

ANALYSIS 7
THE BIG FAT ELECTIONS IN
UTTAR PRADESH**MONEY 8**
INDIA TO PITCH FOR PERMANENT
SOLUTION FOR FOOD SECURITY**SPORTS 12**
INDIA LIMIT
NZ TO 164

HYDERABAD, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

ROWDY BOYS
POSTPONED

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**INDIAN SCIENTISTS DISCOVER
STAR-PLANET BIGGER THAN JUPITER**

The exoplanet search and study group at the Ahmedabad-based Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), has discovered a new exoplanet orbiting too close to an evolved or aging star with a mass of 1.5 times that of Sun and located 725 light years away, according to Indian Space Research Organisation. This discovery was made using PRL Advanced Radial-velocity Abu-sky Search (PARAS) optical fiber-fed spectrograph, the first of its kind in India, on the 1.2 metre Telescope of PRL at its Mt. Abu Observatory, the Bengaluru-headquartered space agency said in a statement.

**INDIAN RAILWAYS GETS FIRST POD
HOTEL AT MUMBAI CENTRAL STATION**

Passengers of Indian Railways and even common people can now avail of modern resting facilities at comparatively cheaper rates thanks to the first-of-its-kind pod hotel which has come up at the Mumbai Central station. According to a senior Western Railway (WR) official, one has to pay Rs 999 for 12 hours and Rs 1,999 for 24 hours for staying in this pod hotel where facilities like WiFi, TV, a small locker, adjustable mirror, and reading lights etc will be provided. A pod hotel has several small bed-sized capsules and provides affordable overnight accommodation.

**BIDS FOR HALF A DOZEN CPSEs TO BE
INVITED IN DECEMBER-JAN: DIPAM**

The government will invite financial bids for privatising as many as six CPSEs, including BPCL, BEML and Shipping Corp, by January, a top government official said. Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Secretary in the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), also invited private players to bid for the CPSEs, which are up for privatisation, along with transfer of management control. After 19 years, we will see 5-6 privatisation this year. BPCL is in the due diligence stage. BEML, Shipping Corp, Pawan Hans, Central Electronics, NINL bids can take place in December-January," he said.

**GOVT EXTENDS TENURE OF ED
DIRECTOR S K MISHRA BY A YEAR**

The government on Wednesday extended the tenure of ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra by a year till November 18, 2022, days after the Centre brought ordinances to allow ED and CBI directors to occupy the office for up to five years. The already extended tenure of Mishra, a 1984-batch Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer of the Income Tax Department cadre, was to end on Thursday. The order said the "President of India is pleased to extend the tenure of Shri Sanjay Kumar Mishra, IRS as Director of Enforcement for a period of one year or until further orders, whichever is earlier."

KCR to lead TRS 'Maha Dharna' for rabi paddy at Dharna Chowk

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

For the first time after the formation of Telangana State, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao will participate in the TRS 'Maha Dharna' at the famous Dharna Chowk near Indira Park on Thursday.

This would be a marked departure from his earlier stand of banning protests at the site that has had a history of dharnas, so much so that it has come to be called 'Dharna Chowk'.

On Thursday, the Chief Minister will lead his Cabinet colleagues, party MLAs, MLCs, MPs and other elected representatives at the protest to step up pressure on the Centre to procure Yasangi paddy from Telangana.

According to well-placed TRS sources, KCR believes that a Chief Minister of a State participating in a dharna would amp up the pres-

sure on the Union government which has adopted a stoic silence for the last 50 days on the issue.

With the Centre continuing its silence, despite the dharnas staged in all Assembly constituencies in Telangana last week, the CM decided it's time that he himself leads the protest, the TRS sources said.

When KCR banned dharnas at the historic site at Indira Park, he had faced immense criticism from all quarters and accused of displaying 'dictatorial' tendencies.

Now with the Chief Minister himself headed towards the Dharna Chowk, he risks being accused of political hypocrisy, despite the obvious political paradox in democracy being at play.

**End uncertainty of farmers: KCR to Modi**

Seeking an immediate end to the prevailing uncertainty over paddy procurement by the Centre for the Yasangi season of 2021-22, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao on Wednesday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to direct the Food Corporation of India to confirm the target of procurement of rice from Telangana State during ensuing Rabi/Yasangi season. He also requested the Prime Minister to direct the FCI to complete the procurement of the remaining five lakh tonnes of rice produced last year in Rabi- 2020-21. KCR made another request to enhance the target beyond 40 lakh tonnes for procurement of rice during the ongoing Kharif 2021-22 to 90 percent of the production as done in Punjab State. The Chief Minister had during his press conference on Tuesday said that having waited for about 50 days for clarity from the Union Minister for Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal after personally apprising him of the situation, decided to write directly to the Prime Minister seeking his intervention.

**PROJECTS ON GODAVARI**

TS seeks time to study 'handing-over' note

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State government has sought more time to study the note issued by the Godavari River Management Board on handing over of projects in line with the gazette notification issued by the Centre on fixing the jurisdiction of the Board.

In a meeting with members of the GRMB subcommittee here on Wednesday, Telangana officials

protested against the note seeking handing over of certain projects as the GRMB visited the sites without involving the subcommittee members.

The correctness of the handing-over note needed to be assessed with the Irrigation Secretary, Engineer in Chief, General and Project Engineers, they said.

KTR sends youths hurt in accident in convoy vehicle

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

IT Minister KT Rama Rao on Wednesday endeared himself to the people by sending victims of a road accident at Hakimpet to the hospital in a vehicle from his convoy.

The accident involved two youths from Miyapur who fell off their bike near Hakimpet.

The Minister, who was travelling on the same route, noticed the injured persons on the road. He immediately asked his driver to stop the vehicle and got off.

KTR then directed his security personnel to act swiftly and help the injured youth. He sent them in his convoy vehicle to the hospital for treatment. The Minister's act has received appreciation from people on social media.



Hyd man goes missing from Asaram's ashram

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

A 27-year-old man from Hyderabad has gone missing from jailed godman Asaram Bapu's ashram in Motera area of Gujarat's Ahmedabad city after attending a "shivir" (camp) between November 3 and 11, police said on Wednesday.

A missing person's complaint was registered at Chandkheda police station in this regard, inspector RS Thakar said.

Vijay Yadav last spoke to his parents on November 9, after which he went untraceable, as his phone has been switched off, said his brother Sanjay Yadav, who has come to the city from Hyderabad with other relatives.

Ashram authorities have informed the police that Vijay had sent an email on Tuesday stating that he is alright and will return after some days, said Thakar, adding that the email was sent from Vijay's ID to the ashram's email ID.

"In the email, Vijay had purportedly said that he has gone to a place voluntarily and will come back soon," the inspector said.

2 from Tirupati among 7 arrested by CBI in child porn case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested seven persons in connection with its operation against alleged peddling of online child sexual exploitation material, officials said Wednesday.

Ram Gautam, Satender Mittal and Purushottam were taken into custody from Delhi, Surendra Kumar Nayak from Dhenkanal in Odisha, Nishant Jain from Noida, Jitender Kumar from Jhansi and T Mohan Krishna from Tirupati, they said.

The CBI will produce the accused

from Delhi before a competent court on Wednesday while for the rest it will seek a transit remand for bringing them to Delhi for further investigation, they said.

More arrests are likely as investigation progresses, they said.

"It was alleged that various syndicates of individuals based in different parts of India and foreign countries were indulging in circulating, storing and viewing Child Sexual Exploitation Material (CSEM) through various social media platforms/groups. It was also alleged that

persons were disseminating CSEM by way of sharing links, videos, pictures, texts, posts and hosting of such content on social media groups/platforms and third party storage/hosting platforms," CBI spokesperson RC Joshi had said.

The agency had launched a massive operation on Children's Day on November 14, registering 23 FIRs against 83 accused which continued till next day.

The CBI action was based on inputs of its special unit 'Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

Prevention/ Investigation (OCSAE)' which tracks and monitors posting, circulation and downloads of child sexual exploitation material on the internet.

The operation targeted over 50 social media groups having more than 5,000 alleged offenders sharing child sexual abuse material with some accused based in countries like Pakistan, Canada, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Indonesia, Azerbaijan, Sri Lanka, the US, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, the UK, Belgium and Ghana.

Akbaruddin Owaisi acquitted in 'hate' speech case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A Special Court here has acquitted AIMIM leader and MLA Akbaruddin Owaisi in a "hate" speech case registered against him in 2004. The Special Sessions Court for trial of MPs/MLAs on Tuesday found Owaisi not guilty of the offences/allegations against him and acquitted him.

A case was registered under relevant IPC sections against him on a complaint from a police official, who alleged that the Chandrayangutta legislator made an inflammatory speech at a public meeting here during election campaigning in March 2004 and tried to instigate the public. Subsequently a charge-sheet was filed by police after getting the government's nod to prosecute Owaisi.

CBI arrests Sankar Reddy in Viveka murder case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested Devireddy Siva Sankar Reddy from Hyderabad in connection with the murder of former minister YS Vivekananda Reddy.

A suspect in the case, Shaik Dastagiri, had mentioned his name in his confessional statement.

Siva Sankar Reddy is a close associate of YSRCP MP Avinash Reddy. His name is in the list of 15 suspects mentioned by Dr Sunitha Reddy, the daughter of Vivekananda Reddy, in the report submitted to High Court.

Already, the CBI has filed a charge sheet in the Vivekananda Reddy murder case. The former Minister was killed on March 15, 2019, just before the General Elections at his home in Pulivendula.

The CBI has listed four persons

as accused in this case - T Gangi Reddy, Yadati Sunil Yadav, Gajjala Umashankar Reddy and Shaik Dasthagiri. They were named as accused in the charge sheet filed by the CBI in court.

Shaik Dasthagiri, who was a driver of YS Vivekananda Reddy, had filed a confessional statement in court in August 2021.

Mumbai ex-top cop an 'absconder': Court

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A magistrate's court here on Wednesday declared former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh a "proclaimed offender" in an extortion case registered against him and some other police officers in the city.

Singh had last attended office in May after which he went on leave. The police had told the Bombay High Court last month that his whereabouts were not known.

The crime branch of Mumbai Police, which is probing the extortion case, sought the proclamation against him, saying that Singh could not be traced even after the issuance of a non-bailable warrant.

Under section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, a court can publish a proclamation requiring an accused to appear if a warrant issued against him or her cannot be executed.

Third wave fears ensure health insurance thrives

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the threat of the Covid-19 third wave continuing to loom large over the horizon and being well aware that hospitalisation means expenses running into lakhs of rupees, more and more people in Telangana are buying or renewing health insurance.

This is hardly surprising since many families have either experienced the horrors of Covid-19 from close quarters or at least second-hand and believe these uncertain times call for prudent measures. This may be worrisome for

citizens and a strain on the family budget, but it is good news for the health insurance companies who are clocking tremendous growth.

Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Rangareddy are the fastest-growing markets in Telangana for health insurance companies and a majority of customers choose to pay premiums monthly.

For Instance, Navi Health Insurance has clocked 283 percent monthly growth in Telangana since June, 2021 while nationally, the firm's business grew by 165 percent every month since May, 2021.

YSRCP storms Naidu's stronghold Kuppam

SNV SUDHIR
■ VIJAYAWADA

In major embarrassment to former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, the ruling YSRCP bagged a majority of the wards in Kuppam municipality Chittoor district, considered the bastion of the TDP supremacy for over three decades.

Expectedly, upbeat YSRCP cadres said they have dismantled Naidu's 'Kuppam Fort'.

Elections were held for 24 of the 25 wards as polling for one was unanimous. Counting of votes took place on Wednesday.

Of the 24 wards that went for polls, YSRCP candidates won 18 and TDP candidates won six.

Call centre racket busted, 16 held for Rs 3 crore fraud

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cyber Crime Police of Cyberabad police unearthed a call centre racket operating from Uttam Nagar in Delhi and also raided a hotel in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, following which 16 members were arrested for their involvement in 34 cases in Cyberabad Commissionerate and 166 cases all over India.

They pretended to be RBL bank employees and have cheated citizens to the tune of Rs 3 crores, police said.

Officials froze Rs 15 lakhs in

a bank account, seized three cars, one bike, 865 fake Aadhar cards, voter and PAN cards along with 1000 SIM cards, 37 cheque books, 34 mobiles etc.

The accused were identified as Deepak Chaudhary, Vishal Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Karan Kumar, Gourav Sharma, Akash Sharma, Dhananjay Khudania, Durgesh Kumar Jha, Ashutosh Kumar Jha, Aman, Deepu Manvani, Ravi Bhatti, Rahul Nagpal, Rajindra Kumar, Kunal Kapoor and Chetan Nagpal, said the police.

"SG said, The top court, however, said: "We were not misled at all. You said 10 per cent but it was pointed out in the affidavit that it was 30 to 40 per cent. This type of criticism is bound to happen when we are holding public offices. We are clear, our conscience is clear, forget about all this. These kinds of criticisms keep happening. Our conscience is clear and we work for the betterment of society," the bench said.

TV debates causing more pollution, says SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Debates on TV news channels are causing more pollution than anybody with statements made in the court being taken out of context, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday.

A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana said everyone has their own agenda and statements are taken out of context in these debates.

"You want to use some issue, make us observe and then make it controversial, and then only blame games will remain...", observed the bench also comprising Justices D Y Chandrachud and Surya Kant.

"Debates on TV are creating

more pollution than anybody. They don't understand what is happening and what is the issue. Statements are taken out of context. Everyone has their own agenda. We can't help and we can't control. We are focussing on working out the solution," it said.

The apex court's observations came while hearing a plea relating to air pollution in Delhi and adjoining areas.

The oral remarks came in response to the submission of senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi government, that stubble burning was one of the contributors of the air pollution which needs to be addressed and referred to the Centre's figures on the issue.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta referred to the television debates and said they claimed that he had misled the top court on the contribution of stubble burning to air pollution.

I

TODAY**ALMANAC****Month & Paksham:**

Kartik & Shukla Paksha

Tithi : Chaturdashi 11:59**Nakshatram** : Bharani 25:29**Time to Avoid** : Time to Avoid

(Bad time to start any important work)

Rahukalam : 1:24 pm - 2:48 pm**Yamagandam** : 6:26 am - 7:50 am**Varjyam** : 9:25 am - 11:12 am**Gulika** : 9:13 am - 10:37 am**Good Time** : (to start any important work)**Amritakalam** : 8:08 pm - 9:55 pm**Ahhijit Muhurtham** : 11:38 am - 12:23 pm**HYDERABAD
WEATHER****Forecast** : Thunderstorm**Temp** : 27**Humidity** : 80%**Sunrise** : 6:22 am**Sunset** : 05:39 pm**Current Weather Conditions**

Updated NOVEMBER 17, 2021 5:00 PM



Akbaruddin Owaisi acquitted in 'hate' speech case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A Special Court here has acquitted AIMIM leader and MLA Akbaruddin Owaisi in a "hate" speech case registered against him in 2004. The Special Sessions Court for trial of MPs/MLAs on Tuesday found Owaisi not guilty of the offences/allegations against him and acquitted him.

A case was registered under relevant IPC sections against him on a complaint from a police official, who alleged that the Chandrayangutta legislator made an inflammatory speech at a public meeting here during election campaigning in March 2004 and tried to instigate the public. Subsequently a charge-sheet was filed by police after getting the government's nod to prosecute Owaisi. After hearing arguments and counter arguments, the court acquitted Owaisi for lack of evidence as no independent witness supported the case.

Owaisi complains...

Continued from page 1

Rizvi's statements are also targeted at creating a feeling of enmity against Muslims of India, the Hyderabad MP pointed out.

Owaisi urged the Police Commissioner to take action against Rizvi and his associates on the charge of promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion and others and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony.

CBI arrests...

Continued from page 1

In the confessional statement, he had detailed the circumstances regarding Vivekananda Reddy's murder, the persons involved and those involved in the murder conspiracy.

He had mentioned the name of Devireddy Siva Sankar Reddy along with MP Avinash Reddy and the brother of YS Rajasekhara Reddy, Bhaskara Reddy, as they helped the main accused, Gangireddy, to manage the situation and the case subsequently.

The CBI arrested Devireddy Siva Sankar Reddy based on the confessional statement of Shaik Dasthagiri.

Third wave fears ensure...

Continued from page 1

According to General Insurance Council Dashboard, in Q3 in Telangana as many as 22,704 health insurance claims were reported. This is comparable to 26,717 health insurance claims in Q2 and 10,686 claims, amounting to 2,77,102, being reported in Q1 of 2020-2021.

According to a Navi spokesperson, "The response from Telangana for Navi Health Insurance has been extremely heartening. Our objective is to radically simplify health insurance for individuals and families. We do this by actively leveraging technology and data as well as customer feedback to constantly implement new features and improve our offering to customers."

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹180
Without Skin	₹200
Broiler at Farm	₹110

EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	443
VIJAYAWADA	382
VISAKHAPATNAM	402
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.43

In power or not, we are on the side of people: Harish

ML MELLY MAITREYI ■ HYDERABAD

Most of the top leaders and cadres of the TRS were busy on Wednesday, preparing for what is certain to be a showdown between their party and the opposition BJP over the paddy procurement issue at the Indira Park on Thursday.

Ministers Harish Rao and Talasani Srinivas Yadav who reviewed the arrangements for the 'Maha Dharna' announced by TRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao, made it clear that it was to exert pressure on the Centre on behalf of farmers.

"Whether we are in power or in opposition, we will always be on the side of people. At the time of State bifurcation, seven mandals of Telangana State were merged into Andhra Pradesh. As a result, Telangana is incurring



Health Minister T Harish Rao inspects the arrangements for Thursday's Maha Dharna at Dharma Chowk, Indira Park in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

a loss of Rs 1,000 crore per year. We expressed our resentment then itself by calling for a bandh. We staged a protest in the early days of TRS coming to power against the attitude of Centre. Even today, we

decided to stage dharna on behalf of lakhs of farmers to protest against the stubborn attitude of Centre," Harish Rao told media persons.

He demanded a uniform policy for all the States in the

country. "While Centre buys every grain from Punjab, why does it not promise to do the same in Telangana?" he sought to know.

