

ANALYSIS 7
INTERESTS OF INDIAN
FISHERMEN IN DANGER**MONEY 8**
CRYPTOCURRENCY INDUSTRY URGES CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT TO TAKE NUANCED APPROACH**SPORTS 11**
EYES ON RAHANE AS 'SECOND
STRING' INDIA TAKE ON GUTSY...

VIJAYAWADA, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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NAGA SHAURYA'S
LAKSHYA
COMING
ON DEC10
Page 12**PUTIN TESTS EXPERIMENTAL NASAL VAX
AGAINST COVID AFTER BOOSTER SHOT**

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday he has taken an experimental nasal vaccine against the coronavirus, three days after he received his booster shot, as Russia faces its worst surge of infections and deaths since the pandemic began. Putin was vaccinated with Sputnik V, Russia's domestically developed Covid-19 vaccine, in the spring. On Sunday, he said he received a booster shot of Sputnik Light, the one-dose version of the jab, and said he wanted to take part in testing the nasal version of Sputnik V. The nasal vaccine is yet to be tested on members of the public and is currently being studied off-label mostly.

**US TO RELEASE 50 MN BARRELS OF OIL
FROM RESERVES, INDIA 5 MILLION**

Shortly after US President Joe Biden on Tuesday ordered a record 50 million barrels of oil released from America's strategic reserve, India on Wednesday said it would release 5 million barrels from its strategic reserves to bring down gasoline and other costs. The British government too confirmed it will release up to 1.5 million barrels from its stockpile. China, Japan and South Korea are also participating in what U.S. officials said is the biggest coordinated release from global strategic reserves. The U.S. action is focused on helping Americans cope with higher fuel and other prices ahead of Thanksgiving and winter holiday travel.

**GOA GOVERNMENT REFUSES
PERMISSION FOR SUNBURN EVENT**

The Goa government on Wednesday said it will not grant permission to organise the 15th edition of the Sunburn EDM festival, slated to be held in December. The state government has refused the permission to host the Sunburn festival in Goa. I have already signed the file refusing the permission," Chief Minister Pramod Sawant told reporters after chairing a state cabinet meeting refusing to elaborate. The 15th edition of the Sunburn Festival was slated for December this year at Vagator with the organisers announcing that only fully vaccinated participants will be allowed.

**RAJ MINISTER SAYS ROADS SHOULD BE
LIKE 'KATRINA KAIF'S CHEEKS'**

Days after being inducted as a minister in Rajasthan, Rajendra Singh Gudha has shot his mouth off comparing roads to the cheeks of actors Hema Malini and Katrina Kaif. The remark was allegedly made by the Minister of State for Panchayati Raj and Rural Development. In the purported video of the event, Gudha is heard saying in local dialect that roads should be like the cheeks of Hema Malini, adding she had become too old. The Minister made the comparison after he was told about the bad condition of roads in the district. He went on to say roads should be like Katrina Kaif's cheeks. 'Katrina Kaif Ka Gaalan Jaayan ki Sadak Banni Chayey,' he says.

Jagan seeks Rs 1,000-cr interim relief from Centre

Writes to PM Modi, HM Amit Shah detailing losses caused by flood to crops, roads

SNV SUDHIR
VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on Wednesday requested the Centre to grant immediately Rs 1,000 cr as interim relief towards relief and restoration works in the flood-affected areas of the Rayalaseema region.

In separate letters addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the Chief Minister urged the Centre to also depute an inter-ministerial central team to the state at the earliest for assessing the damage and losses caused by the recent heavy rains. "I request the Government of India to support Andhra Pradesh state by extending financial assistance liberally so as to assist the affected families and restore the damaged infrastructure," the Chief Minister said in the letter. He said that in all 40 people,



including one SDRF constable who was on search and rescue operations, died and 25 people were still missing. In all, 1,402 villages in 196 mandals and four towns were affected. Giving details, Jagan pointed out that agricultural crops like paddy, Bengal gram, cotton, black gram, groundnut, sunflower, and sugar-

cane etc. over an extent of 1.43 lakh hectares were damaged. Horticultural crops like banana, papaya, turmeric, onion, vegetables etc., over an extent of 42,229 hectares, were damaged. Roads extending to a length of 1,887.65 km in Nellore, Kadapa, Chittoor and Anantapur districts were damaged.

In the letter, Jagan explained that during the recent depression in the Bay of Bengal four south coastal and four Rayalaseema districts received average rainfall of 11.1 cm, as against the normal rainfall of 3.2 cm between November 13 and 20. In a single day, highest rainfall of 20 cm was recorded at Peddamandayam Mandal in Chittoor district, he added.

Heavy rains lashed the temple town Tirupati, Tirumala, Nellore town, Madanapalli, Rajampet etc., causing inundation of low-lying areas and disrupting normal life. As many as 17 NDRF/SDRF teams and two helicopters had to be deployed for undertaking search and rescue operations, the Chief Minister said.

"Several highways, irrigation tanks and canals got breached and damaged at several places in Kadapa, Chittoor, Anantapuram and Nellore districts," he said.

House passes Cinemas Bill

- No additional/ benefit shows allowed
- Online ticket booking system to be introduced

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Wednesday passed the AP Cinemas (Regulation) (Amendment) Bill 2021 that had pitted a section of the Telugu industry backed by Jana Sena chief and actor Pawan Kalyan against the YSRCP government.

According to the new Bill, only four shows will be allowed. The ticket rates will be the same without any difference between small and big movies. Besides, an online movie ticket booking system would be introduced. No additional shows or benefit shows of movies at higher ticket prices would be allowed in theatres, especially big cinemas.

The state government's proposal to bring in the current Bill, popularly called Cinemas Bill, had caused resentment in certain quarters of the film industry. A battery of representatives of the Telugu film industry had met Information & Public Relations Minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) in this regard.



The Cinemas Bill proposes to introduce a new online movie ticket booking system that will replace the current booking system in theatres. Although the state government had taken the position that the new online system of ticket booking would help moviegoers enhance their experience and check black-marketing of tickets as well as evasion of taxes payable to the government; Pawan Kalyan alleged that the new system

targeted him. Minister for Transport Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani), who tabled the Cinemas Bill on behalf of Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, said that the government had proposed to amend the existing Cinemas Bill to regulate ticket pricing and stop exploitation of middle-class people by those out to cash in on their interests.

CM pats AP Police

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has congratulated the State Police Department which has topped the Smart Policing Index 2021, a nationwide survey conducted by the Indian Police Foundation (IPF).

Director General of Police Goutam Sawang met the Chief Minister at the secretariat and handed over the survey report. The Chief Minister asked him to keep up the good work by serving the people even better.

The Andhra Pradesh Police also stood first in other indicators such as friendly policing, impartiality, legitimacy, transparent policing, accountability and public trust.

They also achieved good ranking in police sensitivity, police behaviour, availability of police, police response and technology use.

The idea of SMART Policing was introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Conference of DGPs of the State and Central police organisations in 2014.

Floods have affected 95,000 families: Jagan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy said the floods have affected nearly 95,000 families and that they should be helped immediately. He asked collectors to monitor relief works.

On Wednesday he held a video con-

ference with the collectors of flood-affected areas and reviewed the progress in relief works.

He asked officials to ensure that there is no problem regarding drinking water and electricity. The Chief Minister asked the officials to give wide publicity to the '104' helpline number

and said officials should take those calls and respond immediately.

The CM said compensation for the deaths of livestock should be given immediately and added that cattle should be vaccinated and fodder should be distributed.

He asked officials to speed up com-

pensation payments to those whose houses were completely or partially damaged within the next three to four days and added that new houses would be sanctioned for those whose houses were completely damaged.

Naidu: Flood fury man-made disaster

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On the second day of his visit to the flood-hit areas of AP, TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu described the breaches in the chain of water tanks and projects as a 'man-made disaster'.

Naidu said the loss of lives and property in Rayalaseema and Nellore districts was caused by the mismanagement of water bodies and the unchecked sand mafia.

The Chief Minister was making ritualistic aerial surveys. If the CM does not make field visits, the Collectors, SPs and the official machinery would not be able to take up relief and rescue operations, Naidu said here on Wednesday.

The TDP chief visited the affected areas in Yerpedu, Srikalahasti and other mandals of Chittoor district.

He had a look at the photos of crop losses and damage to roads and bridges. He also visited the collapsed Swarnamukhi Bridge on the



Papanaidupeta-Gudimallam Road. Addressing the public, Chandrababu Naidu criticised YSRCP MLAs and said, "They launched personal attacks against my wife who is NTR's daughter. She has never been in public life but they targeted her personally. I'm also a human. I'm asking you whether you will respond or not if your wife or sister is targeted unjustifiably."

Naidu told the public that he was not given a mic in the 'Kuru Sabha'

(biased Assembly) to make a statement on the YSRCP's personal abuses and brutal attacks.

Hence, he said he had decided to take his fight to the 'Gaurava Sabha' (respectable forum).

The TDP would settle its scores with the oppressive YSRCP government in the people's court, Naidu said.

The TDP chief asserted that the TDP would not get frightened by the ruling YSRCP's intimidating tactics. He said they had attacked his house, vandalised the TDP main office and harassed TDP leaders and cadres. But the TDP would continue its fight on behalf of the people, he declared.

He said the TDP would fight till the government pays compensation for crop losses and ex-gratia to flood victims.

Naidu asked YSRCP to clarify whether farmers should cultivate ganja if they should not cultivate paddy.

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

Kartik & Krishna Paksha

Tithi : Shashthi 28:41**Nakshatram** : Pushya 18:49**Time to Avoid** : Time to Avoid

(Bad time to start any important work)

Rahukalam : 1:26 pm - 2:49 pm**Yamagandam** : 6:30 am - 7:53 am**Variyam** : Nil**Gulika** : 9:16 am - 10:39 am**Good Time** : (to start any important work)**Amritakalam** : 11:48 am - 1:33 pm**Abhijit Muhurtham** : 11:40 am - 12:25 pm**VIJAYAWADA****WEATHER**

Forecast : Thunderstorm

Temp: 30

Humidity: 79%

Sunrise: 6:25 am

Sunset: 05:39 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated NOVEMBER 24, 2021 5:00 PM

Cabinet okays bill to repeal 3 farm laws; bill to be tabled in Parl winter session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a bill to repeal the three farm laws, which triggered protests at Delhi borders by thousands of farmers, and will be tabled in Parliament during the upcoming winter session for passage.

On November 19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the nation had announced the withdrawal of the three farm laws, saying the government could not convince protesting farmers about the benefits of the agriculture sector reforms.

VKL GAYATRI
VISAKHAPATNAM

The Department of Agricultural Marketing in Andhra Pradesh has directed all district authorities to arrange mobile rythu bazaars to ensure availability of vegetables at affordable prices to common people.

This is because the prices of most vegetables have skyrocketed in the open markets. Although the prices of vegetables are relatively less in rythu bazaars, most of the consumers depend on the open markets because rythu bazaars are available at very few locations.

Observing the need of the hour, the state government has decided



to promote mobile rythu bazaars, particularly at residential colonies, weaker sections' colonies, and remote areas.

The Department has asked farmers to sell their vegetables by maintaining three- and four-wheeler vehicles at their nearest areas.

MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION BILL PASSED

Green tax, registration to raise vehicle prices

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Wednesday passed the AP Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 2021, for enhancing the tax on motor vehicles and net an additional revenue of Rs 409.58 crore per annum.

Significant in the amended law will be the multi-fold increase in the so-called 'Green Tax' on aged vehicles, making it a disincentive to continue their usage.

Karnataka now tops the southern states in taxes on motor vehicles and now, with the new amended law, AP too joins its neighbour.

Moving the Motor Vehicles

Taxation (Amendment) Bill, Transport Minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) claimed it has been proposed to 'rationalise' the rates of life tax (on vehicles) in view of growing inflation and also the increasing need to improve road infrastructure, road safety and anti-pollution measures.

The Green Tax was last revised in the year 2006.

There are 4.17 lakh transport vehicles (excluding autos and goods carriages) aged over seven years and another 20.31 lakh non-transport vehicles aged over 15 years in the state.

Moving the Motor Vehicles

There is a massive response to the introduction of mobile rythu bazaars. Expressing their happiness, people are purchasing vegetables at mobile rythu bazaars.

"In fact, the Gopalapatnam Rythu Bazaar is far away from my village and there is no local market at my village. Facing a lot of pains, I have been selling the vegetables at the rythu bazaars all these years.

However, after getting permission for the mobile rythu bazaar, even as a member of the Gopalapatnam Rythu Bazaar, now I am selling vegetables at various locations. Earlier I faced very tough times to store and often had to return unsold stock. But, now I am selling maximum vegetables

and returning home with unsold stock," Karri Pydinaidu, resident of Lakshminagar in Sabbavaram mandal, said.

