind. I followed Priyan sir’s mantra and tried to enjoy the process. As soon as the camera comes on, I have to get

into the zone. I am glad that song blew up across the globe with people making reels on it and I am grateful for the love that has come my way because of the song.

**Did you watch *Minnaram*, the Malayalam film by Priyadarshan, in which *Hungama 2* is said to be based?**

Priyan sir specifically told me to not watch *Minnaram*. He felt that if I watch it, I might subconsciously end up copying what Mohanlal did in the film. However, when I sat down to watch *Minnaram* after we wrapped up shooting, I was surprised because it is poles apart from what we had made. And when I expressed this over a phone call with Priyan sir, he shared that he thought it would be wise to not reveal anything so that I could focus on my character. I would say that only 20 per cent of *Hungama 2* bears a resemblance to *Minnaram*.

**Working alongside stalwarts such as Priyadarshan, Paresh and Shilpa was surely an incredible learning experience. Is there anything, in particular, that you think was of vital importance?**

Seeing Paresh ji at work I have understood the significance of completely letting yourself go, without any inhibitions, in this industry. That,

I would say, was the most important lesson — staying true to the character assigned to you. That is something I won’t forget and will hopefully shape me as an actor in the years to come. Additionally, while an actor is a director’s puppet, with them trying to mould us the way they think works best for the film, an actor must give them a considerable range of nuanced skillset to work with. This is something I have learnt with Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Priyan sir. It is just the beginning of my journey, but something I have learnt is that every time I set foot on the set, I have to give it a little more than just my 100 per cent.

**Would you say your father had a big role in helping you in Bollywood?**

Well, I did not plan on making it big in this industry and my father knew this. As a kid, I have witnessed my father at work multiple times. There were instances when my mum asked me to drop dad’s lunch on the set and when I would get there he would always welcome my presence and I think it helped him relax as he would ask me to sit with him for a bit. I used to watch, without any interest or intention of becoming an actor. Back then I was into music and sports and was interested in pursu-

ing some sort of business related to sports. I had applied to Loughborough University in London, which is considered to be among the finest universities for sports, and I managed to get in as well, but I don’t know what happened, call it fate or whatever you want, I got into filmmaking. I started learning direction and editing. I met Sanjay sir who expressed his interest in launching me in *Malaal* and I took the opportunity. You know how they say that opportunity does not come knocking twice... Later on, during the time I was shooting for *Malaal*, I realised how much those impromptu visits to my father’s set had helped me. Apart from that, my father has always encouraged me to pursue my interests.

**What are you up to, now that you are done with *Hungama 2*?**

There are more films in the works, I believe you would be hearing about them soon. The production has its way of announcing, I will respect their call and wait for them to put it out there. What I can tell you is that I have two-three projects in the making and I can’t wait to start filming. Currently, I am busy with all the promotions and *hungama* for *Hungama 2*. Trying to take it one step at a time. (smiles).





Farida



Tanisha



Hani



Nidhi



Shruti



Franklin



Lakshmi

### SWEET CREAMS

Actress Snehal Kamat and food lovers in the city graced the launch of Creamstone's 85th store in India, at Hyderabad's Attapur. The actress also unveiled new flavours like Fossil Fuel, California Roasted Almond Malai, Rose Petal Tub, and Choco Chunks which will be available across all their stores. Ice-cream lovers sure are in for a treat this season!

### PARTY



### WINNER WINNER MEET AND DINNER

Vysya Business Network and Vysya LimeLight Awards held a 'Meet and Greet' with awardees at Hotel Park Hyatt, Banjara Hills in Hyderabad during the weekend. The winners were congratulated, and treated to the best food!

Photos by SV Chary

## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



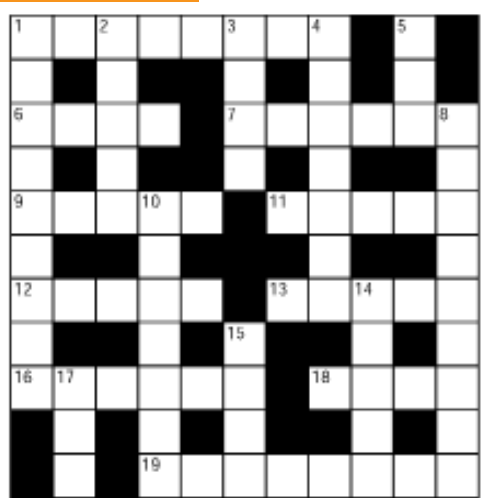
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