Deploing the system of different policy for different States, Harish Rao said that this would tantamount to Centre absolving itself from its responsibilities. "It is the responsibility of the Centre to procure paddy," he said.

Along with Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, Ministers, MPs, MLAs, MLCs, ZP Chairmen, DCCB Chairmen, DCMS Chairmen, Market Committee Chairmen, TRS cadre would participate in the "Maha Dharna" and express their protest on behalf of farmers. The dharna will be staged peacefully and in the most democratic way to exert pressure on the Centre, Harish Rao made it clear.

Hyd man goes missing from Asaram's ashram

Continued from page 1

He added: "We are trying to get the exact location using the IP address of the computer from which the mail was sent. We have also sought call records of his phone number."

Vijay had come to the ashram from Hyderabad with nine other men to attend a shivir between November 3 and 11, he said.

While his friends returned to their homes after the camp, Vijay stayed back saying he wanted to take part in some ritual to attain inner peace, and cancelled his train ticket, the official said.

When his relatives reached the ashram to inquire about Vijay on Tuesday, they were told that he was not in the ashram. When the police went to the ashram for preliminary investigation, they did not find any record of Vijay's entry into the premises, Thakar said.

According to Sanjay Yadav, his brother last spoke to his mother on November 9 and his phone got switched off a day after.

The family was unhappy as Vijay had started visiting the Asaram ashram in Hyderabad more frequently in the recent times, he said.

End uncertainty of farmers...

Continued from page 1

TRS legislators headed by the Chief Minister in the meeting held on Tuesday said that it was also decided to stage dharna at Indira Park on Thursday to exert pressure on the Centre to end to uncertainty over paddy procurement by stating clearly whether they would procure boiled rice in the ensuing Yasangi or not so that the State government could direct the farmers to go for alternative crops.

The State government also resented the dual standards of Centre in procuring food grains from Punjab and Telangana. By choosing to write to the PM a day before the proposed dharna, KCRD apparently wanted Modi to understand the situation in the State had worsened due to the contradictory statements by State and Central BJP leaders and ask him to take measures to resolve it.

In his letter to Modi, KCR explained that Telangana, due to priority given to develop irrigation facilities after the formation of the State, had become a huge grain-surplus State. The farmers of Telangana were now able to produce for the rest of the country, he wrote.

The FCI, which has the mandate of ensuring food security for the people of the country by maintaining buffer stocks and supplying rice and

KCR to lead TRS 'Maha Dharna'...

Continued from page 1

It may be mentioned here that when the Telangana statehood movement gathered momentum, protests were a common occurrence. Dharna Chowk was earmarked for protests in 2005, when the then Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court GS Singhvi was caught in a traffic jam. The then CJ asked the then Hyderabad Police Commissioner Dinesh Reddy why the city couldn't have a designated place for public demonstrations like the Jantar Mantar in Delhi. Thus Dharna Chowk came into being and represents what Jantar Mantar is to the National Capital Delhi. It may be mentioned here that KCR has set the deadline of November 18 for the BJP-led government at the Centre to make its stand clear whether it will purchase paddy from Telangana or not in the Yasangi season.

wheat through the public distribution system, has been following certain policies which are creating confusion in the minds of farmers as well as the State governments, the Chief Minister said.

He pointed out that the target of procurement is not fixed for the entire year in one go and the procurement is not keeping pace though the production is increasing year by year.

As a result, it was becoming difficult for the States to plan an appropriate cropping pattern and explain the same to farmers.

During Kharif 2020-21, the production of rice in Telangana was 55.75 lakh tonnes but the procurement was only 32.66 lakh tonnes which was 59 per-

cent of the production. This was less than the 78 percent procured in Kharif 2019-20. Such wide variations in procurement levels would not allow the State to implement a rational cropping pattern, KCR pointed out in his letter.

KCR brought to the notice of the Prime Minister that he had met Piyush Goyal for two days on September 25 and 26 this year and requested him to fix the annual target for procurement immediately. "Yet no policy decision was taken and communicated to the State even after 50 days," the Chief Minister wrote, adding that thus, he wanted the Government of India to give direction to FCI to address the concerns raised by the Telangana State.

TS seeks time to...

Continued from page 1

GRMB officials agreed to defer the discussion and asked the Chief Engineers of both the States to finalise the date of the next meeting.

Telangana officials did not agree to the suggestion of GRMB to hand over GLIS intake pump house at Gangaram and Geesugonda Cross Regulator on Kakatiya canal as the GRMB visited the sites without involving the subcommittee members.

They said that they did not receive orders from the State government with respect to projects of Telangana other than Peddavagu medium irrigation project for sharing information under various clauses of gazette notification ie sanctioned posts, plant machinery, equipment, office premises, furniture, vehicles, detailed project reports, records maintained since inception etc.,

They said they would take action as per government's directions and could not give any commitment on the handing-over note. They also pointed out that as per Clause 4 of

Godavari Water Dispute Tribunal, States are at liberty to transfer any part of their share to any other basin.

GLIS and SRSP were sanctioned and grounded by the government of undivided Andhra Pradesh. At that time the government did not object to transfer of water from Godavari basin to provide irrigation facilities to areas in Krishna basin, they said.

But after bifurcation, AP was objecting to the transfer but it was not acceptable to Telangana State and it was against the GWDIT award.

Telangana officials Sridhar Rao Deshpande, OSD to Chief Minister, Koteswar Rao, SE, Inter-state and Subramanya Prasad, Executive Engineer, Inter-State attended the meeting chaired by Member Secretary, GRMB.

It may be recalled that the Telangana officials expressed their objections recently to the GRMB for not forwarding DPRs of Telangana projects in Godavari basin to the Central Water Commission and raising queries that was delaying the process.

Two held for trying to enter Rashtrapati Bhavan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two people were arrested for allegedly trying to enter the Rashtrapati Bhavan, police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place around 11.30 pm on Monday, they said.

They were identified as Shivam Sharma and Kusum Rajput. They were under the influence of alcohol when they tried to force their way into Rashtrapati Bhavan, the police said, adding that an FIR was registered against the duo.

Both of them work at a salon, the police said.

The case was filed against them under Sections of trespass, Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and the Motor Vehicles Act on the complaint of an ACP rank officer at the South Avenue police station, the FIR stated.

The duo was sent to 14 days' judicial custody.

YSRCP storms...

Continued from page 1

After bagging 80 percent of panchayats, the YS Jaganmohan Reddy-led YSRCP had swept the civic body polls registering a landslide victory by winning 74 out of 75 municipalities and 11 out of 12 Municipal Corporations that went for polls in March. The TDP failed to secure even a single Municipal Corporation.

Polls were put on hold for 12 municipalities and Nellore Municipal Corporation due to various reasons and were finally conducted on November 15.

Naturally, all eyes were on maiden polls for Kuppam municipality.

Even before the votes were cast, ground reports suggested that it was never going to be an easy task for the TDP to win the municipality in the Chittoor district that comes under Naidu's home con-

stituency Kuppam, which he has been winning without break since 1989.

On its part, the YSRCP focussed all its resources to win Kuppam municipality at any cost and embarrass Naidu.

The TDP shifted its energies on Kuppam municipality; Naidu himself leading the charge by holding road shows for two days. His son Nara Lokesh also campaigned in Kuppam and both father and son were far more aggressive than ever before in attacking the YSRCP supremo and Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy.

They accused Jagan of trying to turn the peaceful Kuppam region into 'Pulivendula', which is infamous for faction-ridden politics.

Naidu and his team also alleged that YSRCP had deployed bogus voters in large numbers and that the police also supported the ruling party.

Mumbai ex-top cop an 'absconder': Court

Continued from page 1

As per section 83, after issuing such a proclamation the court can also order attachment of the proclaimed offender's properties.

Former assistant police inspector Sachin Waze is also an accused in the case, registered at the Goregaon police station in the city.

Besides Param Bir Singh, co-accused Vinay Singh and Riyaz Bhatti were also

declared as proclaimed offenders by additional chief metropolitan magistrate S B Bhajipale on Wednesday.

Bimal Agrawal, a real estate developer and hotelier, had alleged that the accused extorted Rs 9 lakh from him for not conducting raid on two bars and restaurants which he ran in partnership, and also forced him to buy two smartphones worth around Rs 2.92 lakh for them.

The incidents occurred

between January 2020 and March 2021, he had claimed.

Following his complaint, a case was filed under Indian Penal Code sections 384 and 385 (both pertaining to extortion) and 34 (common intention) against six accused.

Singh is facing an extortion case in Thane too.

The IPS officer was shunted out from the post of Mumbai police commissioner in March 2021 after Waze

was arrested in the case of the SUV with explosives found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's south Mumbai residence 'Antilia' and the subsequent death of Thane businessman Mansukh Hiran.

Singh was then appointed as Director General, Home Guards, following which he accused then Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh of corruption, a charge the latter denied.

Deshmukh later stepped down as minister and the CBI registered a case against him based on Singh's allegations.

Singh was last seen in public on April 7, when he appeared before the National Investigation Agency (NIA) here to record statement in the Antilia bomb scare case.

The CBI also recorded his statement in the Deshmukh case. He last attended office on May 4, following which he went on leave citing health issues, a senior official said.

40k Tamil Brahmins search for brides in UP, Bihar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As more than 40,000 young Tamil Brahmin men are finding it difficult to find brides within the state, the Tamil Nadu based association for Brahmins has launched a special drive to look for suitable matches belonging to the same community in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

"We have launched a special movement on behalf of our Sangam," said Thamizhnam Brahmin Association (Thambraas) president N Narayanan in an open letter published in the association's monthly Tamil magazine's November issue.

Quoting rough estimates, Narayanan said more than 40,000 Tamil Brahmin men, in the age group of 30-40, could



not get married as they are unable to find brides from within Tamil Nadu.

Giving a ballpark figure, he said, "if there are 10 Brahmin boys in the marriageable age group, only six girls are available in the marriageable age group in Tamil Nadu." The association chief, in his letter said coordinators would be

appointed in Delhi, Lucknow and Patna to take forward the initiative.

Asked on the move, Narayanan said a person who can read, write and speak in Hindi would be appointed at the association's headquarters here to perform the coordination role.

The Thambraas chief told PTI that he is in touch with

people in Lucknow and Patna adding the initiative is practicable. "I have commenced work in this regard," he said.

While several Brahmin people welcomed the move, there were also other views from within the community.

An educationist, M Parameswaran said, "though enough number of Tamil Brahmin girls are not available in the marriageable age group, that is not the one and only reason for boys not being able to find brides." He wondered why parents of prospective bridegrooms expect 'pomp and show' in weddings.

"Why parents of boys want marriages to be held in swanky marriage halls? What stops them from conducting marriage in a simple fashion? Why not in a temple or at home," he asked.

The 'Mahaperiyava' preached simplicity in every walk of life and advised people to not use silk cloth, Parameswaran said.

Mahaperiyava, Mahaswami and Paramacharya are reverential references to late Shankaracharya, Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi (1894-1994), the 68th pontiff of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, also known as Shankara Math.

Parameswaran said the girl's family has to bear the entire expenditure of conducting the wedding and it is the bane of the Tamil Brahmin community.

"Big fat weddings have become a status symbol and it is very unfortunate. The community must choose progression and reject retrogression," he said.

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GHMC earmarks Rs 86.61 cr to improve city's sports infra

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a bid to improve sports facilities in the city, the GHMC has taken up work on 19 sports complexes and swimming pools at an estimated cost of Rs 86.61 crore.

Of these 19 works, as many as seven works worth Rs 22.11 crore have been completed. Officials said that work on remaining facilities is in progress. Considering that sporting activities have started returning to a semblance of normalcy after the pandemic, the GHMC authorities are working towards completing the projects expeditiously.

As per the official communication from GHMC, "In order to improve physical fitness of the citizens, GHMC is working hard to provide sports facilities and swim-



ming pools for adults. This apart, to ensure that children develop an interest in sports, as well as to enable local athletes to master modern games in addition to traditional

games, these facilities are being upgraded."

It may be mentioned here that the GHMC owns 12 sports complexes, seven swimming pools, 521 play-



grounds among other sporting facilities. Nearly 1,800 coaches, some of them Olympians, coach at GHMC facilities.

GHMC staffer falls to death from third floor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 50-year-old man died after falling from the terrace of a multi-storied building at KPHB on Wednesday.

Kamala Raj Mehra, 50, was a government employee working for GHMC. He was staying along with his wife at Road Number 2 of KPHB Colony, the police said.

Raj's wife, Haritha, said that her husband had gone to the third floor at around 9 am. She heard a loud sound after 20 minutes, and when she rushed outside, she saw that her husband had fallen from the third floor on to the ground and was lying in a pool of blood, police said.

An ambulance was called and the paramedics declared Raj dead.

Based on a complaint by his wife, the KPHB Police registered a suspicious death case and are investigating.

Raj's wife ruled out foul play, saying that her husband might have slipped and fallen from the third floor.



Telangana Home Minister Md Mahmood Ali receives Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu on his arrival to the city at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

V-P calls for making healthcare affordable and accessible to all

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Wednesday emphasised the need to ensure affordable and accessible healthcare for all and suggested that modern multi-specialty hospitals also start satellite centres in rural areas.

Inaugurating Yoda Life Line Diagnostics Pvt Ltd here, he praised the Central government's decision to set up at least one medical college in

each district, an official release said.

He further suggested that governments envision one medical college in each revenue sub-division, which would not only address the shortage of trained manpower in the medical profession, but also increase people's access to quality healthcare.

Appreciating the Governments' efforts in making healthcare accessible to all, he further called for redou-

bling the efforts in providing infrastructure support for medical centres across the country.

Talking about Covid-19 pandemic, Venkaiah Naidu praised the frontline Covid warriors for their dedication and hard work.

Lauding Indian scientists and researchers for coming out with a vaccine against Covid-19 in record time, he urged everyone to come forward and get vaccinated.



Saplings planted in eight rows around the Peddapet to Shamshabad stretch of the Outer Ring Road begin to give the appearance of a forest. Special teams maintain the greenery along the 158-km length of the ORR.

Telangana logs 148 new Covid cases, one death

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana on Wednesday logged 148 new Covid-19 cases, pushing the tally to 6,74,037, while the toll rose to 3,977 with one more fatality.

The GHMC accounted for most number of cases with 52, followed by Warangal Urban (13) and Medchal Malkajigiri (10), a state government bulletin said, providing details as of 5.30 PM on Wednesday.

The number of recoveries (172) outnumbered fresh cases, taking the cumulative number till date to 6,66,348, the bulletin said.



Man dies in fire mishap at home

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 33-year-old resident of Uppal died after he got trapped in his burning house on Wednesday.

The deceased man, identified as one Palle Anil Kumar Goud, 33, was a resident of the Green Hills Colony of Mallapur in Uppal.

Police said Anil was running a waste oil business from his house.

On Wednesday, while Anil was working in a room, suddenly a fire erupted and thick smoke engulfed the room. Unable to come out, he cried for help.

Soon after, he began inhaling the smoke and began to lose consciousness due to lack of oxygen.

His wife and neighbours tried to save him but they were unable to do so and called the fire service.

Fire service officials rushed to the spot, doused the flames and then declared Anil 'dead'. Officials suspect that he died due to burns and inhaling the smoke.

Based on a complaint from his wife, the Nacharam Police registered a case.

The police have ruled out any foul play in the case, according to sources.

Man dies after son sets him on fire

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 55-year-old man died of burn injuries after his son allegedly set him ablaze by dousing him with kerosene at their house here, police said on Wednesday.

The accused, in his mid-30s, picked up quarrel with his father over some issue on Tuesday, poured kerosene and set him on fire, leading to him sustaining burn injuries, they said.

Though the man was shifted to a hospital, he succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment, police said.

SOT nabs 11 peddlers with MDMA, marijuana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Eleven people were arrested by the SOT team of Madhapur on drug charges.

The police seized 50 grams of Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), 45 kg of ganja, cash and other materials from the suspects, the Cyberabad police said.

The police teams initially nabbed Mohammed Bin Hassan Kolani and Kondla Rakesh, with three grams of MDMA in front of a star hotel at Madhapur and came to know that three major drug peddlers who supplied them drugs from Mumbai were absconding.

The police team learnt that the suspect, Yasin Khan, had



bought the drug from an unknown person in Mumbai and it was transported to Hyderabad through Raheed Ali.

On Tuesday, the SOT team arrested Raheed Ali, Yasin Khan and Ifthekhar Ahmed at the Hitech city railway station and seized 42 grams of MDMA from them.

"After interrogation of Raheed Ali Nihal Ahmad it

was found that he had received MDMA from Yasin Khan and he had brought the same from one Raju Bhai. Subsequently, it was found that Mohammed Bin Hassan Kolani frequently visits Mumbai and purchases drugs from Ifthekhar Ahmed along with another drug peddler, Salman, from Hyderabad, who were earlier arrested by the Nampally police in

February 2021 and was released in May 2021. Another 45 grams of MDMA was seized from them," the police said.

Meanwhile, the Balanagar SOT apprehended three men, Jude Jeevan, Algooy Bhavani Shankar and Chilukoti Shivaram, with two grams of MDMA from a hotel in Madhapur, after they caught Mareedu Srinivas, a software engineer, who had three grams of MDMA.

The Madhapur team also arrested Pittala Kupender, Nor Mohammed Abdul Salam Patel and Govinda Ravindar Bavishwal, 33, for transporting ganja from Vizag to Mumbai.

"Their organiser receives orders through personal contacts," the police said.

Man cheats six of Rs 25 lakh, held

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The KPHB Police arrested a man on Wednesday who had allegedly cheated many people promising jobs, and had taken Rs 25 lakh from them.

Kambadura Ravi Kumar, 30, hails from Amalapuram in AP. He was working in a company at ECIL and was staying at Kamala Nagar in Vanasthalipuram. Police said a complaint was received from a resident of KPHB who had paid several lakhs to Ravi Kumar.