Consumers are very happy about the introduction of mobile rythu bazaars. While purchasing vegetables from mobile rythu bazaar at a residential colony near Old Goshala of Simhachalam, M.Sitalakshmi said that she had previously purchased tomato at Rs.120 and onions at Rs.60 per kg. However, at the mobile rythu bazaars, the price of tomato is Rs.80 per kg and that of onion is Rs.45 per kg. The prices of almost all the vegetables are Rs.80 per kg and above. But at the mobile rythu bazaars the prices are Rs.20 less per kg, Sitalakshmi detailed.

Election held for Kondapalli chairman on State HC order

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The election for the chairman and vice-chairman of Kondapalli Municipality in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh was held on Wednesday as per the direction of the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

The State Election Commission completed the poll process amid tight security. However, as per the court orders, the result was not declared.

TDP ward members reached the municipal office under the leadership of Vijayawada MP Kesineni Nani while ward members of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) was led by MLA Vasanta Krishna Prasad.

The election could not be conducted on Monday and Tuesday. Ward members of the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Kesineni Nani had approached the High Court seeking direction to the



Assistant Election Officer to conduct the election without further delay.

The court had observed that election was apparently postponed not to implement its orders allowing MP Kesineni Nani to vote in the election as an ex-officio member.

Justice D. Ramesh had summoned Vijayawada police commissioner (in charge) G. Pala Raju and Assistant

Election Officer Shivanarayana Reddy. When Shivanarayana Reddy said the situation was not suitable to conduct the election, the judge asked him why he did not seek the help of police.

After issuing the direction to conduct the election on Wednesday, the court adjourned the case hearing to November 25. The poll panel was directed not to announce poll results till further orders.

In the municipal elections held last week, ruling YSRCP and TDP had won 14 wards each. However, TDP's strength rose to 15 as independent ward member K. Srilakshmi joined the party.

The newly elected ward members were scheduled to elect chairman and vice-chairman on Monday.

With MLA Krishna Prasad eligible to cast his vote as ex-officio member, YSRCP's tally had gone up to 15. However, YSRCP members stalled the election on Monday on the ground that Vijayawada MP can't participate in the voting. The High Court allowed Nani to cast his vote but will rule later on validity of his vote.

In the recent elections held for 13 urban local bodies, YSRCP had swept the polls winning 11 of them with clear majority. TDP won Darsi municipality in Prakasam district while the result was tied in Kondapalli.

Jana Sena leaders to take part in Maha Padayatra tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Jana Sena leaders will participate in the Maha Padayatra being taken out by Amaravati farmers on November 26 to protest against the shifting of the executive capital from Amaravati to Visakhapatnam.

A Jana Sena statement here on Wednesday said that as per the directions of Janasena chief K. Pawan Kalyan, Janasena leaders led by Political Affairs Committee Chairman Nadendla Manohar would take part in the 'Nyaya Sthanam to Devasthanam' maha padayatra on November 26. The statement said that Nadendla Manohar held a video conference with district presidents on Wednesday.

He told them that Janasena chief Pawan Kalyan had been supporting the protesting Amaravati farmers from the beginning of the stir.

It was decided to take part in the maha padayatra and extend solidarity with the farmers on November 26 at north Rajupalem village in Nellore district, he said.

TDP ignored 2017 report on Annamayya dam, says Jagan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A 2017 report on the Annamayya Project Dam recommending that its quality must be improved was neglected by the then government, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy said here on Wednesday.

During a video conference with the collectors of flood-affected districts, the Chief Minister said the Annamayya Project should have been designed to release 2.85 lakh cusecs of water, but it was instead designed to release only 2.17 lakh cusecs.

He said the dam received an inflow of 3.25 lakh cusecs of water and that resulted in a breach.

Jagan said the discharge capacity of the Pincha Project



Dam was 58,000 cusecs but it received an inflow of 1.38 lakh cusecs.

He asked officials to take measures anticipating similar floods in future and asked them to redesign the Annamayya Project Dam considering current inflows.

The CM instructed officials not to lose confidence due to political criticism and to provide services to vic-

tics. The Chief Minister directed the officials to focus on the safety of irrigation projects in 13 districts.

He asked them to check the reports submitted by previous governments on the safety of dams and to prepare new reports as per data on current water discharge capacity and maximum water inflow estimates.

He said that incidents like the Annamayya Dam breach should not happen in future and directed officials to take all needed measures to ensure safety.

The Chief Minister asked the officials to be alert as heavy rains have been forecast in Nellore and Prakasam districts from November 26 for four days.

All shops, vendors in city ordered to keep dustbins

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In order to maintain the city clean, the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) has directed all the line department officials to ensure that every shop, establishment and even the pushcart vendors maintain wet and dry dustbins with immediate effect. Thousands of shops and establishments, particularly small and medium roadside and pushcart vendors, dump waste in the drainages and on the roadsides. The sanitary workers of GVMC have had a tough time removing the garbage from the drains and roadsides.

In the wake of this, Municipal Commissioner Lakshimisha has directed all the line department officials to ensure that all shops, establishments and even roadside vendors keep wet and dry dustbins.

Visakhapatnam, which tops in industrial, educational and medical fields, is also blessed with many

tourist attractions. The regulations implemented in view of the spread of COVID-19 are being lifted and the city is returning to normalcy. Thousands of sanitary workers, supervisors and other staff have been engaged in maintaining the city clean. However, majority of the shops, roadside eateries, pushcart vendors and very particularly saloons and meat shops are not maintaining separate dustbins nowadays.

The sanitary workers are at the receiving end of this development. Following the regular inspections by the GVMC officials, the cleaning staff are given a telling-off and branded as inefficient workers. Some were even suspended.

The Commissioner has discussed the matter with the officials. During his morning visits, he observed that a lion's share of the shops have not maintained dustbins and issued strict directions to the officials to levy penalties on those who dump garbage in drains and on roadsides.

GVL nominated to DISHA committee

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Union Ministry of Rural Development has nominated BJP Rajya Sabha Member GVL Narasimha Rao as an 'Eminent Person' to the DISHA committee of Andhra Pradesh.

Besides being an MP, Narasimha Rao is a well-known development expert. He has been drafted into the committee for better monitoring of all Central schemes in Andhra Pradesh.

The State has been directed by the Centre to issue a notification regarding this immediately. The District-Level Co ordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) is an important instrument for monitoring the implementation of development schemes in States and districts.

This mechanism was set up by the Modi Government in 2016 to effectively monitor the implementation of development programmes aimed at the common goal of accelerated development through convergence.

The State-level DISHA committee is the apex committee in States and it will monitor implementation in all States.



The State-level DISHA committee is headed by the Chief Minister and has elected representatives and eminent persons appointed by the Union Ministry of Rural Development as members.

The DISHA committee also has the power to examine complaints, irregularities, misappropriation and diversion of funds allotted for development programmes and to recommend action.

The DISHA committee's mandate covers around 40 development programmes of several ministries including all the Central flagship

schemes.

The nomination of GVL Narasimha Rao will enable the BJP to check the rampant cases of fund misuse, diversion and non-utilisation of funds allotted for schemes in Andhra Pradesh.

Reacting to his nomination, GVL Narasimha Rao said, "In Andhra Pradesh, the implementation of development schemes needs an urgent review and as a Member of the DISHA State-level committee, I will ask the State government to properly use all Central funds and to avoid diversion of funds."

RoFR enacted to correct historic injustice done to STs: Deputy CM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 (RoFR) was enacted to correct the historic injustice done to Scheduled Tribes and other forest dwellers whose rights to ancestral lands were not adequately recognised while consolidating forests during the colonial period as well as in independent India. Deputy Chief Minister and Tribal Welfare Minister Pamula Pushpa Sri Vani said.

Participating in a discussion in the Assembly on Wednesday she said the RoFR

Act recognises forest rights including the occupation of individual forest lands prior to the cut-off date of December 13, 2005, community rights etc.

The 2007 RoFR Act was amended in 2012 for operationalize the Act. The Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal ministry at the Centre while the Tribal Welfare Department is the agency responsible at the State level, she said.

A State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC) has been constituted to monitor the implementation of the RoFR Act. Undivided Andhra Pradesh started implementing

the RoFR Act in 2008.

She said that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had issued orders to speed up the process of issuing title deeds under the RoFR Act. He had also instructed to ensure that all ST families in the scheduled area have a minimum of two acres to ensure livelihood security.

The Deputy CM said that a website titled 'Giribhumi' has been developed to digitise RoFR data about land and beneficiaries.

Stones have been laid to fix the boundaries of RoFR lands and photos of beneficiaries have been uploaded on Giribhumi portal, she said.

Aided institutions given second option on merger

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Considering the requests of the aided educational institutions' managements, the government has given them the second option regarding merger with the government. After Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's announcement that the merger is not mandatory, but a completely free option for the managements, the government directed the district administrations to give the second option to the aided educational institutions.

The government has made it clear that there is no mandatory guideline that all the aided institutions should merge with the government.

The managements have to make a very clear decision and it's their choice only. Some of the aided educational institutions have already given the nod to merge with the government and the procedures have been completed. However, the government has given them a second chance to withdraw the decision. Certain parties and political leaders with vested interests have pelted stones at the government on the matter. In fact, after the merger, there would be an additional burden on the government. However, the government has directed all the DEOs to convene meetings with aided educational institutions and clear their doubts, said a senior official.



Education Minister Adimulapu Suresh along with Rajampeta MLA Meda Mallikarjuna Reddy and Special Representative for North America Pandugayala Ratnakar monitored the progress of relief works and distributed cylinder stoves along with utensils and other essential commodities at Thogurupeta Panchayat Village in YSR Kadapa district on Wednesday.

Amaravati farmers to continue protests

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Unfazed by state government's plans to bring new and comprehensive legislation for developing three state capitals, farmers and women of Amaravati are determined to continue their protest, demanding Amaravati as the only state capital.

Though the developments of Monday morning had raised hopes among a section of people in Amaravati, the announcement later made by Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has not surprised those who are at the forefront in the movement for protection of Amaravati as the state capital.

For a few hours many believed that like Prime Minister Narendra Modi who withdrew three controversial farm legislations, Jagan Mohan Reddy will also take back the laws passed to create three



state capitals. However, their celebration proved short-lived as the government made it clear that it remained committed to three capitals.

The Assembly passed Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of all Regions

Repeal Bill 2021, repealing the Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of all Regions Act 2020 and the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Repeal Act 2020 Act.

However, the move was not

to reverse the decision of three capitals but to overcome the loopholes in the Bill. The statements made by the chief minister and then by finance minister Bugga Rajendranath left no one in doubt that the government is sticking to its stand on three capitals.

The hurry with which the Bill was passed to repeal the two Acts clearly indicates that the government feared that the two legislations may be struck down by the High Court, which was hearing more than 50 petitions challenging them.

The petitioners had challenged the laws on ground being technically flawed as they were not passed by the Legislative Council, the Upper House of the state legislature.

Farmers of 29 villages of the Amaravati region, who had given 33,000 acres of land for development of the state capital, have been protesting for more than 700 days and they are determined to carry on the protest till the government decides to have Amaravati as the only capital.

The 'Maha padayatra' by farmers from Amaravati to Tirupati entered the 24th day on Wednesday.

Digital shoppers, be wary this Thanksgiving season!

DAVE BENNETT SILVERY
■ HYDERABAD

With the Covid pandemic pushing more consumers to shop digitally, the number of cyber crimes being reported over the holiday shopping season, have also seen a drastic jump over the last two years. As consumers and merchants gear up for the upcoming Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales over the weekend, police are asking shoppers to be more cautious while browsing for deals online.

Though not as big as India's Diwali and Dussehra sales, the weekend sales nevertheless rake in huge numbers of consumer footfall online, due to the steep drop in prices across all categories. The increase in

the number of online shoppers is a boon for opportunistic cyber criminals who use various methods to dupe their victims and steal their hard earned money.

One of the most common and effective ways fraudsters use to con victims is with the use of mirror websites. The technically advanced fraudster develops a website that looks similar to the original website and has everything the same as the original one. For example, the fraudster may create a website that looks the same as Amazon.co.in but has the address as amzn.co.in or amazonofficial.co.in, to make it seem genuine or go unnoticed. Sometimes, text messages are sent with offers and a hyperlink to the fake website. The unsuspecting cus-

tomers go on about with his/her purchase routine unbothered as the website is an exact replica of the original. Until the delivery of the products will never come through, the customer is unaware that he/she is conned. Such websites also offer huge discounts on the products, luring customers in every way possible, said Cyber Crime officials.

Adding a twist to an old modus operandi, fraudsters send texts regarding festive shopping offers, followed by links to download an application to avail the offers. Unsuspecting customers who click on the link, have a remote access application like team viewer downloaded on their phone, through which the fraudster gains access to confidential information of victims.

RAINING MISERY

Incessant rains damage paddy, cotton in 1.7 L acres in Guntur

VASIREDDY RAVICHANDRA
■ GUNTUR

With the incessant rains, under the influence of low pressure, causing heavy damage to paddy and cotton crops in 15 mandals, the leaders of farmers' unions have appealed to the government to extend financial assistance to the affected farmers.