#### ACROSS

- 1 Creatures that turn into frogs
- 6 Absent
- 7 Extremely foolish
- 9 Vote into power
- 11 One fifth of thirty-five
- 12 Memorise
- 13 The part of a theatre where people perform
- 16 Take something away
- 18 A toy on a string that can be spun up and down
- 19 Dried grapes used in baking

#### DOWN

- 1 Someone on a journey
- 2 A male duck
- 3 Fewer

- 4 Someone studying at college or university
- 5 The number 3 in Roman numerals
- 8 Very unsafe
- 10 Inquisitive
- 14 A nut from an oak tree
- 15 A prisoner's room
- 17 Finish



### SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution								
6	7	5	1	2	4	3	8	9
1	2	3	6	9	8	5	4	7
4	8	9	5	3	7	2	1	6
9	3	2	7	8	5	1	6	4
8	4	7	3	6	1	9	5	2
5	1	6	2	4	9	8	7	3
7	9	4	8	1	2	6	3	5
2	6	1	4	5	3	7	9	8
3	5	8	9	7	6	4	2	1

#### 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.



# Madhavan on the importance of being kind, caring and compassionate

Parents are a child's first exposure to the world. Right from conception till the time they are adults, parents mould a child to be a better human being. Kids learn valuable lessons like love, care, kindness and compassion from everyone through their experiences and face-to-face interactions at home, at school and during playtime with friends. These qualities are learnt over time and through practice, but this learning starts at home. For father, actor and humanitarian R Madhavan, whose bundle of joy Vedaant arrived in 2005, parenting has been an all-encompassing yet rewarding journey. Reflecting on how the role of parenting has evolved given the new normal, he

shares, "Unlike a year and a half ago, today's kids are born into a very different world. One restricted to the four walls of their homes. This makes it even more important for parents to be their guide and positively influence their child's learning and development years during these challenging times." Care comes in many forms, and with kids, one must take baby steps. "Encourage your child to be caring towards everyone around them— especially those that are vulnerable like their grandparents, those less fortunate or the help at home. Small steps go a long way — like donating a toy they have outgrown, or making their grandparents a card. If you have plants and animals at home, encourage your little ones to nurture and care for them too." Recently,

Madhavan joined the Vicks #TouchOfCare campaign where he commended the story of the late pediatrician Dnyaneshwar Bhosale during the pandemic. "Dr. Bhosale worked tirelessly to look after the needs of underprivileged children in his village during Covid. He was a true example of care for each one of us and the children he helped. It's important as parents, we expose our kids to stories of heroes like him and many more health-care workers who have displayed courage and bravery during this time," he added.



## DSP is on a back step, why?

Devi Sri Prasad, the high power music director, is known for his energetic music. Once upon a time, he

would compose music for over 4 to 5 films in a year. He had become an instant favourite for big heroes. The Mega family has encouraged him and have also

availed his talent, which became an added advantage for their movies. But, gradually in Tollywood, DSP is said not be getting as many projects.

Recently, he gave two hits *Sarileru Neekevuru* of Mahesh Babu, and *Uppena* of Vaishnav Tej. Now only Allu Arjun's much-awaited film *Pushpa* has been getting DSP's music magic. Other than, that he didn't have any projects in Tollywood. He has stated that a few hindi films are in row, and they have been delayed due to the Covid situation.

Tollywood has become the centre for pan-India films now. Everybody is now planning pan-India movies, expecting huge profits. DSP is not in the team of any of these pan-India movies, except *Pushpa*. On the other hand, S. Thaman has bagged plenty of projects and Mickey J Mayer has got Prabhas-Nag Ashwin movies. Even Manisharma has made a

comeback with Ismart Shankar and then got Mega Star's project *Acharya*, a big one. Upcoming directors, debut directors seem to be going with new music directors. Where did Mr. DSP fail? What is the reason behind this situation? For these questions, we are being told that he demands a huge remuneration and does not compromise on it. Second, we hear that he gets involved in the story, and tries to suggest where a particular song can be inserted in the movie. Being a lyric writer, he is also involved in the work of lyricists. This unsolicited involvement of his, many say, has become an embarrassment for others. But, fans of DSP are expecting more and more music from him. Let's hope this will change and rock as usual again.