"After seeing an advertisement about job openings, the complainant contacted the mobile number mentioned in



the advertisement. The fraudster said that there were contract jobs in a company at ECIL and that hiring was on. After asking the victim about his qualifications, the fraudster told him that he could get a job for him if he paid Rs 6 lakh. The fraudster also asked the

victim to keep the matter a secret and to inform only his close friends as he could get jobs for them too," said Inspector S. Laxmi Narayana.

The complainant then told five others about the same and the six decided to pay Ravi Kumar to get a job.

On July 16, 2020, the six went to ECIL to meet Ravi Kumar and pay the money. After collecting Rs 25 lakh from the six as advance Ravi Kumar avoided them.

When the victims grew suspicious and asked Ravi to give their money back, he began threatening them and refused to pay.

Infant falls to death from fifth

G. RAVI KIRAN

■ HYDERABAD

A one-year-old baby died on Wednesday at Mallepally in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

The baby, Akshara, fell from a building and died while being treated at Niloufer Hospital. She fell from the fifth floor of a building, police said.

Akshara was playing at her home on the fifth floor on Wednesday morning. There was a grilled wall on the balcony. But the grill had a gap between its steel bars. The baby fell down through that gap and was injured seriously, police said.

Akshara was taken to Niloufer Hospital immediately. She died while getting treated, police said.

Cyber crooks cheat man of Rs 21 lakh

G. RAVI KIRAN

■ HYDERABAD

A businessperson, staying at Azamabad, has lost Rs 21 lakh to cyber crooks. Police said he had got a link on his mobile phone to SQ.com which offered him huge profits provided he invested with them.

The complainant invested Rs 21 lakh and after that, the app disappeared. The mobile phone of the concerned person also was switched off. He then complained to the Cyber Crime wing of Hyderabad police on Tuesday.

A month back, the com-



plainant got a link to SQ.com through a WhatsApp message. In that message, the senders men-

tioned that if he invests, he will get 10 times the money invested.

The complainant regis-

tered with the app and sent Rs 2,000 as trial. By evening he got Rs 4,000 in the accounts section of the app.

A person called him on his mobile phone and encouraged him to invest more money.

The complainant increased his investment gradually. As the account section of that app showed profits, he invested Rs 21 lakh on different dates. The account finally showed Rs 50 lakh as his balance.

On Monday, he tried to withdraw the amount, but he could not. Then he tried to contact the person, who

had called him earlier, in vain. Immediately the app also disappeared from his mobile phone.

The complainant tried to locate the app on his mobile phone and on Google.com, but it could not be found, police said.

The complainant then realised that he had been cheated by cybercriminals and complained to the Cyber Crime wing of Hyderabad Police Commissionerate as per the suggestion of the Musheerabad Police.

The police have registered a case and are investigating.

తెలుగు మీడియాలో కొత్తవారికి అవకాశం

త్వరలో ప్రారంభమయ్యే శాటిలైట్ న్యూస్ ఛానల్ / డిజిటల్ వేదికలో పనిచేయటానికి ఉత్సాహవంతులైన యువత యువకులు కావాలి.

డిగ్రీ పదిని వుండి తెలుగు భాష మీద పట్టు. ఇంగ్లీష్ పరిజ్ఞానంతో బాటు సామాజిక న్యూస్, వుటా సమస్యల పట్ల అవగాహన, మీడియా ద్వారా సమాజానికి సేవ చేయవచ్చునన్న ఆలోచనా ధోరణి ఉన్నవారిని ఆహ్వానిస్తున్నాం!

రిపోర్టింగ్, యాంకరింగ్, ప్రింట్ రైటింగ్. LIVE

ప్రాడక్షన్, వీడియో ఎడిటింగ్

తదితర విభాగాలలో పనిచేయాలనుకునే వారికి స్టైపెండ్ తో కూడిన శిక్షణ ఉంటుంది. విజయవంతంగా శిక్షణ పూర్తిచేసుకున్నవారు పూర్తికాలపు ఉద్యోగులవుతారు.

దరఖాస్తు విధానం

మీ ఫోటోతో కూడిన ఉయోగోహితోతు ఈ వ్యక్తి పట్ల మీ ఆసక్తి, నియంత్రాపన, మీకున్న అభ్యుదయ ఒక ౪౫ సైజు చీల్చేలో, ప్రజలు మెచ్చేలో ఒక నవ్వో ఛానల్ ఎలా ఉండాలని మీరు అనుకుంటున్నారో ఇంతో చీల్చేలో మీ చేతికెంతో కిసి పంపండి.

20.11.2021లోగా మీ దరఖాస్తు మెయిల్ చేయాలన్న వివరాలను

ascendasbroadcasting@gmail.com

Re-survey of Eatala's lands underway

PNS ■ MEDAK

Resurvey of the lands, alleged to be grabbed by MLA Eatala Rajender, commenced on Tuesday and continued on Wednesday.

The re-survey will continue on Thursday too. It may be recalled that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao recently ordered a survey of lands held by the former minister and present Huzurabad MLA Eatala Rajender on a complaint by some farmers that Eatala had encroached lands belonging to Dalits and the poor in Atchampet and Hakimpet in Masaipet mandal.

Earlier, a preliminary survey was conducted by revenue authorities and submitted a



report to the government that Jamuna Hatcheries, owned by Eatala's spouse Jamuna,

encroached 66.01 acres of assigned and ceiling lands. The district collector had sub-

mitted a report in this regard to the state government.

Following this, Eatala approached the court contending that the survey was not done properly and sought justice to him.

Then, the high court ordered resurvey of the said lands. In fact, the re-survey would have to be held in June this year but was put off on account of Covid-19. In a recent development, revenue authorities served notices on Jamuna Hatcheries on November 8.

They commenced a re-survey of the said lands on Tuesday. The authorities surveyed 18.35 acres under survey no.130 in Atchampet village of Masaipet and fixed

boundaries of the lands.

RDO Shyam Prakash, Tahsildar Malati, divisional surveyor Lakshmi Sujata are supervising the land survey. The survey was done in the presence of farmers who had complained to KCR about land encroachment by Eataly, 20 local villagers. The police have beefed up security in the region.

On Wednesday, a re-survey of lands was done under survey numbers 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, and 82. On Thursday, lands in Hakimpet under survey number 97 would be surveyed.

Toopran RDO Shyam Prasad said that a comprehensive report would be submitted to the government on November 18.

‘Don’t neglect your responsibility’

Collector angry at teachers absence in school

PNS ■ NAGAR KURNOOL

The District Collector P Uday Kumar has urged the teachers to take educational initiatives for the children in Chenchu areas and added that they should work committedly for improving their educational standards.

While inspecting Appapur tribal residential school and a bridge school in Mallapur on Wednesday, he said that “The teachers, who are supposed to educate children and inculcate discipline in them, should not neglect their noble responsibility. They should be punctual to their duties and never skip timely attendance”. He made the comment seeing that only one teacher was present in the school even after 10-30 in the morning.

He came to know that five teachers are working in Appapur residential school and on inquiry, it was revealed that the remaining four teachers come only after 11 am. He immediately conducted a spot meeting in the same premises and as he was informed the principal Ramlal another teacher Shankaraiah came after



11 am.

Not stopping himself at that, the collector observed the attendance register and to his shock, it was found that two teachers had been absent for the last so many days and Shankaraiah did not even sign on the register. “You are working as a contract residential teacher.

It is your responsibility to present in time and teach the children and you are not at all doing your duty duly” the collector asked Shankaraiah and as he did not answer ordered the officials to take action against him. Expressing his dissatisfaction at the attitude of the teachers the collector advised them “If you are not interested in duties.. you had better

quit your jobs” and at the same time he warned them that if educational standards of the students were not improved action would be taken on those who are responsible.

After that Collector, Uday Kumar visited Mallapur Bridge school and spent some time talking to the children and he also made them to write alphabets.

Improving the educational standards of the children in the Chenchu areas will be helpful to them a lot and it will also lead to social development also, the Collector said even as he advised the teachers that they should not derelict their duties in this regard.



Advance loans as per set targets, Bankers told

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

District Collector Jitesh V Patil on Wednesday urged bankers to give crop loans to farmers in tune with the set targets and asked them to sensitize farmers on crop loans at Rytu Vadikas Addressing participants of the district consultative committee, he asked the farmers to renew their crop loans within the stipulated time.

He asked the bankers to advance bank-linkage loans to the women of self- help groups. Similarly, the bankers were urged to advance home

loans and educational loans as per the targets.

Jitesh released potentially linked credit plan books on the occasion. Additional collector in-charge Venkata Madhava Rao, district agriculture officer Bhagyalakshmi, district SC hostel warden Rajita, SC Corporation Executive Director Dayanand, district veterinary officer Jaga nnadham, LDM Rajender Reddy, Nabard deputy director M Nagesh, RBI AGM Rahaman, Canara Bank AGM Srinivasa Rao, SBI AGM Pallamaraju and other bank officials took part in the event.

Ensure zero mortality rate, Collector advises authorities

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Asking the medical and health authorities, the District Collector S Venkata Rao to act collectively to ensure that there is zero infant and maternal mortality in the district.

He asked them to take precautions to ensure zero infant and maternal mortality rates. If anyone were to be found negligent in this regard, he threatened them to take stern action against them. Reviewing the activities of the medical and health departments with officials in his chambers here on Wednesday, he asked them to pay no negligence in the care of expectant mothers and take necessary precautions since he conceived the baby.

He wanted them to conduct all diagnostic tests on her and advised her nutritious food to be taken and other precautions.



Besides the expectant mother, medical and health authorities should share all information with her spouse and parents.

Her health condition should be monitored constantly. He wanted the medical officer, ANM, and other personnel to remain alert on the issue. He asked the authorities to encourage bereaved family members to apply for financial assistance of Rs 50,000 if any family member dies due to Covid-19.

Blood donation, a gift of life to others

KITSH principle, staff and students donate blood

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Stressing the importance of blood donation, the Principal, staff & students of the KITSW family proved their social responsibility by donating blood during the pandemic.

It was organized on the occasion of the 83rd birthday of the Rajyasabha MP and KITSW Secretary and Correspondent Capt. V. Lakshmikantha Rao.

It was jointly inaugurated by the chief guest IRCS Warangal chairman Dr. P. Vijaychander Reddy, KITSW management members Dr. V. Pavan Kumar, A. Satyanarayana Raju, V. Chandrashekar Rao, coordinator NSS, and Lions club members. The KITSW Principal Prof. K. Ashoka Reddy has donated blood first and he has proved practically the importance of blood and his social responsibility during this pandemic.



demic.

On this occasion, the chief guest IRCS Warangal chairman Dr. P. Vijaychander Reddy said that by donating blood twice a year one can protect their health especially students and youth. “Blood donation is the greatest service for nation-building and it reflects the need for selfless service and it is proved that KITSW Warangal is the paternity of the people of the society not only in the development of technology

but also in the social service to save the lives of the human being during this COVID SEASON” he said. The Principal advised that the slogan is donating blood and save the life and our students have been giving more importance to social service to inculcate social responsibility towards the common man. He also highlighted that donating blood means a few minutes to you but it is a lifetime for someone else.

Gather public opinion, please!

Villagers on second stone crusher in Lakdaram

PNS ■ PATANCHERU

Residents of Lakdaram village in Patancheru Mandal of Sangareddy district on Wednesday told the officials at a meeting held to gather public opinion in the village on establishing rough stone and road metal gravel mining by one G Nageswara Rao. Airing their unanimous decision, they expressed concern over increased water pollution in the village due to the crushers operating in the village. They expressed concern over roads in the village getting damaged due to thousands of lorries passing through the village. They said that the stone crushers would be dangerous to posterity. They told the authorities not to set up crushers in the village. The agriculture operations have come down in the village on account of the stone crushers. Additional Collector Veera Reddy and TS Pollution Control Board officer Suresh were present at the pro-



gramme. They said that the crushers have been posing hardships not only to humans but also to animals and birds. When villagers demand doing away with the existing quarries, what is the rationale behind the authorities conducting a public opinion gathering meeting on establishing another crusher?

The villagers told that they are completely against establishing a new quarry in the village. In a dramatic development, some persons claiming to be representatives of an NGO supported the establishment of quarry in the village. Everyone was surprised at the NGO representatives running after the

crusher owner at the end of the meeting. Additional Collector Veera Reddy said that the exercise to mobilize public opinion was through. He said that public opinion would be conveyed to the government. DSP Bheem Reddy beefed up security for the event to rule out any untoward incidents.

MLC poll: Collector visits NG college center

PNS ■ NALGONDA

As the date for the MLC elections is fast approaching and as part of inspecting the arrangements for the poll, District Collector Prashanth Jeevan Patil visited the N.G.College for setting up of Local Bodies MLC Counting Center on Wednesday.

The District Collector discussed with the officials about setting up a reception center, strong room, and counting center for counting of votes to store the polling material received from the polling stations.

District Collector was accompanied by DRO Jagadishwar Reddy, DSP Venkateshwar Reddy, Tahsildar Nagarjuna, Collector Office Supervisor Krishna Murthy, and Election DT Vijay.

It is a lurking danger of accidents!

Urgent repairs needed for Torur-Maripeda stretch

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Travel on national highway number 563, especially on the stretch of road from Torur to Maripeda Bangalow you feel it as a virtual hell. The stretch of the road is full of ditches and travel on this stretch is highly risky and sometimes causes road accidents. Thanks to the officials who have conveniently forgotten to undertake repairs to the stretch of the road.

Hundreds of vehicles using this stretch of the road are getting broken down en route. Buses take hours instead of minutes to cross the stretch, according to vehicle drivers. As if it is not enough, heavy-load carrying granite lorries have been commuting along the road to distant places like Visakhapatnam causing further damage to the road. People are apprehensive to use this road. Due to alleged lack of control, hundreds of lorries carrying a heavy load of granite are using the road. Elected people's representatives and officials are urged to



take urgent steps to get the road repaired.

The stretch of road from Warangal to Khammam in the Dornakal Assembly constituency has become worse and almost unfit for travel. People are worried about the lurking danger of accidents.

People allege negligence by authorities and elected people's representatives in undertaking repairs to the road. Besides undertaking repairs to this road, people demand authorities to repair the roads damaged during the recent heavy rains.

No MLC nomination even on the second day!

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

The political pressures may have been the reason for the candidates not coming forward to file nominations in the Nizamabad situation is any indication. For the second day today, no MLC nominations filed yet. It may be mentioned here that the notification for Filing of nominations to the biennial elections to the Telangana State Legislative Council from Nizamabad Local Authorities Constituency was issued on 16 November. Its reported that the list of nominations for the biennial elections to the Nizamabad MLC Constituency as per Form - 3 which contained 9 Columns stands NIL until by 3 PM even after the second day from the Commencement of the Notification said the Returning Officer and the District Collector Narayana Reddy reported.



Dharnas only for political gains Cong Sreedharbabu slams ruling parties

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALA PALLY.

Former minister and Manthani MLA D Sreedharbabu alleged here that the ruling parties at the Centre and in the State have been ignoring the actual welfare of the farmers and only resorting to dharnas for political gains. He demanded that both the governments should come forward and purchase paddy from the farmers unconditionally.

On this occasion, he questioned the governments as to who would purchase paddy

from the farmers if they refuse to do. He termed the attitude of the governments towards the farmers as very disturbing. “It is very shocking to see that the governments are not coming to the rescue of the farmers at the same time and resorting to dharnas blaming each other”, Sridharbabu talking to reporters. He also accused the ruling parties of hand in glove with each other and only for public consumption blaming each other on the paddy issue and added that the parties were only interested in their political gains not working for the welfare of the farmers.

Painting competition for children on energy

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

In order to bring out inherent artistic among the children, a big opportunity awaits them. Children of the State are getting a chance to participate and paint their vision of an energy-efficient world. As part of Energy Conservation Mission, NTPC Southern Region Headquarters in association with the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ministry of Power (Govt. of India) is organizing Telangana State Level Painting Competition during December 01 - 10, 2021 at Hyderabad and one of the districts of Telangana.

The competition is open for all Government and Private school students of Class 5, 6 & 7 (Group 'A') and 8, 9, 10 (Group 'B'). There is no registration fee

and the last date for registration is November 30, 2021.

The competition will be held at two-level: State and National. The state-level competition will be completed by December 10, 2021. Interested schools and students are requested to register by logging in at www.bee-students award.in

The Topics for State Level Painting are 1. Energy Efficient India, and 2. Cleaner Plant. The best 13 in each group i.e. 'A' & 'B' at State Level will be given awards amounting to Rs. 3.5 lakh and the same will be forwarded for selection at National Level. Further, all the participants at State Level will receive Digital Participation Certificate from the Ministry of Power as well as two mementos from NTPC & BEE.

Hanumantha Rao assumes additional charge

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Sangareddy district collector Hanumantha Rao on Wednesday took additional charge as Siddipet district collector in place of Venkatram Reddy who opted for VRS to contest MLC elections. Prior to assuming the charge as Siddipet district collector, Hanumantha Rao performed special puja in the Goddess Saraswati temple in Vargas. Additional Collector Muzamil Khan, district revenue official B Channaih and police officials greeted the new collector with bouquets.

Addressing the employees, Hanumantha Rao described Siddipet as a district that has scope for a lot of development.

Peruse Podu applications transparently

PNS ■ MULLUG

Announcing that there have been a big number of applications seeking rights over Podu lands, District Collector Krishna Aditya urged the officials to scrutinize the applications in a transparent manner. He said that from the 9 mandals of the district 10,420 came from STs and 9868 from others. In order to solve the Podu land issue and also to save forests from encroachments, the government has taken steps to give title deeds to those who have been undertaking Podu cultivation, the Collector said in a statement.



‘Follow mine safety norms’

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

General Manager of Ramagundam Area-I coal mines K Narayana on Wednesday asked the mines officials, overmen, supervisors, employees, and other mining staff to implement safe operating practices in view of the frequent accidents in coal mines.

In view of the accident in the Srirampur coal mine, he asked

all workers, coal miners in Rama Gundam Area-1 to pay special attention to safety to prevent recurrence of mining accidents. He asked the officers to constantly monitor the safety practices in coal mines.

Area safety officer KV Rao, agent Srinadh, mines manager Ramesh Babu, safety officer Srinivas Rao, welfare officer Hanumantha Rao and others took part.