Paddy crop in 15 mandals in Tenali division was damaged after being submerged. In many of the villages, the paddy crop was in standing position and ready to be harvested. The farmers suffered huge losses as standing paddy crops in about 1.50 lakh acres were destroyed. The farmers were seen trying to save their soaking paddy crops in knee-deep water.

Cotton crop in about 25,000 acres was also damaged in the district. The farmers had started harvesting the produce and the crop got submerged in rainwater now. Chilli crop was also damaged in some mandals. "Agriculture fields in thousands of acres were seen in a



sheet of water. We do not know when the water will recede. We have lost hopes of crops. If paddy is soaked in water, the quality declines and the farmers will not get remunerative price," AP Rythu Sangham leader Kanchumati Ajay Kumar said.

He said that farming had become an expensive affair nowadays as the prices of fer-

tilisers and pesticides have gone up considerably. Besides, the farm labourers demand exorbitant wages. Fear has gripped the farmers following the forecast of another bout of heavy rains under the influence of low pressure in the next four days.

Agriculture Department Joint Director M Vijay Bharati told The Pioneer that the

incessant rains had resulted in massive loss of the crops including paddy and cotton. She said that they had reported damage of the paddy crop in about one lakh acres. The crops in the delta area bore the brunt of the heavy rains, she said.

Vijaya Bharati added that commercial crops also suffered damage in the Palnadu

region. She asked the farmers of affected areas to drain out the stagnated water as early as possible from the fields so that they could save their crops to some extent.

Meanwhile, TDP senior leader and former MLA Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar visited some of the affected agriculture fields in Ponnur constituency on Wednesday. He saw the waterlogged paddy fields and damaged crop and expressed his anguish at the massive loss of crop.

"On the one hand the farmers feel that farming has become expensive and uncertainty prevails over yielding produce. And now, the heavy rains have caused massive damage to the crops," he lamented. He demanded that the government extend necessary financial help to the affected farmers. He urged the officials to inspect every field and assess crop loss precisely. Talking to The Pioneer, Kanchumati Ajay Kumar appealed to the people's representatives and officials to extend help to the farmers in the hour of crisis.



District officials asked to be alert in view of rain forecast

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Collector Pravin Kumar has directed the officials to be on high alert and take all precautionary measures in the wake of heavy rain forecast from November 26 under the influence of low pressure in the Bay of Bengal.

The Collector held a meeting with the officials here on Wednesday. Fishermen should be warned not to venture into the sea. All the residents of the 135 villages located near the sea should be put on high alert. The vulnerable localities should be identified and relief centres should be set up, he said.

The Collector asked the officials to convert schools as rehabilitation centres to accommodate the victims. "All steps should be taken to avoid loss of life and property. Plans should be evolved and implemented precisely to prevent untoward incidents and loss of lives," he said.

Pravin Kumar said that a control room was set up in the Collector's office to provide and receive information regarding rains and a toll free no 1077 was also set up.

The Collector directed the officials to set up 11 control rooms in the coastal mandals. He asked the officials to keep

ready sandbags to plug the breaches of irrigation tanks and canals.

JCBs and hacksaw machines should be kept ready to remove uprooted trees and road blockades. He asked them to arrange generators in case of power failures. All essentials including food, drinking water and medicines should be kept ready to be provided to the victims, he said.

Joint collectors J Venkata Murali, T S Chetan, K Krishnaveni, Kandukuru Sub-Collector Aparajita Singh and ZP CEO B Jali Reddy were among those who were present.



Cops reunite missing children with parents

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The Prakasam district police's swift action reunited five children with their parents.

Police said here on Wednesday that the children of some families, staying at Janardhan Colony in Martur village were picking up rags and other things in the surrounding areas and went to Vemavaram village in Ballikurava mandal on November 23.

The children are Katti Narasimha Rao (5), M. Ankamma Rao (4), Brahmayya (7), Kotayya (4), and Yesudas.

When the children were found wandering, the staff of Vemavaram Village Secretariat saw them and immediately informed the Ballikurava police station.

ASI Balakrishna sent constable B. Chinnaramulu Nayak to the location and he brought them to the Martur police station.

Immediately Martur SI Chaudhary found out the details of the children's parents, called them to the station and counselled them. After that, the children were safely handed over to their parents in the presence of ICDS members.

The parents of the missing children expressed their thanks to SP Ballikurava, Martur Police, Vemavaram Mahila Police Officer E. Sandarani and the Secretariat staff for handing over the missing children safely.

The SP appreciated the officers and staff for their prompt response and for their initiative in reuniting the children with their parents.



Quality should be maintained in Polavaram works: Secretary

PNS ■ ELURU

Central Tribal Welfare Department Secretary Anil Kumar Jha, on Wednesday, directed the officials to follow the quality standards in the works of Polavaram project and complete the construction works of colonies for evacuees at the earliest.

Anil Kumar Jha, along with District Collector Kartikeya Mishra, Commissioner (R&R) Cherukuri Sridhar and Tribal Welfare Department Secretary Kantilal Dande, visited Devipatnam and Pudipalli villages and the Pochamma temple. The officials sailed on a boat to reach the villages.

Later, he held a meeting with the Irrigation, Revenue, R&R, ITD and other officials. Speaking on the occasion, Jha

asked the officials to give priority to maintaining quality in the works of Polavaram project using technology.

The officials were asked to follow the guidelines of the Jal Shakti mission. He enquired the officials about the works, which had been carried out so far. He directed them to submit reports on the progress of R&R package and project works regularly.

The officials apprised Anil Kumar Jha that the 80 per cent works of approach channel had been completed. The spill channel concrete works had almost been completed. The officials gave a powerpoint presentation to the secretary on the earth works and construction of concrete blocks. They informed him that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy aimed to

provide water for kharif crops from the Polavaram project in 2022.

The officials explained to him the plans for development of the 44 villages which are in the 25.72 contour limits of R&R package and 91 villages which are under the 45.15 contour limits. They said that out of the targeted 1,67,338 acres, 1,12,555 acres had been acquired so far.

In the first phase, 6.88 TMC of water could be impounded in the 17 m high project and in phase four, 191.68 TMC of water could be impounded at 45.72 m height in the Polavaram project. As many as 20,978 houses will be constructed under R&R package in the contour 41. Under phase one, 3,780 houses were constructed and the evacuees were shifted.

233 grams gold worth Rs 11.5L seized at RGIA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In the third such seizure in the last three days, the Hyderabad Customs officials detained a passenger at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Shamshabad, arriving from Sharjah, for smuggling 233.4 grams of gold, valued at Rs 11.56 lakh on Wednesday.

Officials said that the passenger arrived at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport via Sharjah by flight 6E-1406 on Wednesday morning.

The yellow metal was concealed inside two wrist watches.

We have detained the passenger for questioning and further investigation is ongoing, officials said.

MP urges PM to release Rs 1K-cr for flood relief

PNS ■ GUNTUR

YSRCP Narasaraopet MP Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayulu on Wednesday appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to release Rs 1000 crore to Andhra Pradesh to carry out relief operations.

In a letter to the Prime Minister and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the MP urged them to release Rs 1000 crore as initial assistance to conduct the immediate rescue and relief operations in the flood-affected districts.

He urged the Prime Minister to release the funds due from the Central government to AP for paddy procurement on priority basis in the time of the crisis. The MP also urged them to send a Central team to assess the damage.

Sri Krishna Devarayalu said that the cyclone, floods and incessant rains during the last



week devastated four districts, killed about 50 people and 10,000 livestock, destroyed standing crops, caused irreparable damage to the infrastructure such as roads, power supply, bridges and railway tracks, and villages were washed away.

"Life in the entire region has turned topsy-turvy and the poor have been left with virtually nothing," the MP explained in the letter.

Unprecedented inflows caused breach of project, says Collector

PNS ■ KADAPA

Kadapa District Collector V Vijayarajulu said that the unprecedented downpours and heavy inflows to the reservoirs caused the Annamayya project to be breached creating devastation in the district.

The Collector, in a video conference here on Wednesday, explained to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy how the Annamayya project caused havoc in the district. He elaborated on the precautionary measures which were taken in the district to save lives.

The Collector said that the downpour on November 18 and 19 under the influence of low pressure was unprecedented and massive. The rain that lasted several hours caused the Annamayya and Pincha projects to receive lakhs of cusecs of water.

On November 18, at 8.30 am, the inflow to the Pincha project was only 3,845 cusecs. But the inflow increased to 90,464 cusecs at 8.30 pm. There was 10.7 CM rainfall recorded in 50 mandals which explains the magnanimity of the downpour in a few hours. The Cheyyur reservoir received heavy inflows due to incessant rains in the catchment areas including beyond the Seshachala hills.



The Annamayya, Buggavanka, Beligallu, Chitravati, Mylavaram and Gandikota rivers received heavy inflows on November 18. The Pincha dam's water discharge capacity is 48,000 cusecs, but it received 1.17 lakh cusecs of water on the night of November 18, which was about two and half times higher than its discharge capacity.

On November 19, the inflow to the Annamayya project was 2.3 lakh cusecs, and it rose to 3.2 lakh cusecs within a few hours. The Annamayya project had never received 3.2 lakh cusecs inflow during the past 50 years.

The district machinery including the volunteers and VROs were put on high alert on November 18 evening. The villagers of Pullapotturu, Digumanduru, Keshambavar, Gundluru and Hemadripuram were informed about the immi-

nent flood. As many as 400 families were shifted to safer places from the villages. In the morning of November 19, the Annamayya project breached.

The Collector informed the Chief Minister that four APSRTC buses, which were crossing the Nandalur bridge, were struck in the flood water. One of the buses fell into a 20-meter ditch killing 10 people. However, the NDRF rescued 45 passengers from two other buses.

A family of priests, who were performing puja at a Shiva temple near the Annamayya project, was washed away. In the two incidents, 20 people were killed, he informed the Chief Minister. Many lives were saved by the precautionary steps taken by the government machinery. Helicopters were used for the rescue operations on November 19, he said.

ACB court orders takeover of DA from kin of dead accused

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) court has ordered to takeover disproportionate assets (DA) worth Rs 2.89 crore from the family of a deceased accused person.

The accused, K Venkateswara Rao, who used to work in Pay and Accounts

Office (PAO) as an accounts officer, had died.

The properties are now with his family. The court after completing proceedings ordered the ACB to take over the properties from the family.

The case was registered in 2006, and the judgment was delivered on Wednesday.



Swarnim Vijay Varsh: 45 boats take part in Parade

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

As part of the ongoing 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' and 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations to mark the 50th Anniversary of the 1971 War and the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, respectively, a 'Parade of Sails' was

organised by the Eastern Naval Command as part of the engagement and outreach programme at the Western Arm of Visakhapatnam Harbour on Wednesday. The multi-class event saw participation by 45 boats including sail boats, windsurfers, kayaks and power boats with 75 participants sym-

bolising 75 years of Independence.

The programme was organised by the Indian Naval Sailing Association (INSA), New Delhi. Rear Admiral Jyoti Raina, Chief Staff Officer (Operations), ENC, flagged off the event and later presented the prizes to the outstanding

yachtsmen and yachswomen.

As a run-up to the event, the Indian Naval Watermanship Training Centre (INWTC), a premier watermanship training centre at Visakhapatnam under INS Circars, conducted a sail training camp for all the participants over the last month. The 75 enthusiastic partici-

pants included naval personnel and their children, cadets of Sea Cadet Corps (SCC) and National Cadet Corps (NCC). They were trained on Hobbie Cat, Laser Bahia, Laser Standard, Laser Radial, Enterprise, 29er, Bic Nova wind surfers, Optimist and Sea Kayaks.



district bore the brunt of the flood, he did not bother to visit the affected areas," he said.

The Janasena leader said that when elections came the Chief Minister sent a minister to each mandal and an MLA to each village but he did not bother to send ministers and MLAs to the flood ravaged

areas.

Manohar also criticised the Chief Minister for releasing just Rs 2 crore for relief operations.

The Chief Minister has washed his hands off by releasing a paltry Rs 2 crore although a catastrophe took place, he said.

INDIA CORNER

Noida International Airport to see Rs 8,914 cr investment in first phase

The first phase of the Noida International Airport at Jewar will entail an investment of Rs 8,914 crore and the initial annual passenger handling capacity will be 12 million, a senior official civil aviation ministry official said on Wednesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be laying the foundation stone of the international airport, which is expected to be operational by September 2024. The greenfield airport, spread over 1,330 acres of land, will initially have two runways and Zurich Airport International AG (concessionaire) emerged as the winning bidder for developing the aerodrome. Civil Aviation Secretary Rajiv Bansal on Wednesday said the capital expenditure for the first phase of the project will be Rs 4,588 crore. The total cost will be Rs 8,914 crore, including Rs 4,326 crore to be spent by the Uttar Pradesh government towards Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) and land acquisition.