## RRR dictates release of all other films

RRR is dictating the release schedules of all other movies including *Aacharya*. Rajamouli has already announced the release date of *RRR* as October 13. No other movie has dared to compete with the film. All are being planned before or after the release of *RRR*. As *RRR* is a movie of SS Rajamouli after *Baahubali* that has a crazy combination of NTR and Ram Charan, all others have to give way for it for sure. Even Megastar's *Aacharya* is also facing the same fate. The actual schedules of this movie were disturbed and it has to complete a final schedule.

First, they planned to release it on May 9, which is the release date of Chiru's blockbuster *Jagadekaveerudu Atiloka Sundari*, but, that did not happen. And then hoped for August, the birthday of Megastar. But, now even that seems to be impossible. They are trying to release it in September itself, before *RRR*. But, that proposal too has been in a dilemma. If not in September, it will have to be released only after *RRR*. *Liger*, that's coming with the crazy combo of Vijay Devarakonda and Puri Jagannath is also waiting for a proper release date. This film has almost completed its shooting and is in post-production phase. This one too is being planned for September.



## New director for Sai Dharam-Akhil film



Jayanth, an assistant of director of Sukumar, may soon get a multi-starrer movie as his first project. The director is said to have narrated a story to Sai Dharam Tej and the mega hero was mighty impressed with it. The story demands another hero, for which Sai Dharam Tej has suggested Akkineni Akhil's name. This potential multi-starrer is what the industry is talking about currently. Everybody is talking about the combination, but nobody knows the director's name. But, as per the sources, Jayanth who worked as assistant director with Sukumar is that

director. Now, Sai Dharam Tej is in the shoot of his 15th film in the direction of Dandu Karthik Varma, who is also an assistant of Sukumar. It was during the shoot of this very film that Jayanth was introduced to Sai Dharam Tej and narrated the story to him. If all things work out, the next project of Sai Dharam Tej will be with Jayanth. Already, *Republic* with Deva Katta is ready to release. The bigger questions is how Akkineni Akhil's dates would be adjusted for this movie. He is already busy with *Agent*, directed by Surendar Reddy. The film may complete shoot by November or



December. If Akhil agrees to fo with Jayanth's new pro-

ject, it may go on sets only by January 2022.

## Webseries on different kinds of wives: RGV

Controversy's favourite child, Ramgopal Varma is all set to produce a web series in the name of *Rakarakala Bharyalu* (Different types of wives). The announcement was made on Sunday. 30 Weds 21 fame Chaitanya will be seen playing a key role in

this series. RGV stated that each episode will show a type of wife and how the husband's life will be influenced after marriage. As we know, he announces every project of his with a commercial aspect. Sources say that he may focus on illicit affairs and others blaming women, and it will be a dispute

from the beginning. Electronic media will soon take up the subject and conduct discussions on the same. RGV's marketing strategy is known to everybody now. Despite the serial flops, Ram Gopal Varma is doing films continuously, so looks like there's nothing stopping him.





INDIA'S SCHEDULE ON JULY 26 (ALL TIMES IST)		
TIME	EVENTS	ATHLETES
05:30 AM	<b>Fencing:</b> Women's Sabre Individual Table of 64	C Bhavani Devi
06:00 AM	<b>Archery:</b> Men's Team 1/8 Eliminations	Pravin Jadhav, Atanu Das & Tarundeep Rai
06:30 AM	<b>Shooting:</b> Men's Skeet Event Day 2	Mairaj Ahmad Khan & Angad Vir Bajwa
	<b>Table Tennis:</b> Men's Singles Round 2	Achanta Sharath Kamal
TBD	<b>Tennis:</b> Men's Single Second Round	Sumit Nagal
08:30 AM	<b>Table Tennis:</b> Women's Singles Round 2	Sutirtha Mukherjee
08:35 AM	<b>Sailing:</b> Men's Laser Race 2 & 3	Vishnu Saravanan
09:10 AM	<b>Badminton:</b> Men's Doubles Group Stage	Satwiksairaj & Chirag Shetty
10:15 AM	<b>Archery:</b> Men's Team Quarterfinal	
11:05 AM	<b>Sailing:</b> Women's Laser Radial Race	Nethra Kumanan
11:47 AM	<b>Archery:</b> Men's Team Semifinal	
12:00 PM	<b>Table Tennis:</b> Women's Single Round 3	Manika Batra
12:20 PM	<b>Shooting:</b> Skeet Men's Final	
12:45 PM	<b>Archery:</b> Men's Team Medal Rounds	
03:06 PM	<b>Boxing:</b> Men's 75kg - Round of 32	Ashish Kumar
03:50 PM	<b>Swimming:</b> Men's 200m Butterfly - Heat 2	Sajan Prakash
05:45 PM	<b>Hockey:</b> Women's Pool A	India vs Germany
		<b>LIVE ON SONY TEN &amp; SIX NETWORK</b>



Manika Batra competes during TT women's singles second round match AP

## Manika rises to the occasion

**Tokyo:** India's table tennis star Manika Batra made a stunning comeback against world number 32 Margaryta Pesotska to reach the women's singles third round but G Sathian succumbed to the pressure on his Olympic debut to exit the men's singles competition on Sunday.