INDIA CORNER

Naxals free Chhattisgarh govt sub-engineer in Bijapur district

A sub-engineer was on Wednesday released by Naxals nearly five days after he was abducted while surveying an under-construction road in insurgency-hit Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh, police said. Sub-engineer Roshan Lakra (35) of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY), who was abducted by the ultras on November 11, was released at Gangloor Road in the afternoon, a senior police officer said. However, it is still not clear whether Lakra was assaulted or threatened by the ultras, he said, adding that the sub-engineer will be subjected to medical examination once he reaches the district headquarters. Lakra and his department's peon Lakshman Partagiri (24) went missing on November 11 when they had gone to conduct a survey of a road being built on a 15-km stretch between Bijapur town and Gorna-Mankeli. As the duo did not return to Bijapur district headquarter the next day, a search was launched and later, the police confirmed that they had been abducted by Naxals from Kanhaiguda village.



Heroin worth Rs 12 cr seized in Assam, drug trafficker shot at

Police seized heroin valued at Rs 12 crore from two persons in Assam's Karbi Anglong district on Wednesday and fired at one of them injuring him when he tried to flee, a senior officer said. Acting on a tip-off, a team of police personnel launched a search operation in Khotkhoti area and stopped the two travelling on a motorcycle. The police team recovered 1.77 kg of heroin, concealed in 150 soap boxes, from their possession and the drug traffickers had planned to supply the contraband to agents in Sarupathar in Golaghat district, Bokajan Sub-divisional Police Officer John Das said. "The police opened fire when one of the two accused drug traffickers tried to escape from the spot when they were taken to our vehicle. He was injured and admitted to a local hospital," Das said. Assam has been witnessing a series of encounters since the second BJP-led government assumed power in May, and 26 accused were killed and 44 others injured in shootouts by the force in the last few months.



Cabinet clears proposal for mobile services in 7,287 uncovered villages

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday cleared utilisation of the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provision of mobile connectivity in 7,287 uncovered villages across five states at an estimated cost of Rs 6,466 crore. Briefing media on the Cabinet decisions, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said these uncovered villages of 44 aspirational districts across five states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha will get 4G-based mobile services. "So, a total 7,287 uncovered villages will get telecom towers and services, and lakhs of people will get connectivity," Thakur said. The estimated cost of implementation of Rs 6,466 crore includes operational expenses for five years. The project would be funded by the USOF, and would be completed within 18 months of signing of the agreement, an official release said.



TRIPURA VIOLENCE

SC bars coercive steps against three booked under UAPA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Tripura police not to take any coercive action against the three civil society members, including a journalist, in connection with an FIR lodged under the harsh UAPA provisions against them for allegedly bringing facts through social media posts about targeted violence against the minority community in the state.

A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices D Y Chandrachud and Surya Kant also issued a notice to the Agartala police on the plea filed by advocates, Mukesh and Ansarul Haq, and journalist Shyam Meera Singh against lodging of the FIR.

The three persons, who were part of a fact finding committee, have also challenged the Constitutional validity of some provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 on the grounds that the definition of unlawful activities is vague and wide; moreover,



the statute makes grant of bail to accused very difficult.

The FIR took note of a tweet of one of the members of the civil society which had stated that "Tripura is burning".

Recently, the north-eastern state witnessed incidents of arson, looting and violence after reports emerged from Bangladesh that the Hindu minorities there had been attacked during Durga Puja on allegations of blasphemy.

On November 11, the top court had taken note of the submissions of advocate Prashant Bhushan and agreed to hear the plea seeking quash-

ing of the FIR lodged against the three civil society members.

Bhushan had said that the two lawyers and the scribe have been proceeded against by the Tripura police under the UAPA for their social media posts and an FIR has been lodged and a notice under the CrPC has been issued to them.

The plea alleged targeted political violence against Muslim minorities in Tripura in October as also the subsequent efforts by the state to monopolise the flow of information and facts emanating from the affected areas by invoking UAPA provisions

against members of civil society including advocates and journalists who have made the effort to bring facts in relation to the targeted violence in the public domain.

The three persons have been accused in the FIR lodged at the West Agartala Police Station under the IPC and the UAPA provisions for allegedly disseminating information about communal violence in the state.

If the state is allowed to criminalise the very act of fact finding and reporting -- and that too under the stringent provisions of the UAPA in which anticipatory bail is barred and the idea of bail is a remote possibility -- then the only facts that will come in the public domain are those that are convenient to the state due to the chilling effect on the freedom of speech and expression of members of civil society. If the quest for truth and reporting thereof itself is criminalised then the victim in the process is the idea of justice, the plea said.

Privilege motion moved against CBI, ED officials in Bengal House

PNS ■ KOLKATA

A privilege motion was moved against two officials of the CBI and ED in West Bengal Assembly on Wednesday for allegedly lowering the dignity of the Speaker's chair while arresting three TMC MLAs in connection with the Narada sting case without intimating him.

Moving the motion, TMC MLA and minister Tapas Roy said that three ruling party legislators -- Firhad Hakim, Madan Mitra and Subrata Mukherjee -- were arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) earlier this year in connection with the Narada case but neither was permission sought from Speaker Biman Banerjee nor was he intimated.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had also filed the chargesheet against the trio. Roy said this action by both the CBI and ED had lowered the dignity of the Speaker's chair and subsequently moved breach of privileges against Satyendra Singh, Deputy SP of CBI, and Rathin Biswas, Assistant Director of ED.

Vir Das' 'two Indias' monologue sparks sharp debate, complaints

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Police complaints were filed against stand-up comic Vir Das in Mumbai and Delhi as the sharp debate on his video I come from two Indias on Wednesday mirrored the polarity of the monologue itself with celebs, politicians and a host of others speaking out.

The well-known satirist, who has issued a statement saying his comments weren't intended to insult the country, found backing from TMC member Mahua Moitra as well as Congress leaders Kapil Sibal and Shashi Tharoor. However, their fellow politician Abhishek Manu Singhvi criticised him for "vilifying the nation" and actor Kangana Ranaut stepped in too to demand strict action against the comedian.

And moving from just polemics, Delhi BJP vice president Aditya Jha from Delhi and Mumbai lawyer Ashutosh J Dubey went to the police with their complaints. While Jha alleged that Das made "derogatory" statements at an international platform with an intention to malign the country's image, Dubey also



held him responsible for defaming & spoiling the image of India in the USA, which is inflammatory. No FIRs have been filed as yet.

Das, who is in the US right now, on Monday uploaded a six-minute video on YouTube titled "I come from two Indias". It is part of his recent performance at the John F Kennedy Centre in Washington DC.

The Mumbai-based artiste, who has also dabbled in cinema, touched on various topics in the clip, including the farm protests, the battle against Covid, the duality in response to women, particularly rape, and the crackdown on comedians.

As the issue gathered steam,

senior Congress leader Sibal on Wednesday tweeted that none can doubt that there are two Indias. Just that we don't want an Indian to tell the world about it. We are intolerant and hypocritical," he tweeted.

Tharoor praised Das as a stand-up comedian who knows that the real meaning of the term "stand up" is not physical but moral.

Das spoke for millions in the six-minute take on the 'Two Indias' he hails from and stands up for, he said on Twitter Tuesday night.

Tagging a tweet by a person who said he has filed a complaint against Das with Mumbai police, Tharoor said, "We know which India this comes from."

TMC MP Moitra also backed the comedian, thanking him for speaking truth about "Two Indias".

"Reactions also from 2 Indias - one having a laugh & other filing complaints with police!" she tweeted.

There were also some voices of support from the Hindi film industry with filmmaker Hansal Mehta and actor-producer Pooja Bhatt hailing the comedian for his courage.

Seeking legal view on Kangana's remarks: Maha Congress

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Congress is seeking a legal opinion on recent comments made by Kangana Ranaut and a party leader had already requested the police to register a complaint against her, Maharashtra party unit president Nana Patole said on Wednesday and dubbed the Bollywood actor's remarks "anti-national".

Speaking to reporters here, Patole said Congress will take a firm stand against such "coordinated" attacks.

Days after her India's independence in 1947 was "bheek" remarks triggered a row, Ranaut on Tuesday claimed Subhas Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh got no support from Mahatma Gandhi and went on to mock his mantra of ahimsa by saying that offering another cheek gets you "bheek" not freedom.

She had described India's



Independence as "bheek", or alms, and declared that freedom came in 2014 when the Narendra Modi-led government came to power.

In a series of posts on Instagram, Ranaut this time targeted Mahatma Gandhi and said "choose your heroes wisely".

"There are some Hindi film actors who are given some awards and being used to distort the historical facts. We are seeking a legal opinion on the matter. Once we arrive at a decision, the party will take its

next firm stand regarding such coordinated attacks," Patole said when asked about comments made by Ranaut.

He said Congress leader Naseem Khan, a former minister, has already requested the police to file a complaint against Ranaut. Patole said such distortion of facts is an "anti-national act" but the ruling dispensation is encouraging such comments.

PM to hand over desi defence equipment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will formally hand over indigenously designed and developed defence equipment to the three chiefs of armed forces in Jhansi on November 19 in a major push to "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" programme in the defence sector.

At the ceremony, the prime minister will formally give light combat aircraft designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to the Air Force chief, drones and UAVs built by Indian startups to the Army chief, and the DRDO-designed and Bharat Electronics Limited-manufactured advanced electronic warfare suite for naval ships to the Navy chief.

The LCH incorporates advanced technologies and stealth features for effective combat roles, the statement said, adding the deployment of Indian UAVs by armed forces is also a proof of the growing maturity of the Indian drone industry ecosystem.

The advanced EW suite will be used in different naval ships including destroyers and frigates.

Modi will also lay the foundation stone of the Rs 400-crore project at the Jhansi node of Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor. The pro-



ject is being executed by Bharat Dynamics Ltd for setting up a plant to produce propulsion systems for anti-tank guided missiles.

He will launch the NCC Alumni Association with the objective to provide a formal platform to enable NCC alumni to reconnect with the organisation.

The association will further the aims of NCC and assist in nation-building.

"It will witness enrolling the prime minister, a former NCC cadet, as the first member of the association, the statement said.

He will launch the national programme of simulation training for NCC cadets with the aim to scale up these facilities for all the three wings of NCC.

He will also dedicate to the nation augmented reality powered electronic kiosks at the National War Memorial which will enable visitors to pay floral homage to martyrs through the simple click of the button.

Modi to launch projects worth over Rs 6,250 crore in UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Mahoba and Jhansi districts in Uttar Pradesh on Friday and launch multiple development projects worth over Rs 6250 crore.

The PM will visit Mahoba at around 2.45 pm and inaugurate multiple projects aimed at alleviating issues of water shortage for farmers in the region, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement.

The projects include Arjun Sahayak Project, Ratalui Weir Project, Bhaoni Dam Project, and Majhgaon-Chilli

Sprinkler Project.

The cumulative cost of these projects is more than Rs 3250 crore and once fully operating, they will help irrigate around 65,000 hectares of land in the districts of Mahoba, Hamirpur, Banda and Lalitpur, benefitting lakhs of farmers, the PMO said.

These projects will also provide potable drinking water to people in the region, it said.

On the same day around 5.15 pm, Modi will lay the foundation stone of a 600 megawatt Ultra Mega Solar Power Park in Garautha, Jhansi.



CBI gets 3 new Joint Directors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior IPS officers Vidya Jayant Kulkarni, Ghanshyam Upadhyay and Nawal Bajaj were on Wednesday appointed as the Joint Directors in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), a Personnel Ministry order said.

Kulkarni, a 1998-batch IPS officer of Tamil Nadu cadre, has been appointed for a period of five years on a deputation basis, it said. Upadhyay, a 1999-batch IPS officer of Odisha cadre, will have his tenure till June 29, 2026, the order said.

Bajaj, who is from a 1995-batch and belongs to the Maharashtra cadre, will have a combined tenure of five years, i.e. up to June 6, 2026, it said.

SUPERVISING LAKHIMPUR VIOLENCE PROBE



SC appoints Rakesh Jain ex-judge of Punjab & Haryana HC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Wednesday appointed Justice Rakesh Kumar Jain, former judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, to supervise on day-to-day basis the Uttar Pradesh SIT's probe into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence in which eight people including four farmers were killed on October 3.

A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli also took note of the names of the IPS officers provided by the state government, and appointed three officials as part of the state SIT.

Now we have verified and contacted the concerned judge we had thought of. This is Justice Rakesh Kumar Jain, a former judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and he will monitor the ongoing investigation so as to ensure transparency and fairness, the bench said.

The apex court further said that the UP SIT will have to be re-constituted to accommodate the three IPS officers including the IG rank police officer Padmaja Chauhan. The investigation will be continued by the SIT under the supervision of the former high court judge and the matter will be listed again after the charge sheet and the status report filed by the learned judge, the bench said.

The CJJ said that a detailed order will be passed shortly. The UP government on

November 15 had agreed to the apex court's suggestion that a former judge of its choice may be appointed to supervise the state SIT's probe.

Prior to this, the apex court had said it had no confidence and did not want the one-member judicial commission appointed by the UP government to continue the probe into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case.

Retired Allahabad High Court judge Justice Pradeep Kumar Srivastava was named by the state government earlier to enquire into the eruption of violence on Tikonija-Banbirpur road in Lakhimpur Kheri district.

We are inclined to appoint a former judge of a different high court to monitor the investigation on a day-to-day basis and then see how the separate charge sheets are eventually prepared, the bench had said.

Speaking for the bench, Justice Surya Kant had suggested the names of justices Ranjit Singh and Justice Rakesh Kumar Jain, both former judges of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and said that they are experienced in the field of criminal law and would oversee the probe of the SIT till filing of the charge sheets in the cases. The police have so far arrested 13 accused, including Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra's son Ashish Mishra, in connection with the case.

PNS ■ GHAZIPUR

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday said he sensed a "wave of change" in Uttar Pradesh that will "wipe out" the BJP in the 2022 Assembly polls as he held a 'Vijay Rath Yatra' on the Purvanchal Expressway inaugurated a day ago by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He claimed the 341-km-long expressway was initiated by the Samajwadi Party when it was in power in the state. He also alleged that the Purvanchal Expressway is still "incomplete".

In a dig at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the Samajwadi Party president



claimed that it was "bulls and bulldozers that were moving around in the state" and asked the people would not they "wipe out bulls and bulldozers".

Yadav was referring to the problem of stray cattle in the state and the chief minister's claim of bulldozers demolishing unauthorised properties.

"I see a wave of change in the state... the BJP will be wiped out. I can assure you that in the coming days, Uttar Pradesh will see a change and that will be for peace. There will definitely be a change in 2022 (assembly polls)."

"It was the Samajwadi Party's dream of building the

Purvanchal Expressway to reduce travelling time between Lucknow and Delhi. It was to be an expressway of prosperity."

Attacking the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh, he said that petrol and diesel have become costlier under the current dispensation. "These are the very people who had said that poor with slippers will travel by air. But the way the prices of diesel and petrol have gone up, riding a motorcycle has become difficult."

Referring to the promises the BJP made to the people, Yadav said, "Unemployed youths waited for jobs for five years. Where are the jobs? Will the youth not bring a change? All

sections of the society, be it farmers, labourers and youths, are ready to bring a change in the state."

Buoyed by the surging crowd, the Samajwadi Party chief said, "This is the beginning, the BJP will be wiped out. A historical rally will be held here soon."

Referring to the different shades of flags of his alliance partners in the crowds, Yadav said, "I can see red, yellow, green and blue. It is a rainbow of all colours. The Samajwadi Party takes all the colours along." He took a dig at the ruling party, accusing it of being "of one hue and they cannot take the state on the path of prosperity."



Nobody's children

The smog over Delhi is no Govt's liability; we look to nature to ameliorate conditions

Nobody killed Jessica. Nobody is responsible for the insufferable, terrible, hazardous air pollution over Delhi and the National Capital Region either. The weatherman says pollution levels could worsen because a drop in wind speed and temperatures is predicted. The smog and haze that blanket the national Capital will not disperse easily in the absence of wind and lower temperatures. The air quality has plunged to the "severe category", leaving people gasping for fresh air. Respiratory infections among children and the infirm have grown in a fortnight. Pollution levels are now posing a critical risk even to healthy individuals. Scientists say the air quality index in the city was at 499 on Tuesday. The Supreme Court, the Union and State Governments, the IMD and various pollution monitoring bodies are involved in trying to find a way out of this mess. However, in reality, there is no way out of it. Like the rain gods used to come to the rescue of Team India in cricket once upon a time, we, with scientific and official might at our disposal, now depend on nature to help the people out of their misery. A steady and strong air current wafting through Delhi and its environs for a week or so can disperse the pollution and lift the haze and everything will be forgotten till next time.



The Supreme Court passed strict orders about the kind of crackers to be burst on Diwali. However, no attempt was made to identify genuine green cracker brands. Policing was conspicuous by its absence. Crackers were sold, bought and used with impunity

because a certain political ideology decided the law cannot come in the way of religion and tradition. The people burst crackers with a vengeance after a lull last year because of the fear of COVID-19 and the lockdown. Visibility was near zero on the morning after Diwali but it was nobody's bother. Issuing orders that cannot be implemented does not help either democracy or health. The Supreme Court and the Governments confabulated a lot about stubble burning by the farmers of Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. The Governments are still 'politically' debating if stubble burning adds to pollution at all. Of course, they pollute. To quote official sources, on Tuesday, 1,820 fires were reported from Punjab and Haryana and they contributed to eight per cent of Delhi's PM 2.5 levels. The Commission for Air Quality Management stopped the entry of trucks and shut down offices and schools. However, it managed to take a politically correct decision of exempting construction activity of "national importance" as if these activities do not generate dust and pollute the air. Now, we face a new threat. With dropping temperatures, the burning of local biomass in the suburban and rural areas will increase the presence of smog. The gigantic machinery of the Executive already appears to have fallen back on air picking up speed some day and stubble fires declining on their own.