UP Congress to launch 15-day membership campaign tomorrow

The Uttar Pradesh Congress will launch a 15-day membership campaign on the Constitution Day on November 26 with a target of enrolling one crore new members, a party leader said on Wednesday. The campaign will continue till December 10. On November 26, 'Bhim Charcha' and dinner will be organised in villages, settlements, and wards. Contributions of Dr B R Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, will be discussed. Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) president Ajay Kumar Lallu said. During the campaign, one crore new members will be added under the slogan 'Ek Parivaar, Naye Sadasya Chaar' (one family, four new members)", Lallu said, adding that all new members will have to give a missed call on 8230005000 to register themselves. The drive will be conducted in all rural and urban areas, at major markets, bus stands, and railway stations among other places, he said.



Over half of women, children found anemic in 14 states, UTs

Anaemia among children and women continues to be a cause of concern, with more than half of them being found anemic in 14 states and UTs and all-India level, according to the findings of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) compared to NFHS-4. The government on Wednesday released the factsheets of key indicators on population, reproductive and child health, family welfare, nutrition and others for India and 14 states and UTs, clubbed under phase two, of the 2019-21 NFHS-5 here. The states and UTs which were surveyed in this phase were Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, NCT of Delhi, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, a Health Ministry statement said.



Union govt extends 5-kg free foodgrains scheme till March'22

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to extend distribution of 5kg foodgrains per month for free under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) to over 80 crore ration card holders for four months till March 2022, a decision that will cost an additional Rs 53,344 crore to the exchequer.

Free foodgrains under the PMGKAY scheme, which was announced in March last year to provide relief to poor people during the COVID pandemic, is over and above the normal quota provided under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) at a highly subsidised rate of Rs 2-3 per kilogram.

Briefing about the decision, I&B Minister Anurag



Thakur said the Cabinet has extended the PMGKAY programme by four months till March 2022.

This will cost an additional Rs 53,344 crore to the exchequer, he said, adding that the total cost of PMGKAY would reach about Rs 2.6 lakh crore, including all

five phases of this ongoing programme.

In the wake of economic disruptions caused by the unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19 in the country last year, the government had in March 2020 announced the distribution of additional free-of-cost foodgrains

(rice/wheat) to about 80 crore National Food Security Act (NFSA) beneficiaries

The Phase-I and Phase-II of this scheme were operational from April to June 2020 and July to November 2020, respectively.

The Phase-III of the scheme was operational from May to June 2021, while Phase-IV of the scheme is currently operational for July-November, 2021.

"The PMGKAY scheme for Phase V from December 2021 till March 2022 would entail an estimated additional food subsidy of Rs 53,344.52 crore," an official statement said.

The total outgo in terms of foodgrains for PMGKAY Phase V is likely to be about 163 lakh tonnes.

So far, under the PMGKAY (phase I to IV), the Centre has allocated a total of

almost 600 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to the states/UTs, equivalent to about Rs 2.07 lakh crore in food subsidy.

"Overall, the government will be incurring an expenditure of nearly Rs.2.60 lakh crore in PMGKAY Phase I-V," the statement said.

As per the reports from the states/UTs so far, 93.8 per cent of foodgrains have been lifted.

Nearly 37.32 lakh tonnes (93.9 per cent of July 2021), 37.20 lakh tonnes (93.6 per cent of August 2021), 36.87 lakh tonnes (92.8 per cent of September 2021), 35.4 lakh tonnes (89 per cent of October 2021), and 17.9 lakh tonnes (45 per cent of November 2021) foodgrains have been distributed to about 74.64 crore, 74.4 crore, 73.75 crore, 70.8 crore and 35.8 crore beneficiaries, respectively.

Pragya appears before court in blast case

PNS ■ MUMBAI

BJP MP Pragya Singh Thakur, an accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, appeared before a special NIA court here on Wednesday.

Thakur, out on bail, had last come to the court in January 2021.

Earlier in the day, her lawyers told special judge for NIA cases P R Sithe that as she was in Mumbai for medical treatment, she would attend the court.

She had not been summoned by the court.

The Bhopal MP arrived at 12.25 PM and sat on a lawyer's chair in the front row.

A soft 'mulmul' cloth was placed on the chair by her aides before she took the seat.



The judge asked about her health, to which Thakur said, "Kabhi theek rehta hai, kabhi nahi (sometimes it is good, sometimes it is bad), sometimes she has been taking treatment at the Kokilaben hospital in the city, and as the treatment suited her, she came for further treatment, the MP told the judge.

Asked about the nature of her illness, she said she was suffering for multiple ailments.

She will be staying in Mumbai for the next two days and if required get admitted to the hospital, Thakur added.

Schools, colleges in Delhi to reopen from November 29

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In view of an 'improvement' in the air quality, the Delhi government Wednesday decided to resume physical classes in schools, colleges and other educational institutions and reopen government offices from November 29.

The ban on the entry of trucks carrying non-essential items will continue till December 3.

However, CNG and electric trucks will be allowed to enter Delhi from November 27, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said after a meeting to review curbs to tackle air pollution.

Rai urged government staff to use public transport.

AIR POLLUTION



"We hired private CNG buses recently. We have decided to use them to ferry employees from government residential colonies such as Gulabi Bagh and Nimri Colony," he said.

The government will also start a shuttle bus service from the Delhi Secretariat to ITO and Indraprastha metro stations for its employees.

"The air quality has improved over the last three days. The city's AQI is similar to pre-Divali days," he said.

On November 13, the city government had ordered closure of all educational institutes, banned construction and demolition activities and asked its employees to work from home to combat air pollution and minimise its health effects.

On November 17, it had extended the restrictions, besides banning the entry of trucks carrying non-essential items in Delhi.

The ban on construction and demolition activities was lifted on Monday in view of an improvement in the air quality and inconvenience caused to workers.

Whispers of Cong leaders on tributes to Sardar go viral

PNS ■ BENGALURU

With the whispers between senior Congress leaders in Karnataka, D K Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah wondering about paying homage to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at an event organised to observe Indira Gandhi's death anniversary going viral, the BJP has accused the grand old party of showing respect to the country's first Home Minister only out of fear of the J P Nadda-led party.

The 1.15-minute video purportedly shows conversation between the two leaders, who were seated on the dais at the party office here to observe the event on October 31, which also happens to be Patel's birthday.

It was picked up by mics placed on the table while the cameras were on.

In the video, Siddaramaiah can be seen reminding Shivakumar, at the beginning of the event, that the day also happens to be Patel's birthday.

In response, Shivakumar says, "It is, Sir, but this is day (Indira's death anniversary) and that is birthday (Patel's). We don't keep their portraits together."

Following which

Siddaramaiah can be heard saying, "But, what happens is, BJP will take advantage of it." To which Shivakumar replies, "Yes...but we have never kept (portraits together so far)."

The video is then fast-forwarded to show Shivakumar asking a party worker if Patel's portrait is there, and directs him to get it.

He then tells Siddaramaiah, he will get the Patel's portrait placed next to Indira, to which the former CM says, "it will be good."

Shivakumar then supervises the placement of Patel's portrait and all the leaders of the state including Siddaramaiah pay floral tributes to it.

Sharing the video, BJP leaders alleged that Congress shows respect to Patel, due to fear of BJP.

"If anyone had doubt about how much the Nehru Dynasty hated Sardar Patel, this video makes it clear. Congress leaders Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar agree to place photo of Sardar Patel along with that of Indira Gandhi fearing BJP. It is a shame that Slaves are so much scared of an Italian," BJP National General Secretary C T Ravi tweeted.



Congress workers stage 'Ramdhun' protest

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Congress workers led by Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh on Wednesday chanted the name of Lord Ram some distance away from BJP MLA Rameshwar Sharma's home here in Madhya Pradesh in protest against his statement asking people to break the knees of Congressmen.

Congress workers chanting 'Ramdhun' (Lord Ram's name) started marching from the statue of Mahatma Gandhi on the Minto Hall campus, about one km away from Sharma's house, but police stopped them midway.

Singh had announced to stage a protest at Sharma's house and chant Lord Ram's name after a video clip of the MLA, who represents Bhopal Huzur seat, went viral.

"Digvijaya Singh came here, has he done anything?... Break the knees if any Congressman comes here," Sharma had purportedly said.

Prez hails role of unsung freedom fighters

PNS ■ KANPUR

President Ram Nath Kovind on Wednesday said the Independence of the country was achieved due to contribution of several unsung freedom fighters and their contribution should be made known to the public.

Kovind arrived here on a two-day visit for the birth centenary celebrations of former MP Chaudhary Harmohan Singh Yadav, who was also a Shaurya Chakra winner.

Harmohan Singh Yadav, who died in 2012, had been associated with the Samajwadi Party (SP), now in the

Opposition.

During his address on the occasion, the president said, "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav is being celebrated all over the country to mark 75 years of our Independence. During this two-year-long Mahotsav, we will remember the contribution of unsung heroes of the free-

dom struggle who had laid down their lives."

Remembering freedom fighters Aijjan Bai, Mainavati, Jaidev Kapoor, Shiv Varma, Bijay Kumar Sinha and Gaya Prasad on the occasion, he said India could get Independence due to the important contribution of many such freedom

fighters. Therefore, it is the duty of all of us to bring information about the contribution of such anonymous freedom fighters to the public, Kovind said.

He said the future of any nation is guided by the experience of the past and enriched by its heritage.

Apex court to hear plea on quotas in hiring of faculty

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Wednesday agreed to hear a plea seeking direction to the Centre and IITs to follow the reservation policies in admission in research degree programmes and recruitment of faculty members.

A bench of Justices L N Rao, B R Gavai and B V Nagarathna said it is issuing notices to the Centre and all the IITs on the plea for prayer A which is related to following of reservation policies in admission to research programmes and recruitment of faculty members.

During the brief hearing, Advocate Ashwani Kumar Dubey, appearing for petitioner Sachichida Nand



Pandey, said the IITs are not following the reservation policies and direction may be issued by the court.

The bench said there are many prayers in the petition but it would only issue notice on the prayer A only.

Pandey has also sought directives for creation of

mechanism for resolving the students/scholars and research harassment complaints and to constitute a committee of technical experts review the performance of existing faculty.

He has also sought cancellation of the appointment of non-performing faculty due to violation of reservation norms, formation of transparent recruitment policy.

"It is submitted that the process of taking admissions in the research program and appointment of faculty members by the respondents (IITs) are completely unconstitutional, illegal and arbitrary. The respondents are not following the guidelines of reservation as per the constitutional mandate," the plea said.

Panel for disposal of enemy properties recast

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has reconstituted a high level committee for the disposal of enemy properties that have been left behind by those who migrated and took up citizenship of Pakistan and China.

The committee, which is headed by a senior officer of the Union Home Ministry, will look after the disposal of over 12,600 immovable enemy properties, which may fetch up to Rs one lakh crore to the exchequer, officials said.

According to a Home Ministry notification, an additional secretary rank officer will be the chairman of the committee while there will be five members from different central government wings besides a member secretary.

The move is seen as a fresh effort by the government to



monetise the vast assets left behind by people who left India during partition and after the 1962 war.

A total of 12,485 enemy properties were left behind by those who took up Pakistani citizenship, while 126 enemy properties were left behind by those who took up Chinese cit-

izenship.

The highest number of enemy properties were found in Uttar Pradesh (6,255 properties), followed by West Bengal (4,088 properties), Delhi (658), Goa (295), Maharashtra (207), Telangana (158), Gujarat (151), Tripura (105) and Bihar (94).

The committee will give its recommendation to the central government for the disposal of enemy property or the manner in which the enemy property may be dealt with and matters connected therewith.

The recommendations may include sale, usage by a central government department or transfer of enemy property.

So far, movable properties worth about Rs 2,700 crore have been disposed of and the amount has been deposited in the consolidated fund of India account.

However, no immovable enemy property has been sold so far.

The notification said that an additional secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will be the chairman of the committee while members include the Financial Advisor in the MHA, a joint

secretary in the MHA, a joint secretary in the Department of Disinvestment and Public Asset, a joint secretary or equivalent in the Ministry of Law and Justice and the chief engineer of the CPWD.

The Custodian of the Enemy Property for India will be the member-secretary.

Earlier, the custodian of the Enemy Property for India was a member while the joint secretary in the MHA dealing with enemy property matters was the member secretary.

Enemy properties are vested with the Custodian of Enemy Property for India (CEPI), an authority created under the Enemy Property Act 1968.

According to the law, enemy property refers to any property belonging to, held or managed on behalf of an enemy, an enemy subject or an enemy firm.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Woes continue

The Taliban may get aid but not recognition unless they start recognising women's rights

The Taliban are making it difficult for the world community to recognise their interim Government in Afghanistan. Their fresh diktat against women being the latest reason. They have a Ministry that seeks to regulate and control the lives of Afghan women – Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice. The Ministry has banned women from appearing in television dramas and entertainment shows. Women news presenters have to wear headscarves. These are part of the eight directives in the first tranche of restrictions imposed on the media. Films in opposition to Islamic law and "Afghan values" cannot be broadcast. Foreign films that promote "foreign values" are banned. Comedy shows cannot insult anybody. Shows depicting the "prophets and companions" are disallowed. Cynics would say the people have escaped with only a few restrictions because last time the Taliban were around, they had totally banned television and other forms of media. However, it is the Taliban's attitude to women that needs to be repeatedly highlighted. However much they profess to have moderated and modernised themselves, it is sadly true that at their core, they have not changed a bit since their rein between 1996-2001. That it is the Ministry on virtue and vice that deals with women's issues is a dead giveaway. Is that why the Taliban also did not find the need for a minister for women and child welfare?