While the 26th seed Sathian was expected to beat world number 94 Hong Kong's Siu Hang Lam in his second round match after getting a first round bye, the same cannot be said about Manika, whose gritty approach under pressure proved decisive against her higher-ranked opponent from Ukraine.

Manika, ranked 62, made a remarkable comeback after losing the first two games to prevail 4-11, 4-11, 11-7, 12-10, 8-

11, 11-5, 11-7 in a second round match that lasted 57 minutes.

She meets Austria's Sofia Polcanova on Monday for a place in the round of 16. If Manika manages another upset, it will be a significant achievement for the Indian in her second Olympics.

Earlier, world number 38 Sathian had a commanding 3-1 lead but lost four games in a row to lose 3-4 to lower-ranked Lam from Hong Kong.

"It is heartbreaking but I will come back stronger. I was playing really well initially. I was aggressive and serving well but after the fourth game he started to slow down the pace and started receiving better," Sathian said.

**Tokyo:** Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh on Sunday produced the best-ever Olympic performance by Indian rowers as they cruised into the men's lightweight double sculls semifinals at the Tokyo Games.

The Indian duo clocked 6:51.36 to finish third in the repechage round at the Sea Forest Waterway.

"We followed exactly what ever had been told to us by our coach. The coach told us that we should try to get the best position for India," the duo said.

"It's (rowing) not a very popular sport in India. So our coach told us that getting to the semifinals is also a big motivation for us, and we had to do our best."

While Arjun assumes the role of the bower, Arvind is the team's stroker. The two had finished fifth in their heats on Saturday.

"Arvind and Arjun are now among the 12 semifinalists. It can be difficult to win a medal but they will be competing in the semifinals. There will be two semifinal races of six boats each and top three from each semifinal will reach the final," Rowing Federation of India president Rajlaxmi Singh Deo said.

The event includes two rowers in a scull boat using two oars each. The long, narrow and broadly semi-circular in cross-section boats helps to reduce the drag.

The maximum weight set

## Rowers Arjun, Arvind produce best-ever Indian performance



Indian rowers Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh in action @WeAreTeamIndia

for each male competitor is 72.5kg and the average weight cannot exceed 70 kg.

The semifinals will be held on July 27.

**NAYAK FAILS TO QUALIFY**

India's lone gymnast at Tokyo Olympics, Pranati Nayak failed to qualify for the All Round finals of Artistic Gymnastics competition.

The 26-year-old from West Bengal recorded a total score of 42.565 over the four categories — floor exercise, vault, uneven bars and balance beam — at the Ariake Gymnastic centre. She is now ranked at 29th overall at the end of subdivision 2.

There are a total of five sub-

making unforced errors. Sindhu entered the break with 11-5 lead.

Soon, Sindhu was on a roll, grabbing 13 straight points. The Indian used her trademark straight and cross court smashes and drops to trouble the Israeli, who couldn't utilise the few opportunities that came her way.

Sindhu sealed the first game in her favour when Polikarpova missed a shot.

Polikarpova, who was playing with a strapped knee, continued to struggle with her strokes as Sindhu opened up a 9-3 lead in the second game and then entered the mid-interval with a massive seven-point advantage.

It was business as well after the break, with Sindhu riding on the errors of her opponent.

Another wide shot from Polikarpova gave Sindhu 13 match points. The Indian squandered three of them before Polikarpova once again sent the shuttle out to end the match.

On her approach to playing a lower-ranked opponent, Sindhu said: "I think it's important to make sure that you play all of your strokes and get used to them."

"All of a sudden if you're playing with a higher-ranked player or a stronger opponent, it's not that you can just play that type of strokes, it's important to get used to the situations also."

**'WORK ON AGGRESSION'**

In the post match Press conference Sindhu said she has worked on her aggression in the past five years and promised a very 'different' version of herself after making a winning start.

"Mentally, physically and experience-wise, a lot has changed. Coming to (Tokyo) 2020 is completely different; back then there were no expectations," the reigning world champion said.