PICTALK



Hot-air balloons take off from Domri at the launch of the International Balloon Festival, in Varanasi

PTI

Power play

As the BJP shifts gears in UP, the Opposition parties seek to portray it as opportunist

As the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election inches closer, the major players in the State — the BJP, the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Congress, to an extent — have amped up their electoral game as they seek to make last-ditch efforts to occupy voters' mind space. The cacophony emerging from the Opposition camp that the BJP is focusing only on its Hindutva agenda and tom-tomming various projects with a definitive tilt towards Hindu votes, has forced the ruling party to sit back and take notice. Concerned that such statements, if made repeatedly in one voice and with conviction by the Opposition parties that are seemingly bitter rivals in this arena, could alienate voters from other castes, communities and religions, the BJP is consciously making a slight course correction and is now going fast and loose talking about "vikas" and underlining its vision for the development agenda for the State. All available signals in the party's ongoing journey towards winning the battle for the ballot indicate that the launch of the Purvanchal Expressway would certainly not be the BJP's last gift to Uttar Pradesh this election season.



There are already reports in the media that PM Modi could lay the foundation stone of two more infrastructure projects and inaugurate at least three projects next month. He is likely to be in Greater Noida

on November 25 to lay the foundation stone of the Noida International Airport project and hold a public rally there. Chief Minister Yogi had said the work on the 594-km-long Ganga Expressway will "start in a few days" and the work on 296-km-long Bundelkhand Expressway was going on at a fast pace. Two other key projects, set to be unveiled in the Gorakhpur region by the PM, will be a fertiliser plant and an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Gorakhpur, which is scheduled tentatively for December 5. However, putting the proverbial cog in the wheels of the ruling party's game plan are ever-growing shrill voices that the BJP is on this "development spree" involving only the projects that had been envisioned and planned by the erstwhile State Governments. "The BJP Governments are only inaugurating projects started by the Akhilesh Yadav Government," an SP functionary was quoted as saying. Be that as it may, the only thing clear right now is that it would take a lot more than Hindu-wooing and credit-stealing for the BJP to emerge the favourites at the hustings.

Whose Padma is it, anyway?

Consumed by the craving for recognition, people are said to have bid crores to secure a Padma award. But the process has become transparent since 2015



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

As the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, a new type of fever has gripped Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It is the Padma fever! The craving for civilian honours — the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan, which would be declared on the eve of the Republic Day — knows no bounds in these States. It is only in Kerala and Tamil Nadu that one comes across people with a passion for honorific titles, such as a Doctor or Padma winner. Though former Chief Minister, late M Karunanidhi, was a school dropout, he wanted people to address him as 'Dr Kalaignar'.

The fancy for recognition plays a major role in the passion for these awards. Mostly the *nouveau riche* chase these awards, which do not carry any cash prize or material benefits. The Padma awardees get importance in warrant of protocols in public functions.

The Padma awards seek to recognise achievements in all fields where an element of public service is involved. "The recommendations for the Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister to the President of India. No formal recommendations for the Bharat Ratna are necessary. The Padma Awards are conferred on the recommendations made by the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister every year. The nomination process is open to the public. Even self-nomination can be made," states the Government of India notification in this regard.

Since 2015, the Union Government has changed the rules/procedures for selecting the awardees. Earlier, the State Governments were asked to send a list of names, from which the Centre picked the persons for the Padma honours. But this was not at all a transparent process. A Malayalam feature film, *Pranchiyettan And The Saint* (2010), directed by Ranjit, a CPI(M) fellow traveller, portrayed vividly the nuances of getting a Padma award.

Pranchiyettan, a self-made but uneducated entrepreneur in



Kerala's Thrissur city, and his efforts to get a Padma award formed the plot of the hilarious film. Pranchiyettan hands over ₹1.5 crore to a coman who promises him a Padma Shri. Needless to say that Pranchiyettan did not make it to the list and the coman did a vanishing act with the money. It is said that the story was based on a real-life incident in which an expatriate from Thrissur paid ₹4.5 crore to get a Padma award.

The Padma honours come with a lot of dos and don'ts. The awardees are not allowed to display the titles on their letter pads or visiting cards. There is no cash incentive of any kind with the Padmas. The awardees do not stand any chance in getting a railway reservation ticket confirmed or preference of any kind in public dealings.

The only honour awaiting the awardees comes after they pass away. The State Government is bound to give them full honours when the last rites of the awardees are performed. The policemen would offer a gun salute as the band plays *The Last Post*. While the award winner's body is consumed by fire or lowered



THE ONLY HONOUR AWAITING THE AWARDEES COMES AFTER THEY PASS AWAY. THE STATE GOVERNMENT IS BOUND TO GIVE THEM FULL HONOURS WHEN THE LAST RITES OF THE AWARDEES ARE PERFORMED

in the soil, the police would fire a volley of shots which officially marks the conclusion of the "eventful" lives of these "great sons and daughters".

Bobby Chemmanur, a business baron in Kerala's Thrissur, was heard telling a television interviewer that he was offered the Padma Shri by "persons in high places". He said: "But when I was asked to pay ₹50 lakh to meet the initial expenses, I said no. I am happy with the kind of recognition and adulation people give me." He took people by surprise when he brought to Thrissur the iconic Argentinian footballer Diego Maradona.

Since 2015, the selection of Padma awardees is based on the votes/nominations they receive on the Government of India website. Any member of the public can nominate the person of their choice for the civilian honours and there is no need to wait for the 'kindness' of the State Government. Those bagging the maximum number of nominations stand the chance to win the Padma awards. It is not known whether the process is fool-proof or not. But there has been a noteworthy change

since 2016. A female tribal physician, another female Kalaripayattu exponent, a folklore artist, a visually impaired primary school teacher and a Harijan Gandhian (who were all unsung, unheard of) have made it to the list of the Padma awardees.

Interestingly, there is a retired top bureaucrat who played a major role for years in handpicking the awardees. Pejawar Murari, former secretary to the President who was instrumental in organising the swearing-in ceremonies of three Prime Ministers (VP Singh, Chandra Shekhar and PV Narasimha Rao) and who was the last word in selecting the Padma awardees, stays in his Chennai home surrounded by his favourite books and taken care of by his wife, Sita. In his eighties, Murari still retains the old charm as well as the 'stiff upper lip'. He bursts out laughing when asked: "Sir, don't you aspire for a Padma honour?" That is P Murari...He doesn't care a hoot for honours of any kind. (The writer is a senior journalist working as a Special Correspondent with The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BLAMING FARMERS WON'T DO

Sir — Air pollution has been troubling us for decades, but this year it is alarmingly high and Delhi-NCR is on the top of this scourge. It is a serious health emergency and people are suffering. Hospitals are full of patients with breathing problems. Pollution is all around us in different forms but we always put the onus on others. The farmers alone should not be blamed for air pollution. Air and other types of pollution are caused by several man-made activities like industrial smoke, use of coal for electricity, vehicular emissions etc.

The Government must come up with some innovative pollution control strategies. People too will have to sacrifice their comforts for pollution control. We must encourage electric vehicles and cycles, generate electricity through solar energy rather than coal-firing thermal power stations and replace stubble burning by sustainable means. Stubble can be collected and transported to factories and used as raw material for a variety of things. Startups can be encouraged in this regard. The Supreme Court had asked the Centre to call for an emergency meeting to take measures to curb toxicity in the air but no concrete measures have been taken yet.

Shashank Patil | Ujjain

HAS KANGANA RANAUT LOST IT?

Sir — Actor Kangana Ranaut has defended her rant that Britain "gave" Independence to India in 1947 as a "bheek" or alms, mocking Mahatma Gandhi's mantra of *Ahimsa* (non-violence), that offering the other cheek gets you "bheek" but not freedom. In the 'independent' India of her vision, where she is patronised, Kangana Ranaut enjoys the unbridled freedom to demean the freedom obtained from the colonial rulers itself, unabashedly. However, Kangana Ranaut should read what Albert Einstein had said of Mahatma Gandhi, "Generations to come will scarcely believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth." But no one will be surprised, if she chose to rubbish Einstein's words, too. It would be foolish if one thought that

The man who lived for a cause



The demise of Babasaheb (Balwant) Moreswar Purandare, popularly known as Babasaheb Purandare, is an immense loss to the world of culture in the country and, in particular, Maharashtra. He was a versatile personality, a great historian, eminent writer and theatre personality. He had meticulously tracked the history of the Maratha Empire, visited hundreds of forts that Shivaji Maharaj had conquered and visited each and every place where Shivaji Maharaj had gone. He preserved everything he found in

these places for future generations. He remained fully immersed in the life of Shivaji Maharaj till the end, thus very few historians can match his dedication.

Babasaheb Purandare's most popular two-part 900-page magnum opus on Shivaji Maharaj in Marathi which was first published in the 1950s, is a staple in most Marathi households in Maharashtra and beyond. Many eminent personalities paid their tribute to Babasaheb Purandare including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Noted Historian Babasaheb Purandare received several awards for his exceptional work on Shivaji Maharaj including the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award and Maharashtra Bhushan, the highest civilian award of Maharashtra. His demise has left a hard-to-fill void in the cultural, literary and artistic heritage of the nation and, in particular, Maharashtra.

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bengaluru

the ruling BJP Government will classify Kangana Ranaut's sacrilegious comments as sedition. Centre has always looked the other way when Gandhi's killers were repeatedly lionised, independent India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was relentlessly vilified and Muslims were demonised in virulent hate speeches. Kangana sees Narendra Modi's assumption of power in May 2014 as the dawn of the independent 'Hindu Rashtra'. It was not surprising that Padma Shri Kangana Ranaut thought to pooh-pooh India's freedom struggle.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

TALK IT OUT WITH AFGHANISTAN

Sir — After the violence and chaos following the Taliban's annexation of Kabul in August, things seemed to be falling in place in Afghanistan. However, it will require a long, long time before the Taliban can infuse some sort of hope, if any, in people of the country. Domestic Taliban engagement is only one side of the story.

Interrelated are the widespread repercussions of the Taliban rule far and across the country's borders. Dangerous radicalisation, mindless extremism and cross border infiltration are grave issues that need to be addressed on a war-footing. Going by the background of the militant outfit, one cannot blame the countries of the region for feeling threatened by the presence of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Terror breeds on opportunities and convenience. Not only countries like Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which share land borders with Afghanistan, but other countries of the sensitive region of Asia cannot waver an inch on terror. That precisely is why the central Asian countries should shed past animosities and go on an interactive mode with regards to Afghanistan, though it is better said than done.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Those labelling farmers as villains for air pollution due to stubble burning must apologise to farmers.



BKU spokesperson
—Rakesh Tikait



Some people in the US intend to 'use Taiwan to control China'. This trend is very dangerous and is like playing with fire.

Chinese President
—Xi Jinping

Dharma Productions is all set to announce its first-ever action film. Stay tuned, big announcement coming up.



Filmmaker
—Karan Johar



The fans in India have always been there for me and it is for them that you play. We play to entertain.

Australia batsman
—David Warner

We should encourage children to donate things to the poor to make them understand the importance of humanity.



RSS chief
—Mohan Bhagwat

FIRST COLUMN

PERCEPTIVENESS OF INDIANNES

The road to rediscovering Indian identity is arduous and needs a sharpened ability to think



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

India is in the process of celebrating the 75th year of independence. Many events are being held. The purpose however should also be to strengthen the Indian sense of identity while flagging the significant achievements which the Independence enabled. Typically, they range from achievements in space to near elimination of polio. It is necessary to recognise that there continue to be many and significant areas of potential improvement. Not to think of them and not to attempt to tackle them would be naïve. The objective here is not to create a balance sheet but to flag some of the distinctive concepts and manifestations of Indian identity and how it makes India a truly unique experience. Consider the proposition that India probably is among the few lands in the world where *maun* (silence) is celebrated and idolised. There are many amongst us who observe silence for a given day or parts of the day. Some choose when they want to keep quiet and will only communicate in writing. This is often seen and experienced, among other things, as a path of mental peace and coming to terms with oneself. It is well known that spoken words are like arrows that once shot cannot be taken back. Unthinking utterances can sometimes cause



more damage and pain than perhaps even broken bones. Yet communication is such a basic urge that people talk even when the other person is not listening. Give a mike to a speaker and the chances are he will exceed the time in the fond notion that even if many people are not listening, he needs to say what he has to say. A recognition of the significance of *maun* and its projection as a trait would be a worthy contribution to the seminal components of Indian identity.

Consider the brother-sister relationship. India is probably the only culture where a man-woman relationship has been sublimated to an asexual level. It is not only its sublimation but its ritualization that is a matter of further significance. Relationships have been created across known human hurdles by the sending of a *rakhi* by a lady to a gentleman with whom she would seek a connect. The reciprocation of that gesture of sending rakhi is celebrated with much social approval. Some stories about this circulate and many still practise it symbolically. This component of Indian identity needs to be projected with far more vigour to the edification of all who may be interested. Other examples of Indian uniqueness abound. The listing of the type attempted above can have spaces as a constraint. In an era full of climate talk and resetting of developmental objectives, the approach would be incomplete without a look at the uniqueness of Indianness in an ecologically-related context or indeed the non-human world. In India we have recognised life in a unique way amongst animals, trees, plants and more. Two examples would help illustrate the point. In India, even beyond the symbolic value of an elephant, the reference to a *hathi* (elephant) can evoke images of the Airavat. In other words, the celestial elephant with many divine virtues. The rest of the Airavat lore is another story. Coming to the trees, the concept is thereof a heavenly tree called the Kalpavriksh. Belief has it that wishes come true under the shade of this Kalpavriksh. How can then, one practice thoughtless felling of the trees? The targets of climate change, be they of 2030 or of 2070 would qualitatively improve if the prism of looking at the issues is modified. The road to rediscovering Indian identity is clearly arduous and needs a sharpened ability to think. It is worth while.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal.)

The big fat elections in Uttar Pradesh

Mayawati enjoys unquestionable support among Dalits. It will be erroneous to write off the BSP as the party has a committed vote bank of over 20 per cent



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

The election scenario in Uttar Pradesh is hotting up. Leaders of major political parties are out wooing the voters. Akhilesh Yadav has started his Vijay Yatra claiming that people have already written a requiem for the BJP and that the return of the Samajwadi Party is inevitable. Priyanka Gandhi is on a whirlwind tour of Uttar Pradesh, meeting people, exhorting party workers to unite and project Congress as the only alternative BJP in UP as well as at the national level.

On the other hand, BJP leaders, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah are holding meetings, inaugurating projects, and stressing the importance of double-engine government. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is injecting the dose of Hindutva with freebies. The scheme of free ration among the poor has been extended till March 2022 (by the time elections will be over) and also released money to the accounts for parents of school-going children to purchase uniforms. This way, every parent whose ward is studying in a state-run or government-aided school will get Rs 1,100.

The aggressiveness in the election campaign shows the desperation among the parties to do well in this politically sensitive state. This is clear that the future of these parties is at stake and the Uttar Pradesh elections will decide the role of these parties in national politics.

The BJP leadership has accepted this stark reality as Amit Shah during his recent rally said that if you want to bring Modi back to power in 2024 vote for Yogi in Uttar Pradesh in 2022. Though he gave this statement in Varanasi, Modi's parliamentary constituency, it shows how much the future of BJP hinges on the result of the Uttar Pradesh elections. The Modi government is bound to lose the political command if BJP loses Uttar Pradesh. The barbs would be more stringent and every decision of the Prime Minister would be put under the microscope. The Opposition is already questioning BJP's losses in Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka bye-elections and a further loss in Uttar Pradesh would enthuse the opposition and give them hope that they can topple BJP in the 2024 general elections.

The scenario would not be different for Priyanka Gandhi and Congress. The leadership quotient of the sister-brother duo is at stake in Uttar Pradesh. The defeat of the party in the last decade and a half has led to erosion of the party's base. Dalits, Muslims, and upper castes who were the quintessential support group of Congress till the mid-80s gradually shifted to the Bahujan Samaj Party, Samajwadi Party, and BJP, respectively. Despite the Congress-led UPA government ruling India for 10 years till 2014, the party's reliance on the Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party to run the Manmohan Singh government at the



IT WILL BE A HERCULEAN TASK FOR PRIYANKA GANDHI TO REVIVE THE PARTY. IN THE LAST ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, CONGRESS HAD WON JUST SEVEN SEATS IN THE 403-MEMBER ASSEMBLY BUT NOW IT IS LEFT WITH ONLY FIVE MEMBERS. IN THE PRESENT SCENARIO, EVEN WINNING TWO DOZEN SEATS WOULD BE A GREAT VICTORY FOR THE PARTY

(The writer is Political Editor, The Pioneer, Lucknow. The views expressed are personal.)



Centre allowed these parties to gain in Uttar Pradesh at the expense of Congress. In the passage of time, Congress lost mass support, which it once enjoyed in Uttar Pradesh.

In this scenario, it will be a Herculean task for Priyanka Gandhi to revive the party. In the last assembly elections, Congress had won just seven seats in the 403-member assembly but now is left with only five members. In the present scenario, even winning two dozen seats would be a great victory for the party. This is an onerous task and if Priyanka fails to achieve the result, questions would be raised about her leadership quality. The voice of discontent would start emanating within the party demanding a change in leadership.

Similar is the case with Samajwadi Party. Akhilesh knows that a loss in this assembly election would further push him to oblivion and questions would be raised over his leadership. The Samajwadi Party had lost the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections and 2017 assembly elections which it contested under Akhilesh's leadership. In 2017 the SP had forged an alliance with Congress and in 2019 the party contested as an ally with BSP. The experiment failed and this time Akhilesh has decided to go with small parties instead of allying with big political players.

The silhouette of Akhilesh's plan was visible in a rally in Ambedkar nagar where two senior BSP leaders - Ram Achal Rajbhar and Lalji Verma - joined the Samajwadi Party. In that rally,

Akhilesh gave a call to merge B R Ambedkar and Ram Manohar Lohia. The subtle declaration shows an attempt of the Samajwadi Party to turn a new leaf in caste-based identity politics with a desperate attempt to forge a Dalit-backward social coalition.