It was only three months ago, on August 17, two days after the Taliban grabbed power, that Beheshta Arghand became the first-ever female television host to conduct a sit-in interview with a Taliban leader. There would be no second time as the Taliban's moderate make-up wore off fast. Women employees in the private and public sectors have since been asked to go home. Women-oriented jobs are under review. Girls were told they could attend segregated classes in universities. Some women, used to relative freedom in the last two decades, tried to protest but they were beaten and even whipped by Taliban enforcers. Contrary to the Taliban assurances that women's rights would be respected, women are being increasingly left out of the public sphere. The world should know that women would be worse off in the rural areas where the Taliban fighters and tribal heads hold sway and who alone have decided for decades how women ought to live. Many of the far-flung provinces have different rules for women depending on how radical the local Taliban chiefs are. Women's groups want the international community to leverage financial aid to Afghanistan to improve the women's lot. But that is a Catch-22 situation because the lack of aid can lead to mass hunger and deaths in the country. The United Nations has collected over \$600 million as distress aid. With the onset of winter, the supply of food and medicine is crucial. Ironically, most of the aid workers are women and one wonders if the Taliban have anything to say about that.

PICTALK



An anti-smog gun sprays water droplets to curb air pollution, in Gurugram

PTI

Gaining muscle

The TMC has been successful in nagging the BJP unlike the Congress ahead of the Assembly polls

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has started cementing her aspirations of a national footprint for the Trinamool Congress in the coming months, especially in the first quarter of 2022. Both Mamata and her nephew Abhishek, an official of the party's national organ, had declared soon after crushing the BJP in the State Assembly election that the Trinamool wouldn't contest a number of upcoming Assembly elections not just to mark presence but also to win the States and form a Government there, the Chief Minister has now declared that the "march to the Centre cannot be possible without the support of States". The Trinamool Congress supremo sent out this message after a number of prominent leaders from different political parties joined the TMC recently. Ever since her party bagged an undisputed victory against the BJP in Bengal, the TMC has been on the front foot against the ruling party at the Centre. It has courageously been staking its claim to the Chief Minister's chair even as far as in Goa. It's been signing up and roping in new regional leaders, mostly at the cost of the Congress and possible dent in the fortunes of the BJP.



In the latest addition to its political and electoral arsenal, Ashok Tanwar, who had quit the Congress a couple of years back, has joined the TMC in New Delhi in Banerjee's presence. Tanwar, a former Haryana Congress chief, was considered to have had Rahul Gandhi's ears but later fell out with the party over his rivalry with other State leaders, including former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Tanwar had floated Apna Bharat Morcha after quitting the Congress but has now come out in strong support of the TMC supremo and has been throwing his weight in support of her party "across the entire country" and against the "misgovernance of the BJP". Tanwar's entry is sure to have given a shot in the arm to the TMC in Haryana, which is a State, apart from Punjab and regions in Uttar Pradesh, that played a major role in the farmers' unflinching demand against the BJP-led Union Government for the withdrawal of the three farm laws. However, that threat staring in the face of the BJP is still not over, what with the Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait warning the Centre of a prolonged agitation if it didn't agree of "all the demands" of the protesting farmers, including those involving the Minimum Support Price and punishing the Union State Minister Teni for the Lakhimpur Kheri incident.

The legacy of the division of India

Hindus and Muslims derive their inspiration from different sources of history. Very often, the hero of one is a foe of the other



PRAFULL GORADIA

There were two sides to the coin of Partition. One was that the Muslim community was well behind the Hindus as well as the other minorities. They were about a third in population or one-third in numbers compared to the Hindus. Therefore, if Independent India adopted a universal adult franchise, they would be out-numbered by lengths. Secondly, the Muslims were less educated. As a matter of long-term strategy, Islam had played down education from its early days of the seventh century. For the last thousand years, Hejaz as well as Caliphs had prohibited *ijtihad* (reinterpretation or change) and enforced *taqlid* (orthodoxy). The less educated a person, the fewer the questions he/she is likely to think up and ask. Thus, ensuring the perpetuity of the religion. Incidentally, women's education was restricted to reading the Quran, especially the prayers.

When the British came to India, instead of using English, the clergy exhorted their followers to avoid the study of English and Western science. Sir William Hunter has made a lucid analysis of how and where the Muslim students fell back in the 19th century and even earlier. Then came the decision of Lt Governor of UP to make English the court language, Hindi and Persian was abolished. Such measures, although rational, put the Muslims back. Their fear was of diluting their identity which was dearer to them than their development.

The other difficulty was that very few Muslims took to business and industry, the only exceptions were the Khojas, the Memons and the Bohras, all based in Bombay. The Muslim elites of the rest of India were land based, whether agricultural, farming vegetables or cultivating orchards but had very few factories. In short, cultivating the Hindus had the economic lead. Timur Kuran, Professor at the University of Duke, has explained at length the financial disadvantage of Islamic communities. He has focused on West Asia and how Islamic ordainments have kept the common folk econom-



ically back. Imagine West Asia without petroleum! And imagine a business without banking and lending without interest!

The Viceroy had called an all-India election in December 1945 to January 1946. By that time, Jinnah's speech preceding the passing of the Pakistan resolution on, March 23, 1940, at the Lahore session of the Muslim League was humming to virtually all Muslim ears in India. Incidentally, Jinnah deliberately made Fazlur Rahman of Bengal sign the resolution. Rahman was a popular, prominent peasant leader of the eastern wing of what eventually became Pakistan and now Bangladesh. His Two Nation Theory is very briefly stated here: the Hindus and Muslims have different religious philosophies, social customs and literatures. They neither intermarry nor inter-dine and, indeed, they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their views on life and of life are different. It is also quite clear that Hindus and Muslims derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes in different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and likewise, their victories and defeats overlap.

MUSLIM INDIA CANNOT ACCEPT ANY CONSTITUTION WHICH MUST NECESSARILY RESULT IN HINDU MAJORITY. IF HINDUS AND MUSLIMS ARE BROUGHT UNDER A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, IT CAN ONLY MEAN HINDU RAJ

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FITNESS SHOULD BE GIVEN DUE IMPORTANCE

Sir — I strongly believe that every individual has the right to healthy living. Healthy living is not a privilege, but a right. Sadly, however, in our country, healthy living is more like a right in the pocket of people who are able and willing to pay for it. Therefore, a chain of health clubs needs to be opened and made accessible — to make fitness a part of every Indian's lifestyle. To provide easy access to superior quality and affordable fitness regimens that will be an integral part of every Indian.

Unlike the US, we do not have special cycling lanes; our offices are not equipped with lockers and shower-rooms that we can freshen up after walking or cycling our way to work. Also, the Indian weather does not permit exercise all year around — the summers are bad, the rainy season has its own woes and the winter is practically nonexistent. Such scenarios don't leave much scope for exercise. We haven't given due importance to fitness and working out and it's high time that we realised the benefit of a brisk walk or a jog in the morning so that we wake up fresh and sleep well.

MR Jayanthi Subramaniam | Mumbai

WHERE DID WE REACH AFTER 26/11?

Sir — Even though Mumbai's lauded as a business hub, the 26/11 terror attack tells a different story. No commercial Capital of a country would be so ill equipped as to not be able to detect and prevent such attacks on time. While some may argue that Manhattan was a victim of 9/11, too, I point out that Mumbai has been a soft target since times immemorial. Terror has sneaked up on us not once but thrice — the 1992 riots, 2006 blasts and 2008 attacks; all caught Mumbai unawares. In short, for Mumbai to truly become India's commercial hub, the quality of life, quality of infrastructure, quality of security and attitude — all need improvement.

The 26/11 attacks saw the world in a state of disbelief at one of the most audacious acts of terrorism ever committed. Although we have lived with terrorism

Tigers are shy, but they kill



A 10-year-old tigress called Maya attacked and killed a 45-year-old Swati Dumane, a forest guard at the Tadoba Andheri Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Maharashtra. The guard was on beat duty for the All India Tiger Estimation survey at the TATR. Generally, tigers are nocturnal hunters. Attack on Swati took place early — at around 8 am. The slain Swati and three of her colleagues are said to have waited, for half an hour or so, for Maya to move away after spotting her a mere 200 metres away. When the tigress did not

bulge, the workers, instead of returning to their base, explored a detour only to be ambushed by the big cat.

Tigers are introverted and moody animals. They do not hunt human beings for food. Also, tigers are wary of possible injuries that can incapacitate them. The big cats love hunting — for food and sport. However, injured tigers are frustrated: such tigers can attack humans without provocation. Intrusion of a tiger's territory can be lethal for human beings. Though a tourist crowd can instigate a tiger, generally they are not known to turn hostile in such situations. It is not known whether the tigress was separated from her cubs because these big cats are known to be provoked at the slightest pretext. It is unknown whether guards like Swati, who dangerously venture into the forest, sport some type of protective gear. It is appropriate for them to be armed with some type of weapons or tranquilliser guns to save themselves.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

for decades, the attacks were frightening as we learned what that these terror outfits were capable of. However, over the last few years, India has significantly improved its intelligence network and anti-terror measures. It's the need of the hour to save the youth from being influenced and brain-washed by these outfits. Every Indian can contribute to national security just by staying vigilant.

CK Ramani | Pune

THE GOVT SHOULD RECONSIDER THE CAA, TOO

Sir — The repeal of the three farm laws has inclined many people into thinking that the repeal of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is not beyond the realms of possibility. The anti-CAA movement could not (and did not have to) go ahead despite gathering momentum each day in the face of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Government's preoccupation with the fight against the pandemic including national lockdowns and its lukewarm approach to its implementa-

tion due to the unprecedented public health crisis and opposition to the legislation from unanticipated quarters. Even though no rules have been framed to implement the law, the CAA is ominously still there on the statute book.

The Government cannot be unaware of what the implementation of the CAA will signal to the outside world — India's retreat from secularism. No amount of rationalisation can justify CAA's enactment or validate its discriminatory provisions. The CAA is wholly unacceptable and it has to go for the simple reason that it does not jibe with secularism and the equality of religions guaranteed in the Constitution. The legacy of the freedom movement and the Constitution do not discriminate between the religions that 'originated' in India and that did not.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

In Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rule, there is nothing left that hasn't been made expensive.

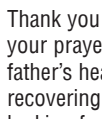


Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi



There is also a time for the Government to step back, so Australians can move forward.

Australian Prime Minister —Scott Morrison



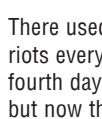
Thank you all for your prayers for my father's health. He is recovering well and looking forward to interacting with all of you soon.

Actor —Shruti Haasan



As long as I keep battling well and keep contributing to the team's total, I am happy.

Indian batsman —Cheteshwar Pujara



There used to be riots every third or fourth day in UP, but now the State has a 'riot-free' identity.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister —Yogi Adityanath

FIRST COLUMN

UNIFORM CODE FOR EDUCATIONAL BODIES

In private colleges, there are no uniform rules in salary structure or promotions



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

The so-called quality maintained by private schools is only in physical infrastructure and English communication promotion and not at the intellectual level. Good quality education can be provided even in open spaces. The digital revolution in education that happened during the pandemic has made the physical structure of schools irrelevant. It is the willpower and dedication of teachers that matter. However, teachers are not paid well in most private schools and the COVID situation has made things worse for them as they have to do extra duty without additional pay. Across the country, private school teachers are the lowest-paid. There is no job security also as any time managements can dismiss teachers if they are not complying with the management rules. The situation in the higher education sector is no different. During the pandemic time, hundreds of teachers were made to resign from private colleges and universities. Even otherwise in private colleges, there are no uniform rules in salary structure or promotions. Many private institutions are recruiting people who do not meet required qualifications. These private institutions just need a workforce that would just obey them. There are also private aided colleges that take hefty dona-



tions for the recruitment process. Teachers working in all private higher education centers are not satisfied and their dissatisfaction is transferred to the students through their teaching. Recently, the Kerala legislative assembly passed a landmark Kerala Self-Financing College Teaching and Non-Teaching Employees (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Bill, 2021, that puts in place a law to guarantee service conditions for employees in private colleges. The legislation, which had been recommended by the Kerala State Higher Education Council, is being viewed as one that would standardize rules to ensure service conditions for those employed in the unaided sector. Even though this is a progressive step in removing the perils of higher education, one area of concern is the special privilege mooted for minority institutions. In Kerala, most of the private colleges are managed by minority communities and over-exploitation of teachers happens in these centers. As per the privileges enjoyed by the minority institutions, government cannot completely control them. The private medical and dental colleges run by these agencies rarely provide a full stipend for students as per government norms. In some cases, PG students have to return the stipend that is credited into their account, fearing backlashes by management. The staff members from the management side, usually from the same community, get undue favours and members from other communities are harassed mentally and curtail their professional advancement. The unhealthy atmosphere prevailing among the teachers is transferred to students and the whole system gets vitiated.