"I know that I have worked hard and given all my heart all of these years and I think it's time to show now. I've been working on my aggression and my technique and you will definitely see a different Sindhu."

## Mary's experience triumphs

**Tokyo:** Six-time world champion M C Mary Kom (51kg) powered into the Olympics' pre-quarterfinals with a superb tactical victory over Dominican Republic's Miguelina Hernandez Garcia but Manish Kaushik's (63kg) Games debut ended in disappointment following a hard-fought opening-round loss on Sunday.

The 38-year-old Mary Kom, who is a 2012 Olympic Bronze-medallist and a multiple-time Asian champion, prevailed 4-1 against a rival who is 15 years her junior and a Pan American Games Bronze-medallist.

But Manish, a Commonwealth Games Silver-medallist and a world championship Bronze-winner, went down 1-4 to Britain's Luke McCormack in an edge-of-the-seat clash.

Mary Kom was the first to step into the ring and in a bout that was also exciting from start to finish, the Manipuri displayed some brilliant tactics to overcome the fight that Garcia put up.

She will next be up against third-seeded Colombian Ingrid Valencia, who was a Bronze-medallist at the 2016 Rio Games.

Mary has beaten the Colombian both times the two have faced, including the 2019 world championship quarterfinals.

"I have all the medals in my hand. Olympic medal (Bronze) from 2012, Commonwealth Games Gold, six-time Gold at world championships. It's not easy to count them, but the difficult part is continuously winning and performing, it's not easy," she said.

"...What is left is the Olympic Gold medal. That is what is driving me and pushing me to carry on. I am trying my best, if I am able to get it then I will be so grateful, but if not then I will



still be so happy for all the medals I have won in the past," she added.

On Monday, another Games debutant Ashish Kumar (75kg) will open his campaign against China's Erbieke Toutheta.

## Medal-winning athletes allowed 30-second smile for photo op

**Tokyo:** The medal-winning athletes at the Tokyo Olympics will now be able to sport a wide smile for the shutterbugs after the IOC updated its protocol on Sunday, allowing them to remove their masks for 30 seconds during the podium ceremony.

The updated protocol, which allows athletes to remove masks briefly, came into effect on Sunday morning.

"It has been decided today, in line with the Tokyo 2020 Playbooks, to adapt the victory ceremony protocol in order



to allow athletes to have a physically distanced image on the podium without their masks on for 30 seconds, and a group photo with masks on the Gold-medal step," said the IOC in a statement.

"...The victory ceremony protocol has been adapted to allow athletes to have an image for the media that captures their faces and their emotions during a unique moment in their sporting career, as well as to celebrate the achievements of all the medallists together."

## Shooters disappoint, again

**Tokyo:** The fancied Indian shooting team drew a blank for the second day running in the Tokyo Olympics, with a major weapon malfunction leading to a heartbreaking exit for the young Manu Bhaker in the women's 10 air pistol event.

Appearing in her maiden Olympics, the 19-year-old Manu finished a creditable 12th, despite losing nearly 20 minutes during the qualifications after the cocking lever in her pistol broke down, forcing her to go to a designated area for getting it fixed.

Manu shot 575, while the cut-off was 577.

Yashaswini Singh Deswal, the other first-timer at the Games, recovered from a sub-par start to end 13th, with a total score of 574.

In the men's 10 air rifle event, both the experienced Deepak Kumar and the teenaged Divyansh Singh Panwar finished a lowly 26th and 32nd respectively.

Deepak aggregated 624.7 while Divyansh shot 622.8 over the six series, scores which were never going to be enough to make the final.

India's Angad Vir Singh Bajwa missed two targets out of 75 to be placed 11th on



count back at the end of the third round in men's skeet qualifications. He looks to be in search of a top-six finals spot.

Angad had scores of 25, 24, 24 in the first three series and will come back on Monday to shoot the final two series.

Compatriot Mairaj Ahmad Khan shot 71 and was placed 25th out of the 30 shooters in fray.

Taken together, the first two days' performance, or, the lack of it, is certainly going to raise a few eyebrows within the Indian shooting fraternity, including the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI), which has done its bit in preparing its athletes.

## Sania-Ankita pair knocked out



India women's doubles pair of Sania Mirza and Ankita Raina in action during their opening round match on Sunday @AITA\_Tennis

**Tokyo:** Sania Mirza and debutant Ankita Raina were knocked out of the Tokyo Olympics despite dominating a large part of their women's doubles opener against Ukrainian twin sisters Nadia and Liudmyla Kichenok.