This is not the first time that such an experiment has been tried in Uttar Pradesh. Earlier, it was BSP's patriarch Kashi Ram who carved out a larger Dalit-Bahujan coalition of Scheduled Castes and OBCs. The experiment yielded results in 1993 when the Samajwadi Party and BSP came together to defeat BJP at the peak of the Ram Temple movement to form a coalition government. 'Mile Mulayam Kanshi Ram, hawameinudgaye Jai Shri Ram' was the common refrain at that time. In 2007, through her focus on Sarva Samaj, Mayawati succeeded in enlisting the support of sections of the extremely backward castes and won a clear majority on her own. The political pundits called it the magic of social engineering where the Dalits stitched an alliance with backward and upper castes.

In this election, Akhilesh Yadav wants to revive the same magic and has given a call for the coming together of the followers of Dr. BR Ambedkar and Ram Manohar Lohia to protect the honour of the Dalits and OBCs and ensuring their due representation in the power structure. This declaration is made with a design because Other Backward Castes (OBCs) are bound to play an important role as

they played in the 2019 general elections and 2017 assembly elections. BJP came to power only because it was able to garner good support of OBC because it stitched effective alliances with small but caste-based parties. Samajwadi Party has thrived largely on a Yadav-Muslim core base. When non-Yadav OBCs supported M-Y social equation, Akhilesh came to power in the 2012 assembly elections. Since the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the non-Yadav OBCs have veered around to the BJP and Akhilesh's slogan is an attempt to bring this OBC vote bank back to the SP umbrella.

In this edition of the election, Akhilesh has already forged an alliance with small parties like Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) of Om Prakash Rajbhar. It is also in alliance with Mahan Dal led by Keshav Prasad Maurya and in western UP it has declared its alliance with Rashtriya Lok Dal.

About BSP, no one questions the support Mayawati enjoys among Dalits. It will be erroneous to write off the Bahujan Samaj Party as the party has committed a vote bank of over 20 per cent. The party has successfully carried out Brahmin Sammelans across the state but the way senior party leaders, including legislators, have left BSP and joined Samajwadi Party reflects the eroding base. Mayawati is yet to start the campaign, once she starts moving from one district to another the groundswell in her support cannot be ruled out.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE NAME OF WEST BENGAL HAS BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH CORRUPTION, BLOODSHED AND ANARCHY UNDER THE TMC.
—BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT JP NADDA



THE BJP PRESIDENT SAID THERE IS LAWLESSNESS IN BENGAL. LOOK AT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN UP, GUJARAT, TRIPURA AND ASSAM.
—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE

Chance — an ever-dependable factor in society

Humankind is not on a steady march but in an irregular lurch towards progress. How well can a novel written in mid-1970s America convey this?

Any kind of progress is a miracle, not of the divine kind, but of a very much human variety. In fact, it can be said that only humans can work miracles! For a God, any remarkable event would be a straightforward capability, and so not really an odds-defying miracle.

Indeed, so much of astounding progress seems a fluke; a matter of pure luck. How many governments had a program running to discover a better alternative to lamps and candles? Yet, a self-taught tinkerer succeeds on his own whim and motivation. And electrifies the world with his bulb, made correctly after several hundred attempts!

There is so much zig-zag in human affairs, both at an individual as well as collective



BALAKRISHNAN SATYAM

(The writer is a creative director, advertising faculty, and an amateur epistemologist. The views expressed are personal.)

level, that it leaves us often wondering if there is actually a direction. Though education, life expectancy and access to opportunity are improving for more and more people, humankind is nonetheless not on a steady march but in an irregular lurch towards progress. How well can a novel written in mid-1970s America convey this?

When it's by Alice Walker of 'The Color Purple' fame, her name on the cover is enough to compel one to pick it up. 'Meridian' is the name of a young woman; Meridian Hill, who grows up in the South around the middle of the 20th century. She has some academic aptitude though she comes from a labourer family. She gets lucky



with a second chance at a good education by going on a scholarship to a reputed college. She'd been expelled a couple of years earlier from high school for getting pregnant.

On campus, she has friends who are active minds, enquiring into social inequality, history and law. Over a period of time, she becomes a Civil Rights picketer, and an

activist supporter for black rights. Drafting petitions, cooking, typing, nursing, canvassing, protesting...she is in the thick of it all.

The middle of the book is about the personal vicissitudes in these young lives as they try to earn money, help their friends, cope with their own emotions, and continue their political activity.

The rights campaigners are greeted with cynicism and derision, seen as deluded dreamers, and there are many community members who cling to comforts — the bottle, the weed, their local pastor, or vices that occupy their time. Most have no education. The few beliefs they have are religious ones learnt from their family and local community. Nothing in their lives or

their grandparents' lives could inspire any optimism regarding society.

Still, social change is taking place. Individuals with upward mobility are taking up careers in the church, the legal profession, and in teaching.

White America is brutal on the activists, using violence against non-violent protesters. Through Meridian, we see it all — the community that has to be mobilized, the momentum of the Civil Rights marchers, the turmoil in personal lives compounded with the unrest around them - and we see how people change expectations over time.

It's simplistic to categorize individuals into conservatives and radicals, because there are people like Meridian's moth-

er who's a generous, extremely hard-working person but doesn't set store by political change. Her devoutness has already equipped her to forbear her lot and consider it still to be morally better than that of any exploiter.

The last quarter of the book is powerful. It has poignant scenes like the crowds milling into the church for a glimpse of Martin Luther King Jr. during the funeral service for him.

Much older now, and the Movement in a different phase, Meridian happens to step into a church, and hears the preacher speak in the very style and language of Martin Luther King to the congregation. She feels a difference in the body language of the attendees. She senses

that the civil rights movement now has the majority of the community with it.

"...she actually felt as if the rich and racist of the world should stand in fear of her, because she - though apparently weak and penniless, a little crazy and without power - was yet of a resolute and relatively fearless character, which, sufficient in its calm acceptance of its own purpose, could bring the mightiest country to its knees."

The takeaway is that social reform requires street tactics, diplomacy, the spread of its message, legal petitions, the support of community elders, the backing of youth, and the hope of success to make headway. Perhaps today, the use of digital platforms is a contributing factor too.

CAIT for probe into use of Amazon for sourcing drugs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Traders' body CAIT on Wednesday said it has approached the Narcotics Control Bureau seeking a probe into the alleged use of e-commerce major Amazon's platform for sourcing marijuana.

When contacted, Amazon India said it is currently investigating the issue. "The issue was notified to us and we are currently investigating it whether there is any non-compliance on part of the seller. We assure full co-operation and support required to Investigating Authorities and Law Enforcement agencies with ongoing investigations and ensure full compliance to applicable laws, an Amazon India Spokesperson said.

On Saturday, an online marijuana sale racket was busted by Bhind police in Madhya Pradesh, leading to the arrest of two persons and seizure of 20 kilograms of the contraband, according to an official. The accused were operating the racket through a leading e-commerce firm, which received two-thirds of the profits generated, as per the official.

India to pitch for permanent solution for food security

WTO MEET AT GENEVA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India will pitch for finding a permanent solution to the issue of public stock holding for food security purposes in the forthcoming meeting of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at Geneva, starting from November 30, an official said.

The official expressed hope that "something may come" up on public stockholding and domestic support, which are part of negotiations on the agriculture sector, in the 12th ministerial conference, which is the highest decision making body of the 164-member WTO.

The four-day ministerial conference will begin from November 30.

"Now that the 12th meeting is approaching, a number of submissions are being made at the WTO for advancing negotiations in agriculture. India along with the G33 (group of nations) has been engaging in



achieving a permanent solution to the public stockholding issue," the government official said.

The official added that the public stockholding (PSH) is must for India because it has a mandate, which goes back a long period of time and India will pitch for that.

Finding a permanent solution to the public food stockpile issue is linked to the survival of 800 million hungry people across the globe.

Under the global trade

norms, a WTO member's food subsidy bill should not breach the limit of 10 per cent of the value of production based on the reference price of 1986-88. Apprehending that full implementation of the food security programme may result in breach of the WTO cap, India has been seeking amendments in the formula to calculate the food subsidy cap.

As an interim measure, the WTO members at the Bali ministerial meeting in December 2013 had agreed to

put in place a mechanism popularly called the Peace Clause and committed to negotiating an agreement for permanent solution at the 11th ministerial meeting at Buenos Aires.

Under the Peace Clause, WTO members agreed to refrain from challenging any breach in the prescribed ceiling by a developing nation at the dispute settlement forum of the WTO. This clause will be there till a permanent solution is found to the food stockpiling issue.

India has invoked the clause in 2018-19 (13 per cent) and 2019-20 (11 per cent) as it breached the subsidy cap for rice.

The current discourse in agriculture negotiations at the WTO includes developed members seeking developing countries to take on additional commitments in terms of enhanced market access, reduction in policy space through reduced domestic support.

India seeks duty-free access for leather goods under FTAs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is seeking duty free market access for its leather goods in countries, including UAE, UK and Australia, with which it is negotiating Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to boost manufacturing and exports, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Wednesday.

He also expressed hope that talks for a similar agreement with the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) group will be launched sometime in January or February next year.

Member countries of GCC are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates (UAE).

"We are trying to get market access duty free for our leather industry and that is one of our prime asks when we are talking to the UAE, UK and Australia... I do hope that Israel can also open their doors for our leather products."

"All of these countries we are looking at, and talking to them for better market access and better opportunities for your sector," Goyal said at the



National Export Excellence Awards function here.

The event was organised by the Council for Leather Exports (CLE).

The minister asked the industry to work on scale and quality to make India a major hub for global brands.


The industry should not wait for government support measures and work on its strengths to boost growth, he added.

Speaking at the event, CLE Chairman Sanjay Leekha said the industry has set an export

target of USD 5.89 billion for the current year and it is aiming to reach USD 10 billion by 2025.

"Besides, we are aiming at reaching a domestic leather products and footwear turnover of USD 20 billion by 2025 from the present turnover of USD 12 billion," he said.

He also urged the government to extend the benefits of the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to the sector as it would help in boosting manufacturing, creating jobs and increasing exports.



Money Matters

NMDC workers hold protest against Nagarnar Steel Plant

NMDC workers on Wednesday staged a dharna at Jantar Mantar here against the demerger of Nagarnar Steel Plant and government stake sale in the company. "We will protest tomorrow also. We will be giving a representation to the Labour Minister regarding this," Sant Ram Sethia, Nagarnar Steel Plant Workers' Union President, said.

Rajesh Sandhu, Secretary of NMDC Sanyukt Khadaan Mazdoor Sangh, which represents workers at the NMDC operated mines, said over 200 employees of the company have gathered in the national capital for the two-day protest.

K&L Wellness Technology raises Rs 30 cr from Angel

Healthtech firm K&L Wellness Technology on Wednesday raised a seed round of Rs 30 crore from angel investors Vimal Kedia and Surendra Kedia of Manjushree Ventures as well as Narendra Firodia of Soham Group. The funds will be invested to launch and scale its healthtech platform to redefine the lifestyle transformation of the world of wellness through science-led personalised solutions, the company said in a statement. K&L Wellness Technology provides therapeutic-based health solutions to lifestyle diseases using natural, sustainable and traditional methods of yoga and meditation.



Gold futures gain on spot demand

Gold prices on Wednesday rose by Rs 55 to Rs 49,093 per 10 gram in futures trade as speculators created fresh positions amid firming spot demand. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for December delivery traded higher by Rs 55, or 0.11 per cent, to Rs 49,093 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 6,412 lots. Fresh positions built up by participants led to the rise in gold prices, analysts said. However, gold prices traded 0.26 per cent lower at USD 1,859 per ounce in New York.



RBI ex DG highlights says central bank's concerns on crypto

Former RBI Deputy Governor N S Vishwanathan on Wednesday said money laundering and lack of clarity on valuations are the primary concerns of central banks in being circumspect about the introduction of cryptocurrencies. If the government goes ahead and allows cryptocurrencies, bankers need to be wary and not confuse persons' wealth with the amount of crypto assets they hold even if they do not use it as collateral for lending, Vishwanathan said. The comments come amid a heated debate over whether to allow private cryptocurrencies into the country, which has seen the RBI being vocal about its concerns, while the government seems to be more amenable. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had on Tuesday reiterated his concerns over cryptocurrencies, saying there are 'far deeper issues' involved in virtual currencies that could pose a threat to the country's economic and financial stability.



GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

EE-DIV-16/ENG-16/SBZ/2021
NIT No. 22/CIR-16/ENG-16/SBZ/2021 Dt: 16-11-2021
Name of the Work: Engaging Tractor Vehicle in Circle-16, Secunderabad Zone, GHMC
Total Tender Amount Rs. 6.525 Lakhs. SI. No. 1 to 6 Start Date: From 18-11-2021 @ 11:00 AM. Last Date & Time for receipt of Bid: 23-11-2021 @ 11:00 AM. M. Shankar, Executive Engineer, Division-16, Circle-16 Amberpet, Secbad Zone, GHMC Cell: 9963677718 Address of the Concerned Executive Engineer, Div-16, SBZ, GHMC Abids, GHMC. Further details can be seen at E-Procurement www.tandrapranganagov.in
R.O. No.: 11991-PVCL/AMVT/1/2021-22 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, DIV-16, SBZ, GHMC



Mahindra Finance launches lease-based vehicle subscription biz

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services (Mahindra Finance) on Wednesday announced the launch of lease-based vehicle subscription business for the urban centres, eyeing a business of Rs 10,000 crore in the next 3-5 years.

Under a brand christened 'Quiklyz', the non-banking financial company (NBFC) said it will be the first-of-its-kind digital journey on vehicle usership aimed at catering to both the retail customers and corporates.

Under the new-age vehicle leasing and subscription business 'Quiklyz', the company will offer multi-brand vehicle leasing and subscription, targeting to reach as many as 30 cities within a year and garner a book size of Rs 10,000 crore in 3-5 years, Mahindra Finance said while announcing Quiklyz virtually.

Mahindra Finance sees this as a great opportunity to create value for its stakeholders with a profitable business



model and build a strong balance sheet out of emerging opportunities in this adjacent business vertical, it said.

Quiklyz is the first-of-its-kind digital journey on car usership with which the customer can access a brand new car without all the hassles of car ownership.

It will take care of registration, insurance, scheduled and unscheduled maintenance, and roadside assistance, among others.

"Car leasing and subscription is a lucrative and fast-growing business in India. We aim to achieve a book size of

Rs 10,000 crore in 3-5 years.

"Leasing is seeing significant traction in the last-mile mobility space especially with EVs (electric vehicles), something our business module will also focus on," Ramesh Iyer, vice-chairman and managing director of Mahindra Finance, said.

The company sees it as a big opportunity to serve the urban market, especially the retail customers.

Besides, it will also allow the company to design products that are suitable to the needs of the customers, Iyer told reporters.

Sensex, Nifty fall for 2nd day on profit taking in RIL, HDFC twins

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Key stock indices Sensex and Nifty declined by more than half a per cent for a second straight day on Wednesday due to profit booking in banking, oil & gas and pharma stocks amid lingering worries over inflation.

The 30-share index ended 314.04 points or 0.52 per cent lower at 60,008.33 as 20 of its components ended with losses. The index moved between a high of 60,426.61 and a low of 59,944.77 during the day.

The broader Nifty of the National Stock Exchange declined by 100.55 points or 0.56 per cent to close at

17,898.65.

Axis Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding around 2 per cent. Reliance Industries declined by 1.91 per cent, Kotak Bank by 1.51 per cent, Bharti Airtel by 1.39 per cent and Titan by 1.2 per cent. Among others, HDFC Bank, HDFC, Dr Reddy's, Sun Pharma, TCS, and HCL Tech also declined.

On the other hand, Maruti remained the top gainer among Sensex scrips for a second day, rising by 2.77 per cent. Asian Paints and PowerGrid rose more than 2 percent. NTPC, ITC, IndusInd and Tech Mahindra also advanced.

Corporate sustainability: Adani firms score more than average points in survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Green Energy and Adani Transmission have scored 66 points and 63 points, respectively, in the corporate sustainability assessment (CSA) survey 2021 conducted by DJSI-S&P Global, which is higher than the average world electric utility sector score of 38 points.

"Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), the world's largest solar power developer, scored 66 points in the corporate sustainability assessment (CSA) survey 2021 conducted by DJSI-S&P Global. This is significantly higher than the average



world electric utility sector score of 38," the company said in a statement.

Adani Transmission Ltd (ATL) in its statement said it has scored 63 points in the 2021 corporate sustainability assessment (CSA) survey conducted by DJSI-S&P Global.

"This is significantly higher than the average world electric utility sector score of 38," it added.

AGEL Chief Sustainability Officer Santosh Kumar Singh said, "This achievement is a manifestation of the Adani vision to steer India towards a cleaner, greener future."

With an industry-specific approach, the S&P Global ESG score provides multiple layers of ESG intelligence with three underlying environments, social and governance, as well as economic dimension scores.

AGEL initially interacted with DJSI-S&P Global for ESG benchmarking and received a

score of 51 in April 2021, which has now increased to 66, representing a massive 15-point improvement.

Following the initial score, AGEL aligned its ESG reporting standards with the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative), and increased public disclosures in the company's annual report, sustainability report, management systems and business excellence initiatives.

"This remarkable improvement in our ESG score within just a few months testifies to the robustness of ATL's approach and strategy on ESG," said Anil Sardana, MD and CEO of ATL.

CIL efforts to curb pollution pay off

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned CIL on Wednesday said its efforts to curb environmental pollution through the implementation of mechanised coal transportation and loading through coal-handling plants resulted in a significant reduction of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and other air pollutants.

This was revealed in a first-of-its-kind pilot study sponsored by Coal India Ltd (CIL) in two of its opencast mines.

At a time when the country under COP 26 commitment has pledged the reduction of CO2 emissions towards net-zero march, CIL's efforts in this regard will help the national cause.

To reduce emissions for a cleaner environment, CIL in a major step is switching over to mechanised transportation of coal through conveyor belts and loading by CHP/ silos under its first-mile connectivity (FMC) initiative.



In addition to 151 million tonnes (MT) of coal currently transported through this means, CIL has identified 35 coal mining projects where additionally 415 million tonnes (MT) of coal will be loaded through environment-friendly CHP/ silos by 2023-24.