When an educational institution is managed by the fees and donations from students and teachers belonging to other communities, how can an institution claim special minority status? If they want to enjoy that status they should teach students from their community alone, and also recruit teachers from the same community. Even in private government-aided educational institutions managed by minority communities (even non-minority also) teachers are recruited after taking lakhs of rupees as donations. This is an open secret and none of the political parties have the courage to take on these managements, fearing backlash in elections. In such a situation we have to appreciate the effort taken by the government of Kerala. However, it would be hard to see how the government will implement the new bill effectively in institutions enjoying minority status. It is high time we develop a nation-wide common law controlling the functioning of private schools and colleges, for education is common for everyone, irrespective of class, gender, or racial discrimination.

(The writer is a popular science writer and academician. The views expressed are personal.)

Interests of Indian fishermen in danger



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

If the problems of overfishing and depleting marine resources continue, it can badly impact the catch by small fishermen and their livelihood

For some time, a round of negotiations has been going on in the WTO, in which an agreement is expected to be made aiming to ending subsidies to curb alleged illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. These talks are said to be the part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which seek to end subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing while ensuring special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries. But if this agreement is reached, it may adversely affect the livelihood of small fishermen in India and other developing and underdeveloped countries.

It is true that the world is facing the problem of overfishing and depleting marine resources. If this situation continues, this can impact catch by small fishermen and their livelihood. The idea of the United Nations that overfishing will affect sustainable development is always justified. But the big question is, who is responsible for overfishing in the ocean? At least the small fishermen of India or other developing countries having very low fishing capacity are nowhere to blame for this.

Fishing is done in two ways. One, by small fishermen who catch fish in their boats; and second by trawlers and large ships of large companies. Over the past few decades, the evidence of fishing by large ships and trawlers in a mechanized manner by large companies has increased significantly.

Small fishermen in India do not catch fish in the ocean during the rainy season. Know why? Because it is the breeding season for fish. But the big trawlers do not mind fishing during the same period. However, since the big trawlers come under the organized sector, the small fishermen will be considered as illegal, unreported and unregulated; and the subsidy given to them by the governments will end but the big trawlers and ships will continue to be entitled to catch fish from the sea by mechanical processes and also the government subsidies. In such a situation, the livelihood of small fishermen of India and other developing countries will be adversely affected while big companies will benefit at their cost.

Unfortunately, under pressure from developed countries and big corporates, in the WTO, the exercise is going on to push the agreement on this subject. Director General of the World Trade Organization, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, says that completing these negotiations on fisheries subsidy is the top priority of WTO, not only for fisheries but also for the WTO system. And this is being done under the guise of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

It is noteworthy that after the grant of fishing licenses to large trawlers in India in the early 1990s, due to excessive fishing by them, the availability of fish from the sea was getting depleted. As a



SMALL FISHERMEN IN INDIA DO NOT CATCH FISH IN THE OCEAN DURING THE RAINY SEASON BECAUSE IT IS THE BREEDING SEASON FOR FISH. BUT BIG TRAWLERS DO NOT MIND FISHING DURING THIS PERIOD. AND, SINCE BIG TRAWLERS COME UNDER THE ORGANISED SECTOR, SMALL FISHERMEN WILL BE CONSIDERED ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED

(The writer is Professor, PGDAV College, University of Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)



result, the livelihood of small fishermen was getting adversely affected. At that time there were major agitations to highlight this problem of fishermen, including those led by Swadeshi Jagran Manch and Fr Thomas Kochery, due to which the then government had to stop the renewal of licenses to large trawlers.

After some time, the trawlers again started getting permission. Once again, the demand for re-banning of trawlers by environmentalists is gaining momentum. A committee of the Government of India is working towards regulating these trawlers. Environmentalists say that banning these trawlers is the appropriate solution to the problem of overfishing. Although these trawlers have not been outrightly banned, many states including Kerala and Orissa have been banning trawlers in monsoon (rainy season) on the demand of traditional fishermen so that the breeding of fish is not affected.

It is being argued that the agreement on fishing subsidy will ensure the availability of fish and the protection of marine resources for the future generations. In this regard, if at all any international organization can ban subsidies for fishing, it is the World Trade Organization. The exercise to make rules in this regard has been going on since the year 2001, with the start of Doha Rounds of Negotiations. However, the interesting thing is that though all the remaining provisions of the Doha development Round, under have already been rejected outright by the developed countries, surprising-

ly, exercise is going on to end the fishing subsidy.

It is true that today 34 percent overfishing is taking place, whereas in 1974 it was only 10 percent. Due to overfishing, the availability of fish is gradually reducing, due to which the livelihood of the people living in the coastal areas is getting adversely affected and their poverty is increasing. Today, about 40 million people in the world depend on the fishing, so the security of their lives is linked with the protection of marine resources.

Although the current negotiations are focused on eliminating subsidies for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, these efforts are being strongly opposed by developing countries. Developing countries, including India, believe that ending subsidies on fishing will adversely affect the livelihood and rights of their small fishermen. Although it has been said in the resolution that special and differential treatment for developing and less developed countries is part of the proposals, but it seems that the small fishermen of developing countries will suffer the most from this agreement.

Surprisingly, while everything was stand still during, these talks continued unabated. Therefore, due to restrictions on movements, views of small countries whose missions are not in Geneva could not be appropriately incorporated in this document. For this reason, also, there is anger in this context amongst developing countries. Recently, when the Director General of the World Trade Organization came to India, India had clearly stated that although

due to the irrational subsidies given by various countries for fishing, India's small fishermen have been suffering the most, due to overfishing by developed countries. Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate the subsidy being given to big vessels in these developed countries. Therefore, India has clearly stated in this context, that the draft text is not balanced. In this regard, special treatment will be required for developing countries and this agreement can be balanced only by incorporating India's suggestions.

India's demand is that developed countries stop subsidizing fisheries that go beyond their natural geographical boundaries. Industrial fishing countries are not ready to concede this. India wants that the provision of subsidies should continue to protect the interests of its poor and small fishermen. There is no illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in India. India maintains that since the creation of the WTO, developed countries received special concessions, and their agricultural subsidies continued unabated, while the rights of developing countries were restricted. That mistake should not be repeated in this agreement on fisheries subsidies.

Today, the need of the hour is that India and other developing and least developed countries should face this bigotry of rich countries and there should be no unbalanced and irrational agreement in respect of fisheries subsidies, so that we can protect the interests of our small and poor fishermen.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

NEITHER YOU HELPED THE COVID PATIENTS IN HOSPITALS, NOR PROVIDED ANY COMPENSATION. WHAT TYPE OF GOVERNMENT IS THIS? —CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



COMPENSATIONS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED. THE CENTRE HAS DONE MORE THAN WHAT ANY GOVERNMENT COULD HAVE POSSIBLY IMAGINED. —BJP SPOKESMAN TOM VADAKKAN

Farm laws to be repealed in upcoming Parliament session

The burning question, however, remains: Why were these legislations enacted in the first place if they were to be repealed without implementation?

During the protracted farmers agitation against the three farm laws, a view was advanced especially by those in support of the impugned legislation that it is not easy to suspend operation of a parliamentary enactment or that it is not constitutionally permissible to repeal a law by issuing an ordinance. Such an argument, besides ex facie specious, stands completely annihilated with the announcement of the Prime Minister to repeal them.

Article 73 of the Constitution says that the executive power of the Union is co-extensive with the legislative powers of parliament. The Government, in exercise of its executive power, can suspend, amend or repeal an Act



DEVENDER SINGH ASWAL

(The writer is former Additional Secretary, Lok Sabha and a member of Delhi Bar Council. The views expressed are personal.)

of parliament as long as it commands parliamentary majority. Any subsequent statute may repeal any Act in whole or in part, either expressly or impliedly by enacting a new legislation. Clause 6 of the General clauses Act, 1897 provides that any Act or Regulation can be repealed by the legislature. Unless a different intention appears, the repealing Act cannot revive anything not in force or existing at the time at which the repeal takes effect; or affect the previous operation of any enactment so repealed or anything duly done or suffered thereunder, etc.

The executive power of the Union extends (a) to the matters with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws; and (b) to the exercise of



such rights, authority and jurisdiction as are exercisable by the Government of India by virtue of any treaty or agreement. So, on matters which parliament can legislate, it is the prerogative of the executive to pilot legislative proposals and get them enacted, including an enactment of repeal, with parliamentary support. Laws may also be repealed if they are found detrimental in

course of time or in case there is a ground swell of public opinion against them.

The three farm laws were originally promulgated as ordinances by the government and later replaced by the duly passed Acts of parliament. Since the winter session of parliament will convene in a week, it is not an edifying parliamentary practice to promulgate an Ordinance for the repeal. The Government will bring a Bill to repeal the three laws during the ensuing session. There will be a fierce debate and the opposition would leave no stone unturned to show that they were right in their opposition to the original Bills and the government palpably wrong. The government, in turn, would say that they were unable to convince

the misguided agitating farmers. Once passed by both the Houses of parliament, and assented to by the President, the three laws would stand repealed.

The burning question, however, remains: why were these legislations enacted in the first place if they were to be repealed without implementation? It needs to be borne in mind that in a robust democracy, public opinion, likened to a rope of multiple fibers capable of taming even an elephant, matters. It is for the government to discern whether the opposition is orchestrated by vested interest or it is genuine, broad-based and the real voice of all the farmers of the country.

The Union Government could not have remained

impervious to the farmers' agitation for long especially when elections are round the corner in the largely affected States. But it is also a fact that agro-economists continue to be divided over the proposed repeal. Many nonpartisan experts consider it a setback to agrarian reforms. Incontestably, the fear of losing the impending election is a great deterrent to reforms, regardless of the general perception of bold, visionary and transformative leadership.

It is in this context that the practice of referring the contentious legislation to the committees holds good as the committees crystallise different shades of opinions and help build consensus and unity out of plurality. The National Commission Bill and the

National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professionals Bill were referred to the Standing Committee, and based on the recommendations of the Committee, new Bills were introduced and passed by Parliament. So were many other legislations. The great hurry in which the farm laws were passed during the Covid-19 time without referring the Bills to the standing committee only added fuel to the fire. The lesson is clear and unmistakable that in a parliamentary democratic set up it is not possible to impose laws on an utterly hostile community despite the best of intention and the promise of long-term national gains, without due consultation, consensus and credible parliamentary scrutiny.

Cryptocurrency industry urges Central government to take nuanced approach

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The cryptocurrency industry on Wednesday urged the government to take a nuanced approach towards regulating crypto assets in India and asked investors in the country to remain calm and not arrive at a rushed conclusion, a day after the government listed for introduction a Bill to ban all such cryptocurrencies, with some exceptions.

"The Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021", to be introduced in the winter session of Parliament beginning November 29, seeks to "create a facilitative framework for creation of the official digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India. The Bill also seeks to prohibit all private cryptocurrencies in India, however, it allows for certain exceptions to promote the underlying technology of cryptocurrency and its uses".

BuyUcoin CEO Shivam Thakral said it expects the Bill



to accommodate the aspirations of Indian crypto owners, Indian crypto entrepreneurs, and investors who have put their faith in India's crypto growth story.

"The crypto Bill should be flexible enough for young blockchain projects to flourish and we strongly believe that there is a strong case for a standard process for new cryptocurrencies before they get listed on any exchange in India

for trading.

"I think popular cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin and Ethereum will be pre-approved by the regulators for getting listed on the exchange. We also request the government to give immediate clarity on the taxation and filing of crypto assets," Thakral said.

CoinSwitch Kuber founder and CEO Ashish Singhal said the industry has been actively communicating with all stake-

holders keeping investor protection at the forefront.

"Our discussions in the last few weeks indicate there is a broad agreement on ensuring that customers are protected, financial system stability is reinforced and India is able to take advantage of the crypto technology revolution..."

"As of now, I urge all crypto-asset investors in the country to remain calm, do their own research before arriving at a rushed conclusion," said Singhal, who is also the co-chair of the Blockchain and Crypto Assets Council (BACC).

Cryptocurrency exchange CoinDCX's spokesperson said a well-assessed and thought-through regulation will pave the way for greater adoption of the technology and will help millions of Indians embrace this new-age asset class.

OKEx.com CEO Jay Hao said India is home to the highest number of crypto owners in the world and the onus lies on the government to protect the

interest of a large number of crypto investors in the country.

"We urge the government to take a nuanced approach towards regulating crypto assets in India. With the positive outcome of the cryptocurrency Bill, India will embark on an exciting journey of becoming the global leader in crypto, Defi, and NFTs," Hao said.

Currently, there is no regulation or any ban on the use of cryptocurrencies in the country. Against this backdrop, Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this month held a meeting on the cryptocurrencies with senior officials, and indications are that strong regulatory steps could be taken to deal with the issue.