Sania and Raina were running away with the contest after baggeling their opponents but in a dramatic turnaround, the Kichenok sisters came back from the dead to pull off a 0-6, 7-6(0), 10-8 win at court 11 of Ariake Tennis Centre.

Sania was serving for the match at 5-3 in the second set

## Barty exits



**Tokyo:** Japan's Naomi Osaka won in straight sets on her highly-anticipated return to court on Sunday, while world

but perhaps nerves got the better of her and ended up dropping her serve.

From there on, it was not the same match, in which the Ukrainians looked out of sort, struggling with their serves and returns. The Indians became the prey and Ukrainians pounced on them.

Sania and Raina were down 1-8 in the Super Tie break but reeled off seven straight points to make it 8-8 but lost the next two points to make an exit from the Games.

No 1 Ashleigh Barty crashed out in the first round.

Osaka defeated China's Zheng Saisai 6-1, 6-4 in her first match since taking an eight-week break for mental health reasons and is now the clear favourite for Gold after Barty, the reigning Wimbledon champion, dropped serve twice in each set and made 55 unforced errors in a 6-4, 6-3 loss to Spain's 48th-ranked Sara Sorribes Tormo.

## Govt exempts Olympic returnees from RT-PCR test

**Tokyo:** Athletes, officials and media returning to the country from Tokyo Olympics will not be required to produce RT-PCR negative test reports for Covid-19 before their departure from Tokyo, the Government of India said on Sunday.

The decision was intimated in an official letter by Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare after the Indian Olympic President Narinder Batra had earlier in the day requested the Government to exempt returnees from the Tokyo Games to produce RT-PCR negative report before boarding their flights.

The Health Ministry official, however, said that only those individuals who have returned negative in the saliva-based test prior to their departure to India will be allowed to board the flight. Besides, all those returning from Tokyo will be retested upon landing in India.

The weightlifting contingent will depart for India from Tokyo on Monday after Mirabai Chanu won a historic Silver in women's 49kg event.

PTI

## Surya takes India to 164-5

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Suryakumar Yadav continued his rich vein of form with another attractive half-century but Sri Lanka bowled well to restrict India to 164 for five in the first T20I here on Sunday.

Surya's second T20I half-century was complemented by useful contributions from skipper Shikhar Dhawan (46 off 38 balls) along with Ishan Kishan (20 not out off 14 balls) at the back-end.

Skipper Dhawan added 62 with Surya in eight overs to provide a solid launch-pad but the latter's dismissal surely cost India 20 extra runs.

But looking at the partnership, it was evident that the junior partner was batting in a more assured manner, having already sealed his place in the T20 World Cup team while the skipper is still fighting what looks like a losing battle to jostle inside that jam-packed top-order in the main squad.

There was a six over deep mid-wicket off Akila Dananjaya but the innings did lack the



punch despite four more boundaries.

It was Surya's five fours and a six that really helped Kishan and Hardik to launch the final assault.

At the start, Prithvi Shaw had a forgettable T20I debut as Dushmantha Chameera's (2/24 in 4 overs) outswinger found the edge of his bat off the very first delivery of the match.

Sanju Samson (27 off 20 balls) hit his customary six while batting like a millionaire

before Wanindu Hasaranga (2/28 in 4 overs) trapped him with a googly.

Surya as usual was in his free-flowing self, hitting those whiplash on-drives, cover drives and ramp shots which is a sight to watch both against pacers and spinners.

However what was exhilarating was how Surya picked all those back-of-the-hand slower deliveries from seamers Isuru Udana and Chamika Karunaratne.

## MI-CSK to kickoff IPL 2021 UAE leg

**New Delhi:** Defending champions Mumbai Indians will meet Chennai Super Kings in Dubai on September 19 when the IPL resumes in the United Arab Emirates, the BCCI announced on Sunday.

The tournament was suspended in May after multiple Covid-19 cases were reported in its bio-bubble.

A total number of 31 matches will be played in the duration of 27 days including seven doubles headers.

After the CSK-MI clash, the action will shift to Abu Dhabi where the Kolkata Knight Riders will square off against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Sharjah will host its first game on September 24 when RCB take on CSK.

In all, 13 matches will be held in Dubai, 10 in Sharjah and 8 in Abu Dhabi.

The first Qualifier will be played in Dubai on October 10, the Eliminator and Qualifier 2 will be played in Sharjah on October 11 and 13 respectively with Dubai hosting the final on October 15.

PNS