To come up at an investment of around Rs 10,500 crore, FMC projects will lift the total mechanised loading quantity to 566 MT.

CIL is dovetailing FMC projects with main rail lines, strengthening the rail connectivity at an investment of about Rs 2,335 crore. The company is also investing Rs 3,750 crore in 21 new rail sidings. Evacuation of coal is more challenging. Silo loading compared to prevalent loading through sidings also leads to productivity gain on quality and quantity fronts.

CIL has engaged the services of the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, a unit of the Council of

Scientific Industrial Research, to evaluate potential environmental advantages of loading coal through CHP/ silos in Lingaraj and Gevra opencast projects of MCL and SECL, respectively, as a dipstick survey.

"The result of the study is encouraging. Mechanised loading offers a bouquet of environmental benefits like reduced CO2 emissions, other air pollutants and ambient noise levels."

"Reliability in coal despatches also increases, especially during monsoon, as silo loading avoids road transport," the company said.

With Lingaraj Opencast Project (OCP) having 16 MT CHP/ silo loading capacity per annum, the pilot study established an annual reduction of 10,288 tonnes CO2 emissions. This indicates an overall 54 per cent drop in emissions compared to despatch through rail sidings. Reduction in particulate matter and other gaseous

emissions was around 73 per cent, which translates into a better quality of life.

In the case of Gevra, which has 10 MT CHP/ silo capacity, the reduction in CO2 emissions was 1,658 tonnes per year for loading through silos, around 21 per cent fall against loading through sidings.

There was a reduction of around 84 per cent in particulate matter and other gaseous emissions.

Though CIL has constructed bypass roads for trucks, mechanised loading leads to reduced density on the road network enhancing better road safety and lowering accidents.

Another offshoot of mechanised loading is savings that accrue out of a decrease in diesel consumption and road transportation costs. A total saving of 58.38 lakh litres of diesel from payloaders and tippers was indicated in Lingaraj OCP entailing a benefit of Rs 105 crore, including transportation costs.

Jitendra Singh bats for joint effort of govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The power of collaboration between the government, industry and stakeholders needs to be systematically harnessed for realizing the vision of a new resurgent India, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said.

Addressing the second edition of 'The SMARTec Initiative India 2021', the minister of state for science and technology highlighted various initiatives taken by the government to promote science and technology for startups.

Singh said India is emerging as among the world's top leaders in the area of science and technology and recently it entered the list of top 50 innovative countries reaching the 46th position in the Global Innovation Index 2021.

DANCE OF LIBERATION

SHIKHA DUGGAL

With centuries passing by, Dance has become one of the important tools for recreation, entertainment, health, preserving social interactions, religious ceremonies, and also in celebrating events, etc. Over years, you must have heard of various dance forms including acro, ballet, musical, contemporary, among many others. Dancing with a unique twist are two graceful and professionally trained dancers — Harsha Maheshwari aka KOMET and Faria Abdullah, who is famously known as 'Chitti'. They gave birth to an annual dance festival 'Camp Celiberate' to bring the dance of liberation to the forefront. This festival not only hosts several workshops, dance fitness, dance battles, from across the country, but also holds panel discussions to let people know the career prospects in dancing, long

hours of cyphers, and more. An artist, a lover of life, and a strong believer of energies, Harsha is the director of Happy Hours Dance Place through which she conducts national and international workshops, jams, and uplifting programmes for the privileged and underprivileged people of the city with #DanceNahikiyaTohKyaKiya. A regular visitor of Hyderabad's underground dance set up, Faria also organises workshops, events, and jams. But what is the dance of liberation? Well, the powerful combination of movement therapy rooted in ancient shamanic tradition that clears blockages in the body, mind, heart, and spirit is what the dance of liberation is. Integrating the seven foundations as a spiritual map, the experience allows dancers and non-dancers alike to explore their relationship to pain and the shadow, and learn how to work with the body to release them and get in touch with lost parts of the

self. Healing modality is what the dancer-turned-Tollywood actress mentions to us. As we move further in the exclusive 'community wise' interview, we could feel how a community of danseuses from across the country is coming together in Hyderabad and engaging in dance! If there is national belly dancer Meher Malik on board, so there is Ryan Martyr, the Bollywood choreographer too along with others. This manifestation of liberating dance is huge! "Both of us realised the power and impact of an art form like dance in our personal lives, we wanted to take this art form forward in the form of healing modality now, in the Hyderabad city. We have great dancers, despite that Hyderabad is not seen as the destination for great dancing talent in the country. We want to put Hyderabad on the map and we are successfully doing so," tells Faria Abdullah. At

the same time, Harsha takes the conversation ahead and says, "It's a great way of celebrating life pri-

attendees. That gave both Faria and me an encouraging encounter to follow up." Recalling one of the known performances from the dance movement by Tapash, the organiser calls it to be a personal moment of liberation! Asked why, she says, "The 13-year-old had down syndrome, yet he had mastered four forms of dance. In 2018, Tapash also set a record for non-stop dancing for 40 minutes and

found a place in the Genius Book of Records. There was a shift in vibe during his performance at our camp, he taught us to let go of our fears." Adding to that the Jathi Ratnalu actress calls 'Camp Celiberate' to be a dancing space free of judgment! Of course, the title seems quite catchy, there's a

presence of word-play there. Touching a little upon that, we asked KOMET, why is that and she resounds, "It's my way of showcasing the combination of celebration and liberation. This year's theme is revolving around 'Heal and not Hate' — there will be seven communities coming on board with the sole aim of not looking at them with pity but rather compassion. That's one phase of 'Camp

Celiberate' followed by two other phases." Faria lets us know her relationship with Harsha Maheshwari, and she had all good things to say about this stunning collaboration! "She's my mentor, I used to look up to her and suddenly she was one of my closest friends that I have today here in Hyderabad. Both of us are constantly evolving and dance will always remain that common factor between us. With myself turning into a Tollywood celebrity, it has got 'Camp Celiberate' a lot of positive influence! We have so many eyes on us now, so much more exposure. More people are understanding the importance of movement, art, and therapies and another aim of 'Camp Celiberate' is to also normalise this."



marily! The 'dance' is liberating us just by bringing two passionate souls together, away from all the hassles of life. The first time we organised 'Camp Celiberate' was at a bar in the city, and post the session was over we could see 'ek alag si smile' on the faces of



FROM LAW TO MODELING TO ACTING

PARAMVIR SINGH CHEEMA, WHO PLAYS LUCKY, A COP IN SONYLIV'S *TABBAR*, SPEAKS WITH *THE PIONEER* ABOUT HIS ROLE, HIS JOURNEY AS A MODEL, AND HOW ACTING HAPPENED



What is your role??

I play Lucky who is very frustrated by the errands that his seniors in the police keep giving him and he just wants to grow out of it and change the system. He wants to end corruption in his department. He is always ready to do anything and is a very sharp cop who just wants to do his job loyally. For him, everything is either black or white, there is no grey shade in between.

Tell us about your journey as a model?

I did model for a year in Delhi and won Mister India 2016 there. Post that my journey started in the modelling world. We always heard that modelling is a stepping stone towards Bollywood, so I did that too but I didn't get that kick from modelling. At the back of my head, I always knew I wanted to act. I was also doing LLB from Punjab so I couldn't move to Mumbai permanently at that time, so moving to Delhi was easier and even my father agreed to that, which was a big thing.

You have also been part of Punjabi music videos. Tell us about your experience?

This happened even before Mister Punjab. People approached me since I had a good face and height. I did one music video before the pageant, and after Mister Punjab I got a lot of offers as

my fan following had increased not just in Punjab but also overseas in Canada and UK. From that experience, I got a little more camera friendly but after a point of time I consciously decided to stop doing the music videos as I felt it was time for me to take the next step.

You were a lead actor in Zee TVs show Kaleerein. What would you like to tell about the show?

Kaleerein just happened to me. I feel that you should never stop and just keep working hard. It always bears fruit. I never settled and when Kaleerein came to me, it was a big deal as I was the main antagonist in the series and these renowned faces like Arjit Taneja and Aditi Sharma were my co-stars. It was a very different experience and the fan following I got from it was much more. Even my character's journey clicked with the audience and when it turned negative people even abused me and I found it fascinating. After that, I got work at irregular intervals but when I actually felt that I was ready for the industry, that's when Tabbar happened to me.

How did acting happen?

Acting just happened. It was never a set plan but circumstances became so and opportunities kept coming. I didn't leave them and just grabbed them all. In college, there was a fashion show taking place. I was 6'2 so one of my designer

friends asked me to walk for him on the ramp. I did that and surprisingly even won a title. Post that, I participated in Mister Punjab 2015, shifted to Delhi and did some fashion assignments. In Delhi, I also got that push and validation that helped me make a transition to acting. People there told me that I have more of a commercial face than a model one, so I should go to Mumbai as I would have a better scope there. So, I did.

Your instagram bio says 'Law Graduate'. Are you practicing? If yes, how do you manage to juggle between work?

I am a law graduate but I don't practise it. My father is a lawyer himself and he told me that the line that I was choosing isn't secure, so I should have a back-up plan and he suggested LLB for that.

I had planned to go abroad to study after my BBA but my father's mind changed and he didn't want to send me away and wanted me to pursue LLB here, so I put this condition in front of him that I want to go to Mumbai after LLB. I told him that if it wouldn't work out, I would come back, but I needed to give it a shot. While doing LLB my interest grew in that. Above that, by doing LLB I gave joy to my father and that makes me happy too. I am very connected to my family and our happiness is interlinked.

Diagnose pre-term labour

Every year, November is marked as the National Prematurity Awareness Month. Every year, 15 million babies are born prematurely — that's more than 1 in 10 of all babies around the world. A pregnancy normally lasts for about 40 weeks, but pre-term labour starts 3-4 weeks earlier. Some risk factors for premature birth include having a previous premature birth and being pregnant with multiples. Complications associated with premature birth include immature lungs, difficulty regulating body temperature, poor feeding, and slow weight gain. Prematurity has also been associated with a behavioral phenotype and personality profile that includes being timid, socially withdrawn, over-controlling, and disinclined towards risk-taking or fun-seeking. Premature birth can also affect the pituitary-gonadal axis in ovaries or testicles, which can lead to reproductive insufficiency. Preterm labour is labour that starts before 37 weeks of pregnancy. Going into preterm labour does not automatically mean that a woman will have a preterm birth. Diagnosis of preterm labour is by signs and symptoms that the patient shows. These include:

- Mild abdominal cramps, with or without diarrhea
- A change in the type of vaginal discharge—watery, bloody, or with mucus
- An increase in the amount of discharge



- Pelvic or lower abdominal pressure
- Constant, low, dull backache
- Regular or frequent contractions or uterine tightening, often painless
- Ruptured membranes (your water breaks with a gush or a trickle of fluid)
- Only in 3 in 10 women preterm labor stops on its own; the remaining need early detection and treatment

Preterm labour can happen to anyone without warning. But there are some factors that can increase the risk of preterm labour, including:

- Preterm birth in a past pregnancy
- Having a short cervix early in pregnancy
- Past gynecologic

- conditions or surgeries
 - Current pregnancy complications
 - Lifestyle factors
- Tests to be done to diagnose preterm labour are pelvic examination to assess the status of the cervix, ultrasound, and vaginal swab to test for fetal fibronectin presence.

How to manage: Management depends mainly upon the gestational age of the pregnancy. If the fetus would benefit from a delay in delivery, medications may be given to:

- Help the fetal lungs to mature more quickly
- Reduce the risk of certain complications
- Attempt to delay delivery for a short time

Medications that help prepare a fetus for preterm birth include corticosteroids, magnesium sulfate, and tocolytic

ics. Corticosteroids can help speed up the development of the fetus's lungs, brain, and digestive organs. A single course of corticosteroids may be recommended between 24 and 34 weeks of pregnancy for women who are at risk of delivery within 7 days, including for women with ruptured membranes and those carrying more than one fetus. When given before preterm birth of fewer than 32 weeks and intended delivery in 24 hours, magnesium sulfate may reduce the risk of cerebral palsy and problems with physical movement. Tocolytics are medications used to delay delivery, sometimes for up to 48 hours. Prevention of preterm birth can be done by frequent and close monitoring of pregnancy, progesterone support, and cervical cerclage in indicated cases.

(The author Dr. M Niharika is the Consultant Fertility Specialist at Kamineni Fertility Centre)

‘FEEL LUCKY TO PLAY a layered character in debut film’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Missing, Srinu Josyula's thriller is gearing up for its release later this month. Produced by Bhaskar Josyula and Seshagiri Rao Narra, the film stars Harsha Narra, Nikkesh, and Misha Narang in lead roles. Harsha Narra is making his debut in Tollywood with this crime thriller. Leading up to the release, the debutante actor talks about how he came about the movie and more. "Becoming an actor has been my childhood dream and I've been constantly working towards it. Because I didn't have any background in the film industry, I was told to prioritize my studies. I finished my studies, and in my trials in the movie industry, I met Srinu Josyula who was looking for an actor — and that's how *Missing* came to me."

The actor, who was previously seen in short films and web series like *Muddapappu Avakai*, and *Pelli Gola 3*, says that he felt that his first step into the film industry should be strong.

"I didn't want to make any movies that I wouldn't personally watch with my family. The first time I

heard the story of *Missing*, I felt that it was my luck that I would be playing the role of such a layered character."

He explains that he plays the role of Gautham in the movie and that following a car accident, Gautham's wife, who was in the passenger seat, goes missing. The mystery surrounding the details of her disappearance is what forms the crux of the story.

"The director has clarity about the movie. There are many moving parts, but it doesn't get confusing. There are movies with the same plotline, but this is new and something is never seen before," he shares.

He says that for a thriller, background music is the soul of the movie. "Ajay Arasada is a gift to the movie. The music is gripping and very well designed with the movie. Misha and Nikkesh are amazing as well. They're dedicated actors, and despite not knowing the language — they would sit and study their dialogues to seamlessly work with the director."

Harsha shares that there is a lot of nervousness that comes before the film's release on November 19. "I have a hope on the Telugu audience, that they'll prioritise



T'wood biggies meet to discuss Sankranti release clashes

With big-ticket movies like *RRR*, *Radhe Shyam*, and *Bheemla Nayak* in the race during Sankranti season, the traders of Tollywood are confused about a few things.

Andhra Pradesh's ticket prices issue on one hand and the huge competition among the biggies, on the other hand, have become a headache for the producers, distributors, theater owners, and other movie traders.

Ram Charan and NTR-starrer *RRR*, Prabhas and Pooja Hegde-starrer *Radhe Shyam*, Pawan Kalyan, Rana Daggubati-starrer *Bheemla Nayak* and one more biggie are on the list of the movies which are set to hit the screens during Sankranti.

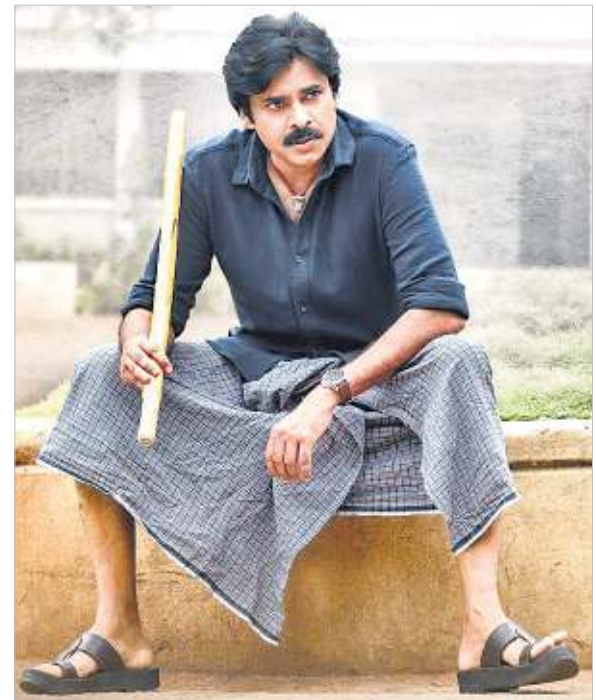
With all the biggies in this competition, there is no possibility of theaters being available for all the movies in the Telugu states. And, if negative talk creeps out about any of these movies after the release, the distributors will face heavy losses and will have to give away theatres. Keeping all the fac-

tors in mind, the big shots of the industry have arranged a meeting to discuss resolutions.

It is reported that there would be major changes in the release dates of the above-listed movies, along

with other business-related resolutions.

Makers of Mahesh Babu's *Sarkaru Vaari Paata* realised the risk factors earlier, and hence averted the box-office clash, postponing the movie to April 1.



Pushpaka Vimanam to be remade in Hindi soon

Pushpaka Vimanam starring Anand Devarakonda, Saanve Meghana hit theatres last week. The film, a family drama infused with comedy, opened to positive responses from audiences and critics alike.

According to the latest buzz, three leading production companies from Bollywood are vying for the remake rights of *Pushpaka Vimanam*. The story

of *Pushpaka Vimanam*, a new-age drama, was told in a unique way with loads of comedy and emotions and it is said that these elements are attracting Bollywood to remake the film in Hindi.

One of the producers of the film Anurag Parvataneni, announced that he will reveal details of the company that will remake *Pushpaka Vimanam* in Hindi, very soon.



Mike Tyson's love for Indian cuisine

Young and promising hero Vijay Deverakonda and director Puri Jagannadh's maiden Pan India project *Liger* marks Legend Mike Tyson's debut in Indian cinema. In fact, the movie's craze increased by leaps and bounds, after Mike Tyson came on board to play the mighty role. The boxing legend started shooting for the film in the USA schedule that commenced on Tuesday.