There has been a rising number of advertisements, featuring even film stars, promising easy and high returns on investments in cryptocurrencies in recent times, amid concerns over such currencies being allegedly used for luring investors with misleading claims.

Govt steps up crackdown on spurious helmets, gas cylinder

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Consumer protection regulator CCPA on Wednesday said it has stepped up crackdown on counterfeit or spurious household products like pressure cooker, two-wheeler helmet and cooking gas cylinder carrying fake 'IS mark' as apart of a special drive in the interest of public safety.

Already, the Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued notices to five e-commerce entities, including Amazon, Flipkart and PaytmMall, as well as various sellers for offering pressure cookers that are non-compliant with Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) norms, it said.

"We have stepped up monitoring and enforcement on sale of spurious products not only in the physical market but also on the e-commerce platforms. We have identified three daily household products -- domestic pressure cooker, two-wheeler helmet and cooking gas cylinder -- as part of a countrywide drive," CCPA Chief Commissioner Nidhi Khare told PTI.



To curb sale of spurious products and counterfeit goods in the physical market, the CCPA has directed all district collectors across the country to inquire into or investigate complaints regarding violation of rights of consumers as a class within its jurisdiction and submit a report in the next two months, she said.

Further, the CCPA is personally monitoring all e-commerce websites to check sale of defective products, especially the three products identified as part of the campaign so that to initiate a class action lawsuit, she added.

Appealing to consumers to

be aware of fake products, Khare said while shopping these daily household goods, the consumers should first look for the 'IS (Indian Standard)' mark of the BIS for their own safety. Even on the websites, consumers should check for this quality sign in the product features.

Consumers should be aware that domestic pressure cooker, two-wheeler helmet and cooking gas cylinder are some of the mandatory products that have to comply with the BIS quality norms. These products cannot be sold without the mandatory 'ISI' mark, she said.

MONEY MATTERS

Hero posts two-fold jump in festive season retail sales

Hero Electric on Wednesday reported over two-fold jump in festive season retail sales at 24,000 units during October 1 to November 15, 2021. The company had clocked 11,339 units in the same period a year ago, the company said in a statement. The recent



amendment in FAME II policy (Faster Adoption and manufacturing of electric vehicles in India), which offers increased upfront incentives for electric two-wheelers and rising fuel prices has propelled the demand for electric vehicles resulting in heightened demand, the company said in a statement. Commenting on the sales performance, Hero Electric CEO Sohinder Gill said, "we saw two clear indicators in our showrooms this festive season. A significant percentage of customers chose Hero E bikes over the petrol bikes and many factored environment and sustainability as influencing factors in their purchase."

Thermax bags Rs 830 cr order to set up FGD systems



Thermax on Wednesday said it has bagged a Rs 830 crore order to set up flue gas desulphurisation systems for a private power company. FGD systems will be installed to cut down

SOx emissions and comply with the air quality standards set for fossil fuel based power plants. Thermax Limited has concluded an order of Rs 830 crore from an Indian power private sector company to set up flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) systems for their three units of 660 MW capacity each in the state of Uttar Pradesh," a company statement said. MD & CEO Ashish Bhandari said, "Our proven technological capabilities in the area of air pollution and gaseous abatement, especially FGD, where we are already executing a few large orders, led to this competitive win." In addition to supporting the customer in meeting statutory compliance related to industrial pollution norms, the project reinforces the company's commitment to the environment, he added.

Rupee pares initial losses, settles 2 paise up at 74.40

The rupee recovered its initial losses and settled 2 paise up at 74.40 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, ahead of the release of the minutes of the latest Federal Reserve meeting. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened on a weak note at 74.53 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.31 and a low of 74.54. It finally ended at 74.40 against the American currency, registering a gain of just 2 paise over its previous close of 74.42. According to Emkay Global Financial Services, the forex market is stuck in a lacklustre trading range, with focus being on Fed minutes and a slew of US economic data. "Only an upbeat data with marginally hawkish FOMC minutes will bolster the case that the US consumer is in good shape and increase bets for an earlier than expected rate hike, appreciating the USD-INR spot," it said.



Ohmium arm enArka ships 1st unit of electrolyser to US



Ohmium International on Wednesday said its subsidiary enArka India has shipped its first unit of electrolyser to the US as a first step towards establishing the country as a global hub for green hydrogen generation. An electrolyser is a system that uses electricity to break water into hydrogen and oxygen in a process called electrolysis. Ohmium in a statement said the electrolyser has been manufactured at the Bengaluru plant, which is India's first green hydrogen electrolyser gigafactory. "We feel that when we export Ohmium products from India we are pushing the boundaries of the Prime Minister's AatmaNirbhar Bharat and National Hydrogen Mission -- in a good way -- by expanding the global impact of these programmes," said Arne Ballantine, CEO & Co-Founder, Ohmium.

Sebi's decision to extend deadline for F&O margin norms to protect investors' interest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi's decision to defer the implementation of the 50 per cent cash margin rule for future and options traders till February 28 will help market participants to adjust to the new process of segregation and monitoring, experts said on Wednesday.

The move was welcomed by market participants, as they were seeking for extension of the deadline due to operational issues.

The regulator, on Tuesday, extended the deadline till February 28, 2022, for implementation of the 50 per cent cash-margin rule for futures and options traders. The earlier deadline was December 1, 2021.

"On the basis of representations received from stakeholders, it has been decided that the provision of earlier circular come into force with effect from February 28, 2022,



instead of December 01, 2021," Sebi said.

Paytm Money CEO Varun Sridhar said this is a good move by Sebi as this will help the market participants, including MIIs, to test and stabilise the system developed by them for the new process of segregation and monitoring.

Investor education towards the implication of new rules will be very important, and investors will also be able to adjust to the new requirements gradually, he added. For trading in the futures

and options (F&O) segment, the earlier margin rules allowed investors to cover their margins entirely with their securities.

However, from February 28, 2022, clearing members will be required to maintain at least 50 per cent of the total collateral in the form of cash or cash equivalents. Clearing members (CM) guarantee trade settlement to stock exchanges on behalf of clients.

For the purpose of monitoring at least 50 per cent cash-equivalent collateral at the

level of clearing member, the excess cash-equivalent collateral of a client will not be considered for other clients or for proprietary accounts of trading or clearing member.

Welcoming Sebi's decision, Vijay Singhania, Chairman, TradeSmart, said that the major issue in the implementation of the rule is the lack of practicality.

"Sebi circular requires segregation of client funds in different segments like cash, F&O, currency etc., and to upload the same to clearing corporation/PCM. It is practically not possible," he said.

Further, he said that brokers are supposed to maintain a combined ledger for all segments for a client, and the client can trade in any segment based on the combined ledger balance. In all fairness, there should be only one combined consolidated margin for each client instead of segregating the same into segments.

'Concept of Aadhaar data vault fallacious'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

National Health Authority CEO and senior member of founding team of Aadhaar R S Sharma on Wednesday criticised some of the restrictions imposed by the Unique Identification Authority of India over use of the unique ID due to apprehensions around privacy.

Sharma, who was the first director general of UIDAI, said that the concept of data vault is fallacious which is adversely impacting the purpose of Aadhaar.

"Aadhaar Act says Aadhaar information should be safely kept. Aadhaar number is not an identity. It is like putting all the numbers on the currency notes into some safe vault saying that these numbers will not be disclosed. This is a fallacious way. Once you start with a fallacious foundation



then everything else becomes fallacious. You came up with the Aadhaar data vault," Sharma said while speaking at a workshop organised by the UIDAI. The UIDAI has recently introduced a concept of Aadhaar data vault which is a centralised storage for all the Aadhaar numbers collected by authorised agencies.

The objective of Aadhaar data vault, as explained by the UIDAI, is to reduce the footprint of Aadhaar numbers within the systems and environment of the organisation hence reduce the risk of unauthorised access.

Tea workers in Bengal demand min wage from Jan 2022

PNS ■ JALPAIGURI

Tea garden workers in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri and Alipurdur districts on Wednesday staged demonstrations, demanding implementation of minimum wage from January 2022.

The Joint Forum of Trade Unions in the sector called for the protests, alleging that the minimum wage issue has not been resolved and workers are losing financially. Tea workers in north Bengal are now getting a daily wage of Rs 202 after a 15 per cent interim hike was granted in January, a trade union leader said. Planters' body Tea Association of India secretary general P K Bhattacharya said members of an advisory panel on minimum wages will meet on December 1 to decide on the issue.

'Guidance on disaster management audit will help govts address risks'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India Girish Chandra Murmu has said guidance on disaster management audit will help governments assess and address the risks to achieve the overall Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by 2030.

The CAG was speaking as the chair of the INTOSAI Knowledge Sharing & Knowledge Services Committee (SKC) on Tuesday evening. He presented important guidance documents on the audit of disaster management and the audit of privatisation at the 75th INTOSAI Governing Board meeting, according to a statement.

Murmu stressed that a collective effort alone shall result in transformational changes and extraordinary results in the public audit profession.

"He expressed hope that the guidance on the audit of disaster management will help governments in assessing and addressing the increasingly



systemic and complex disaster-related risk and strengthening the international collective effort to achieve the overall 2030 agenda of

sustainable development," the statement said.

At a time when countries are using privatisation as a tool to raise the efficiency of state-owned enterprises, improve service delivery, reduce the fiscal burden and enhance the productivity of the economy as a whole, Murmu said the guidance on the audit of privatisation will be of immense help. The International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) operates as an umbrella organisation for the external government audit community.

Its governing board is its apex organ tasked with implementing INTOSAI's goals and objectives.

'India has potential to soar to No 1 spot in air travel'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

India has the potential to attain the top position in air travel in about a decade, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Wednesday, underlining the government's commitment to pushing the sunrise sector to scale new heights.

The government, he said, is committed to improving connectivity on both regional and long haul international routes, and has set a target of raising the number of airports to 220 by 2025 from 136 at present.

"We have jumped from 74 airports in the last 70 years to 62 (more) airports in the last seven years. Now we have 136 airports. But that's not where we are going to stop. We have a target of a total of 220 airports by 2025, and that include heliport and water ports.



The task before us is gigantic. Tomorrow we are going to launch the Jewar airport (near Noida).

"If you look at what we have been able to achieve in the last 5-6 years from 2014-2019...the connectivity growth, civil aviation alone has (grown) 89 per cent, and that

helped us in jumping from the seventh position in terms of travel numbers to almost fourth position in 2019. And mind you, we will be jumping to the number one position in the next decade or so," the union minister told a virtual session of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

Airports sector to see Rs 90K crore investments in 5 years

The country's airports sector is expected to see an investment of Rs 90,000 crore in a five-year period, with nearly Rs 68,000 crore coming from the private players, a senior official said on Wednesday. The civil aviation sector, which was battered by the coronavirus pandemic that had also resulted in the suspension of domestic and international flight services, is slowly on the recovery path and the daily domestic air traffic is nearing the pre-COVID level of 4 lakh. Civil Aviation Secretary Rajiv Bansal said investments totalling Rs 90,000 crore will be made for airports over the five-year period, starting 2020-21. Out of the total amount, around Rs 20,000-22,000 crore will be invested by the Airports Authority of India (AAI), while the remaining amount of about Rs 68,000 crore would be from the private sector. The government expects to have 220 operational airports over five years and will include heliports. Currently, there are 136 operational airports in the country, and many aerodromes are in the works. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone for the new airport at Jewar in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday. Among others, a new airport at Mopa in Goa is expected to be ready next year, and an aerodrome is also coming up at Navi Mumbai.

Govt making all efforts to complete AI disinvestment process by Dec

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is making all efforts to complete the disinvestment process of national carrier Air India by the end of December, according to a senior official.

Tata group firm Talace Pvt Ltd has emerged as the winning bidder for loss-making Air India.

On October 25, the government signed the share purchase agreement with Tata Sons for the sale of the airline for Rs 18,000 crore. The amount includes payment of Rs 2,700 crore in cash and take over Rs 15,300 crore of the carrier's debt.



Priyanka Chopra shoots down split rumours, shares *Jonas Brothers Family Roast* clip

Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas took a dig at the rumours of her split with popstar-husband Nick Jonas by sharing a clip from their Netflix comedy special *Jonas Brothers Family Roast*.

On Monday, Priyanka dropped her surname, along with her husband's last name, from all social media handles. Her move led to speculation that the 39-year-old actor was splitting with the American singer-songwriter, who she married in 2018.

Taking to Instagram late Tuesday evening, Priyanka shared a clip from the show, where she was seen roasting Nick (29).

"Brought my husband and his brothers a nice roast for dinner. Perks of being a Jonas," she wrote with a cheeky, tongue-out emoticon. In the clip, the *Dil Dhadakne Do* star is seen poking fun at the duo's 10-year age gap. Priyanka said the couple teach each other a lot of things: while Nick showed her how to use the social networking service TikTok, she quipped, "I showed him what a successful acting career looks like."

She also joked about being the most famous Jonas in the family. "Also, have you guys noticed how much content the Jonas Brothers post online? Like, they're forever on Instagram,

always on their phone. It's so cute. I'll tell you why. Because all of them combined still have less followers than me. So I guess the most popular Jonas is @PriyankaChopra on Instagram."