During the shoot in the US, a special lunch was

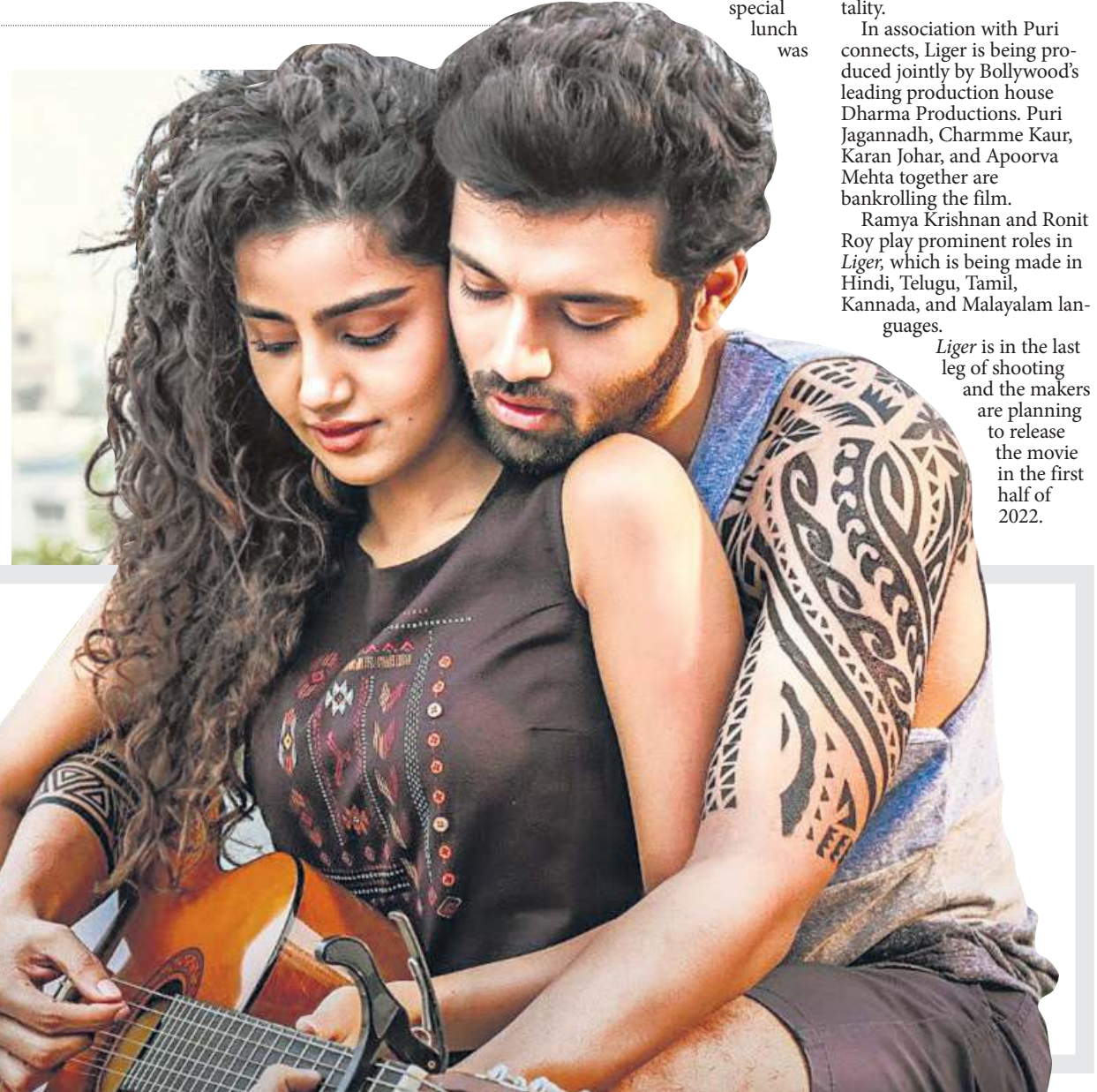
organised for Mike, his wife Kiki, and the team, as Mike loves to have Indian food.

According to sources, Mike fell in love with Indian delicacies such as garlic naan, butter chicken, tandoori chicken, fish tikka masala, and mutton biryani, which he had in his lunch. He specially asked for aloo gobi, palak paneer, samosa, and kebabs. The team was staggered to see his craving for Indian cuisine. They have served the food with love and affection and Tyson too was delighted with the hospitality.

In association with Puri connects, *Liger* is being produced jointly by Bollywood's leading production house Dharma Productions. Puri Jagannadh, Charmme Kaur, Karan Johar, and Apoorva Mehta together are bankrolling the film.

Ramya Krishnan and Ronit Roy play prominent roles in *Liger*, which is being made in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam languages.

Liger is in the last leg of shooting and the makers are planning to release the movie in the first half of 2022.



Rowdy Boys postponed

Rowdy Boys, a romantic drama film, written and directed by Sree Harsha Konuganti of Husharu fame, starring Ashish Reddy, the nephew of Dil Raju and Anupama Parameswaran has postponed its release, announced the makers of the film on Wednesday.

The film has a screenplay by Chiranjeevi Makwana. Bankrolled by Dil Raju and Sireesh under the banner of Sri Venkateswara Creations, Rowdy Boys has already generated good buzz among movie lovers. The film was supposed to hit big screens on November 19.

"#RowdyBoys will be

releasing at a later date. Get ready to relive your college days very soon... #Ashish @anupamahere @HarshaKonuganti @ThisisDSP @Madhie1 @SVC_official @aditya-music #sahidevikram #karthikrathnam #tejkurapati @komaleeprasad, (sic)" tweeted the makers.

Sources close to Ashish Reddy revealed that the

actor underwent grueling acting, fight, and dance workshops under the supervision of star-maker Satyanand, choreographer Sekhar, and stunt master Venkat. Devi Sri Prasad is rendering the tunes in the film.

INDIA LIMIT NZ TO 164

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Martin Gupthill and Mark Chapman's entertaining half-centuries took New Zealand to 164 for six against India in the opening T20 International here on Wednesday.

Gupthill (70 off 42) and Chapman (63 off 50) ensured New Zealand were well placed for a 180 plus total on a batting beauty but Ravichandran Ashwin's double strike in one over put the brakes on the scoring rate.

Ashwin was the pick of the bowlers for India, taking two for 23 in four overs while senior pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar (2/24 in four overs) too got his swing back.

Expecting heavy dew later in the evening, Rohit opted to field. Venkatesh Iyer was expectedly handed a debut while New Zealand made four changes to the playing eleven that played the T20 World Cup final on

Sunday as part of workload management.

Bhuvneshwar, who looked far from his best in the T20 World Cup, got his trademark swing in the very first over of the match.

After a couple that shaped away from Gupthill, he bowled a beautiful outswinger from length to breach Daryl Mitchell's defence.

New Zealand reached 41 for one in the powerplay after a 15-run over from Deepak Chahar, who was guilty of bowling too short or too full.

The Hong Kong-born Chapman, who began his innings with an aerial cover drive, whipped and pulled Chahar for a four and six in the 6th over to give the innings much needed momentum.

India had the run rate under control until 10 overs with New Zealand reaching 65 for one.

Three big overs followed with Chapman and Gupthill



putting their foot on the pedal. Chapman collected a four

and six off Axar Patel in another 15-run over to bring up his

first fifty for New Zealand, having played earlier for Hong

Kong.

Gupthill too looked in ominous touch at the other end as he deposited a slower one from Siraj over long-off.

Ashwin was brought back into the attack in the 14th and he struck twice at a timely juncture for his team with New Zealand getting to 123 for three in 15 overs. He found the stumps of Chapman with a tossed up off-spinner while Glenn Phillips had no clue about his carrom ball.

However, Gupthill was going strong at the other end and the best shot of his entertaining knock came in the 16th over when dispatched Bhuvneshwar for a flat six over deep extra cover, indicating that surface was really good for batting.

With Gupthill in full flow, even 200 seemed on the card but the opener was caught in the deep in the 18th over.

India did well in the last five overs to concede 41 runs besides taking three wickets.



Ganguly replaces Kumble as ICC Committee chairman

PTI ■ DUBAI

BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has been appointed as the Chairman of the ICC men's Cricket Committee, the game's governing body said on Wednesday. Ganguly will replace fellow Indian Anil Kumble, who stepped down after serving a maximum of three, three-year terms.

"I am delighted to welcome Sourav to the position of Chair of the ICC Men's Cricket Committee," ICC Chair Greg Barclay said in a release. "His experience as one of the world's

best players and latterly as an administrator will help us shape our cricketing decisions moving forward.

"I would also like to thank Anil for his outstanding leadership over the last nine years which has included improving the international game through more regular and consistent application of DRS and a robust process for addressing suspect bowling actions." The Board also approved that first-class status and list A classification will be applied to women's cricket to align with the men's game and applied retrospectively.

Jamieson rested from T20s as India Tests key priority

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Calling the Tests against India a key priority, New Zealand head coach Gary Stead has said that the all format players will be given rest during the preceding T20 series against the hosts.

Stead also confirmed that pacer Lockie Ferguson, who had suffered a calf injury at the start of the T20 World Cup in the UAE, has regained full fitness and is available for the series opener here on Wednesday.

All format players like skipper Kane Williamson and pacer Kyle Jamieson have been rested for the T20s, while the other players who are in both squads are Glenn Phillips, Daryl Mitchell, Mitchell Santner and Tim Southee, who will be the stand in captain.

"You'll definitely see that the whole squad (T20) will get match time over here. Again, it's about us



managing the workload of the players. And especially with the Test matches coming up, which will be a real key priority for us as we work through this next week," Stead told NZC's media team.

New Zealand arrived here less than 24 hours after losing the World Cup final to Australia, raising questions about the scheduling of the series in India. The Test squad including the likes of Ross Taylor and Tom Latham had arrived here last week.

"We've decided through talking with Kane and Kyle that they won't play in the T20 series so they're both going to get ready for the Test matches.

"And I think you'll probably find there'll be other guys involved in the Test matches who won't play the entire series either. So it's a bit of a balancing act at the moment and with three T20 games and five days, plus travel to three different cities. It's a it's a very, very busy time."

The two-Test series is part of the new World Test Championship cycle.

Ferguson regaining fitness for the T20s is a big boost for the team, said Stead.

Players to battle out in Mushtaq Ali quarters in 'hazardous' Delhi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Eighty-eight premier domestic cricketers will battle out in hazardous Delhi air when the four quarterfinals of the Syed Mushtaq Ali tournament kicks off at the national capital here on Thursday.

A toxic haze has enveloped Delhi ever since Diwali with authorities in the NCR region making desperate efforts to contain the spiralling air pollution levels.

Despite the toxic air, the pre-quarter finals of the coveted domestic T20 championship were held at the Arun Jaitley stadium and the Airforce ground in Palam without any fuss.

The quarterfinals are also scheduled in Delhi with the two venues hosting two games each, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.



On cricketing front, an unbeaten and fancied Rajasthan will face its toughest opponent when they take on Vidarbha.

For Vidarbha, opener Atharva Taide and skipper Akshay Wadkar are among runs and the duo would like to take on a strong Rajasthan attack, comprising the likes of

pacer Tanveer-ul-Haq and leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi.

The role of middle-order batters Shubham Dubey and Jitesh Sharma, who played a cameo against Maharashtra, would be vital, if the side has to chase or set up a big total.

In the bowling department,

left-arm orthodox bowler Akshay Karnewar and seasoned off-spinner Akshay Wakhare, would be key to their success and their eight overs could decide the match's fate.

Young right-arm pacer Yash Thakur's confidence would be bolstered by his three-wicket haul in the pre-quarters, but he would need support from Darshan Nalkande. For Rajasthan, Deepak Hooda, who shifted from Baroda, has been their batting mainstay and has delivered on every occasion.

But he would need assistance from skipper Ashok Maneria, Mahipal Lomror and others. Their bowlers will also need to bowl in right areas to stop marauding Vidarbha batters.

In another clash, defending champion Tamil Nadu face Kerala in a southern derby.

Mandhana hits WBBL record-equalling 114 not out in WBBL

PTI ■ MACKA

Smriti Mandhana became the first Indian to hit a century in the Women's Big Bash League with a record-equalling 114 not out but her splendid effort went in vain as her side Sydney Thunder lost the match.



Ironically, Mandhana could not pull off a winning six in the last ball off India T20 captain Harmanpreet Kaur as Melbourne Renegades won the match by four runs to send Sydney Thunder out of reckoning of the final.

Mandhana, who faced 64 balls, punished the bowlers with 14 fours and three sixes, equalling Australian batter Ashleigh Gardner's highest individual score in WBBL history.

The left-hander took the Thunder within one six of pulling off a remarkable victory against the Renegades, but she was unable to hit the maximum required from

Harmanpreet's final delivery as her team finished on 171/2.

The defending champions needed an upset win to keep their slim finals hopes alive, and they had a less-than ideal start with Sammy-Jo Johnson (12) and Phoebe Litchfield (1) dismissed inside the powerplay.

Finding a stable partner in Tahlia Wilson (38 not out from 39 balls), Mandhana posted her third fifty of the season from 33 balls. But the asking rate was climbing with 63 runs needed from the last five overs.

Mandhana shifted gears as she took 24 runs off Holly Ferling in the 18th over. She then brought up her century in 57 balls but there was still work to do as 22 runs were needed from the final two

overs. Renegades skipper Sophie Molineux conceded just nine runs from the 19th over and Mandhana was left to face the off-spin of her national skipper Harmanpreet.

Mandhana, who was the beneficiary of two fielding errors, ultimately failed to hit the last-ball six required to complete what would have been a famous victory.

Earlier, Harmanpreet top-scored for the Renegades, who were asked to bat first, with a 55-ball 81 not out with the help of 11 fours and two sixes.

She shared a 91-run stand for the third wicket with English batter Eve Jones (42 off 33 balls). Another Indian, opener Jemimah Rodrigues was out for 2 in the first over.

Mercedes wants to review Hamilton-Verstappen overtake move

AP ■ PARIS

Mercedes has asked for a review of the overtaking incident involving world champion Lewis Hamilton and title rival Max Verstappen during the Brazilian Grand Prix, the Formula One team said. Verstappen was leading the race on Lap 48 when the Red Bull driver defended an attack from Hamilton on Turn 4 and appeared to push the Mercedes star wide off track.

Both were able to continue and Hamilton overtook Verstappen for good on Lap 59 at Interlagos to win and slash the Dutchman's overall lead to 14 points, despite starting last Sunday's race from 10th place on the



grid. Race stewards noted the incident at the time but quickly concluded no further action was necessary as they considered it a racing incident.

"I think it was a good battle," Verstappen said after the race.

"I mean we both of course tried to be ahead into the corner so I

braked a bit late to get that position. I was on the edge of grip.

That's why I think I was already on the apex and it's a safer way of running a bit wide there. In any way, I was happy stewards decided we could keep on racing."

Hamilton appeared to shrug it off in his post-race press conference.

"I didn't think too much of it and obviously I'll have to watch the replay, but it's hard battling and wouldn't expect anything less really," the British driver said.

"We didn't touch wheels, which is good." But now Mercedes said it is appealing "on the basis of new evidence unavailable to the stewards at the time of their decision."

Muguruza, Kontaveit to play for title at year-end WTA inals

AP ■ GUADALAJARA (MEXICO)

Muguruza dominated Paula Badosa in a 6-3, 6-3 victory and will play Anett Kontaveit for the title at the WTA Finals. Eighth-seeded Kontaveit beat Maria Sakrari 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 to advance, ensuring two first-time finalists at the women's season-ending championship. Kontaveit lost to Muguruza in the last match of the round-robin stage, and has a 2-3 career record against the two-time major winner.

The sixth-seeded Muguruza, a losing semifinal



ist in 2015, is the first Spanish woman to reach the singles final since 1993, when Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario was runner-up to Steffi Graf.

"I'm very happy with my performance. It was the best match I played here in

Guadalajara," Muguruza said.

"It's the first time we encountered each other. I'm very proud of Paula, she started the year back in the rankings and made all the way to the top 10." The 28-year-old Muguruza now has a 13-2 record in Mexico, where she won back-to-back titles in Monterrey in 2018 and '19.

She opened this year's WTA Finals with a loss to third-seeded Karolina Pliskova but bounced back with victories over second-seeded Barbora Krejickova, Kontaveit and Badosa.

Argentina draw against Brazil

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Argentina secured a place in next year's World Cup after a 0-0 draw against Brazil, giving Lionel Messi his fifth and possibly final shot at winning the only major trophy missing in his career.

Second-place Argentina qualified after Chile lost 2-0 at home to third-place Ecuador. With 29 points and four qualifiers remaining, Lionel Scaloni's Argentina squad cannot be overtaken by more than two rivals.

Competition-leading Brazil had already secured the first of South America's four direct entries to Qatar 2022. The fifth-place team goes into an intercontinental playoff for a spot in Qatar.

Brazil has 35 points, six ahead of Argentina. Both teams have completed 13 games, one fewer than scheduled because their encounter in September was suspended after seven minutes when Brazilian officials belatedly enforced COVID-19 restrictions. FIFA is yet to decide what to do with that match.

Ecuador has 23 points and is well established in the third posi-

tion. And then, except for last-place Venezuela, there's a crush of candidates to qualify.

Colombia and Peru have 17 points and Chile is sixth with 16 points, narrowly ahead of Uruguay on goal difference. Bolivia is surprisingly competitive with 15 points in eighth position. Paraguay can't be ruled out with 13 points.

Few opportunities were available for Argentina and Brazil in a tense match marked by Messi's low key performance and Neymar's absence due to injury. Goalkeepers Emiliano Martinez and Alisson were just about spectators most of the match.

Messi, who played the entire match after recovering from a knee injury, said he felt well on the pitch. He played for only 15 minutes in Argentina's 1-0 win over Uruguay last week so he could recover to face Brazil.

Dutch head back to World Cup
The Netherlands will be back



at the World Cup after an eight-year gap, forcing Norway star Erling Haaland to wait until at least 2026 to make his debut on the biggest stage.

The Dutch did just enough Tuesday with late goals in a 2-0 win in Rotterdam that eliminated the Norwegians who were missing Haaland, their injured 21-year-old forward. Turkey overtook Norway into second place in Group G, win-

ning 2-1 in Montenegro to enter the European playoffs in March.

Ukraine also won away, 2-0 at Bosnia-Herzegovina, to join Turkey as unseeded teams who will be on the road again in the playoffs semifinals.

The unbeaten Ukrainians, who drew six of their eight Group D games, rose into second place above Finland, which was eliminated by losing 2-0 at home to table-