The actor is currently awaiting the release of her much-anticipated Hollywood film *The Matrix Resurrections*, scheduled to open in cinemas worldwide on December 22.

Hollywood star Keanu Reeves plays the lead role of Neo in the Warner Bros Pictures-backed movie series, which also stars Carrie-Anne Moss, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Jessica Henwick, and Neil Patrick Harris.



Jennifer Lawrence got 'high' while shooting for *Don't Look Up*

Actress Jennifer Lawrence, who portrays Kate Dibiasky in the new political comedy *Don't Look Up*, has revealed that in order to immerse herself in her character, a PhD student and regular weed consumer, she sought permission from director Adam McKay to smoke marijuana before a scene with Hollywood star Meryl Streep that had no dialogue.

As McKay spoke about how the actress threw herself into the role, Lawrence interrupted and said: "I know what you're going to say, and I wasn't pregnant (at the time)," reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.

The director agreed: "You were not pregnant. Can I say this?"

The star replied: "I think so, just nobody tell my mother-in-law."

The *Anchorman* director explained how the actress asked if she could smoke a joint, with the actress then

interrupting: "Because my character was getting high in the movie."

McKay continued during a Question and answer event for the film in Los Angeles: "So Jen was like, 'Are you gonna throw me some improv?', which we always do. And I was like, 'No, you can get high.'"

The 53-year-old filmmaker was very tempted to take advantage of Lawrence's altered state but ultimately decided it would be "mean" but the 'Mother!' actress said not everyone on set left her alone while she was high.

McKay said: "I kept turning to my script supervisor, Cate Hardman, and was like, 'I just want to say, 'Hey Jen. I think I have a monologue idea for you'. And I would look at Jen and was like, 'I can't do it. It would be too mean.' So I left you alone."

She replied: "I was a real target. Everyone was f**** with me... I guess because I was high. Easy to f**** with."

Jay-Z becomes most Grammy-nominated artiste in history

Rapper-producer Jay-Z has become the most-nominated artiste in Grammy Awards history, with his three 2022 nominations pushing him to 83. He had previously been tied with legendary producer/composer Quincy Jones at 80, reports *variety.com*.



Jay-Z, who last released an album in 2017, is nominated for guest appearances with rapper Kanye West and the late DMX. He currently has 23 wins.

Paul McCartney, previously tied for second place with Beyonce, gains two nods in the rock category and passes her and Jones for sole possession of the No. 2 spot with 81. Neither Jones nor Beyonce are nominated for 2022 awards, although Q did write the liner notes for top nominee Jon Batiste's *We Are* album.

Jay-Z made his Grammy bow in 1999 with three nods, two from his classic *Vol. 2 Hard Knock Life* album and one for his tag-team with Jermaine Dupri, *Money Ain't a Thang*. He won but did not attend the awards, later saying he "boycotted" them because fellow New Yorker DMX had not been nominated despite racking up two No. 1 albums in a year.

Jay, who turns 52 next month, has been nominated in 18 of the 22 Grammy years since then, even though his release schedule has slowed considerably over the past decade. The Brooklyn native's biggest Grammy-winning years were 2009, 2010 and 2012, when he took home three each. Ironically, he won no trophies in his most-

nominated year, 2017, when his '4:44' album and related singles and video received eight total nods.

This did not improve his complicated relationship with the Grammys, and Jay-Z stated his opinion on the matter unequivocally in 'Apesh*', released the following year on his duet album with wife Beyonce, *Everything Is Love*.

The first of McCartney's 18 wins came in 1964 with two as a member of the Beatles, who took Best New Artist as well as one for the song *A Hard Day's Night*.

Next in line after Jones and Beyonce are Stevie Wonder and late classical conductor Georg Solti, tied with 74; and film-music maestros Henry Mancini and John Williams, tied with 72, none of whom have 2022 nominations.

Hailee Steinfeld hits the target with Scarlett Johansson's stunt double in *Hawkeye*



As Marvel Studios' greatest archer epic *Hawkeye* starring Jeremy Renner, Hailee Steinfeld, Florence Pugh, Tony Dalton and Vera Farmiga premiers Wednesday on Disney+ Hotstar, there's palpable excitement among fans of the MCU.

Hailee Steinfeld, who plays Kate Bishop, a skilled archer and *Hawkeye*'s biggest fan, recently spilled the beans on acing the action sequences in the series. The actress has worked in tandem with Scarlett Johansson's stunt double, Heidi Monkeymaker for the action sequences of the miniseries. Talking about her she said, "We got to a place where she could throw anything at me but that didn't just happen, I definitely had to prepare for that."

Praising Heidi, the actress shared as to how she made her feel safe during the filming of action sequences, "A lot of times, a fight sequence looks incredibly intricate and very overwhelming and intimidating, but it's nice to have somebody that believes in you and

pushes you. Heidi and the entire stunt team always made me feel very safe, which is important."

Directed by Rhys Thomas and Bert & Bertie, the six-episode miniseries follows the story of MCU's greatest archer, who teams up with a 22-year-old skilled archer and his biggest fan Kate Bishop in order to defeat the outlaws.

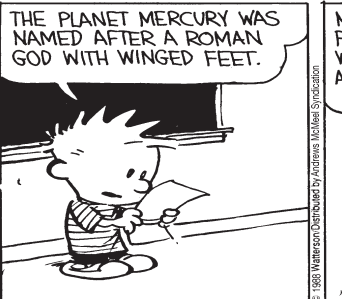
The series will be available in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam on Disney+ Hotstar.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



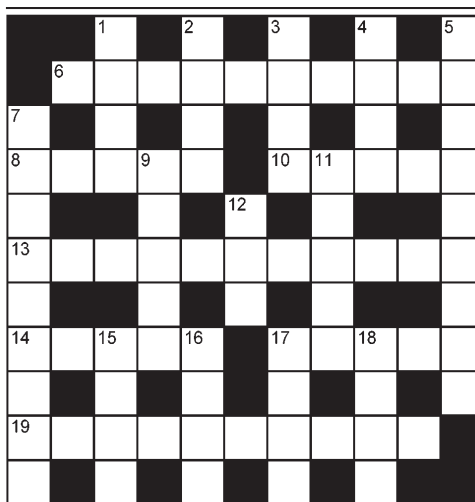
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution												
4	6	5	8	2	9	1	3	7				
2	7	1	6	4	3	5	9	8				
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6	1	2	3	8	4	9	7	5				
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- Rules**
- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
 - The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

ACROSS

- A maker of horseshoes
- Wanders
- Office tables
- He wrote the play "Romeo and Juliet"
- Gets closer to
- Go by bike
- Somewhere to go out to for a meal

DOWN

- This bites a dog
- Divisions in a play
- Second-hand
- Comes first in a race
- Spoke very quietly
- People in jail
- Manufacturer
- The other side in a war
- Something left after a fire
- As well
- Male deer
- Be concerned
- Metal containers for drink, food

SOLUTION												
L	E	T	T	E	R	S	W	I	M			
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TRAVELLING WITH AN ARTIST'S EYE

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Occasionally, travel can bring a massive change in one's life. A usual rover may travel to explore but there are some like Alpula Pocham from Mancherial district of our very own state, who travel to inspire others. He found his fulfillment in travelling with art! This travel journey of Pocham was unprepared. The only thing he could see was marking his name somewhere. We got in touch with him for the 'community wise' story so that all our readers could explore travelling through an artist's eye. What actually intrigued us about this *kala-yatri* was his way of glass casing the civilisation of tribal people, while he was on an expedition! After travelling to 18 states in India, this voyager drew 15,000 paintings of the numerous tribes and the background of



the states that he witnessed on his way.

"I was on a *kala-yatri*, a tour from Kashmir to Kanya kumari. I was supposed to observe every state's happenings very carefully. And, here I am with all the sketches that show my country's diversity," he tells us.

The tourist set on this outing three years ago, which is indeed a long time! The legacy, the upheaval — he wanted to show it all. "I was keenly interested in understanding my own country. There was no better way than travelling and then sketching it out. It's social carving for me," he adds. After documenting the traditions so well, the sketcher is currently on his latest visit to Devbhoomi! The whole thing started as a painting and now he is turning out to be an icon on his own. "I wanted to show some relics of each state, who knew I'll be able to inspire so many. My *chitra* raises



questions about the presence of these forgotten areas or tribes that one can symbolise.

Though we are moving with time, we must not fail to remember our 'sanskriti,' he insists.

He drew what he loved and his current muse is the Solan town in Himachal Pradesh. The illustrator also believes his sketchbook is



what a camera is to a photographer! "It accompanies me everywhere, I am recording my travel experiences especially the transient ones. It is the easiest way to recharge myself and getting away from home



offers me new views. It fires an imagination in me and forms the theme of my work!" he says.

A small encounter in this Telangana boy's life turned out to be a life-changing event and it brought him the new environment he was looking for all this while. The world is a book and those who don't travel read only one page, furthermore, Alpula proved this saying right! Though he was condemned by his near and dear ones to be always

attached in the field of fine arts, he proved all of them wrong and became the first travel artist of Telangana state. The son of a manual worker was once let down by the locals for drawing the movement of Bihari women, they were affronted as per the illustrator nevertheless he didn't give up. He has also stayed at the premises of temples and schools for picturing picturesque spots — such was his journey that we must be pleased about.

Revolutionising fitness with a holistic approach

K RAMYA SREE

As life becomes more stressful and our health is under attack daily from long hours of work, poor nutrition, and environmental toxins around us, it is becoming more important that we take our health into our own hands. Traditional exercise and weight training were designed to tone and build muscle so our outward appearance is pleasing to the eye. But what about the physical condition of our inner body and our emotional state? How can we keep healthy inside and out? One can answer these with a holistic approach to fitness.

Launched last year in April, Portl is a smart mirror-based personalised fitness and wellness device that fits seamlessly within your home where an individual gets programs customised to them, that ensure highly relevant and engaging content from the instructors on-demand and via live classes. That means you will not find cookie-cutter solutions here! From HIIT, strength, dance fitness, endurance, yoga, mindfulness, and nutrition coaching, all are just a single click away.

The Pioneer chats with Indraneel Gupta Founder and CEO, Portl, and Vishal Chandapeta, Co-Founder, who have over 5 years of experience in the fitness industry serving the needs of large fitness and wellness businesses to share their views on fitness, Port more.

How did the idea come about?

Both Vishal and I are avid fitness enthusiasts, and previously ran a start-up within the Fitness space already. Back then, we were serving the needs of large fitness studios and during that time, we learnt immensely about the consumers' needs, their pain points, and overall habits when it comes to fitness as a lifestyle. This experience helped us build Portl and address the unmet needs of the consumers across personalization, convenience, and a holistic approach to overall health. We started working on Portl as a concept a couple of months prior to the lockdown in India, and the consumer behaviour and fitness trends during the pandemic made us accelerate our plans and build a



product that really addresses consumer needs.

How tough or easy was it to integrate AI with tech-related to fitness?

The tough part about providing personalization at scale especially from a fitness perspective is that we have to cater to a wide array of people, their preferences, their lifestyle habits, and their health conditions before a fitness programme can be created. We focused our efforts on creating a highly accurate form-feedback system at the outset and coupled that with our personalization engine to create unique roadmaps for every individual that adapts and adjusts itself based on the users' progress. This activity in itself is both time-consuming and resource-intensive. However, this capability allows us to constantly improve and create unique and relevant experiences for each user.

Who is your target audience?

We aren't just for fitness enthusiasts. Its unique capabilities enable people across all ages and fitness levels to realise their best versions and improve overall health. The very fact that the Portl can be used by different people within a household makes it a ubiquitous device for all fitness, wellness, and health applications. The wide array of workout formats, the form-feedback

and personalization, the health monitoring and pain management, the nutrition coaching, and mental wellness mean that no matter what a person's current health status is, Portl caters to all their needs and is a holistic health and wellness solution that goes far beyond existing home fitness solutions.

What are some things it offers to consumers that a Fitbit or a fitness monitoring app can't? Portl is a complete health, personalized fitness, and wellness solution packaged into a sleek, interactive, and intelligent mirror. We go well beyond existing wearables and fitness apps — our form-feedback system allows us to correct a users' exercise technique in real-time; our personalization engine allows us to provide highly relevant workouts based on a users' capabilities, limitations, and preferences; our health monitoring allows us to track all key health vitals and use those metrics to create better workouts and nutrition schedules that are suited to an individual. The social aspects of the Portl system allow users to interact and engage with community members whilst pursuing their fitness goals.

And the fact that all of this is available at your home, on-demand at affordable prices is incredible, and we are excited to bring the Portl into every home.

How is working from office more productive than working from home

Companies are analysing the benefits and drawbacks of getting staff back to work now that the market has begun to rebound. On the one hand, they are concerned about employee health and are continuing to implement remote work restrictions in order to avoid the spread of coronavirus within the workplace. Organisations, on the other hand, are focusing on what is best for their business and what is the ideal method to implement a hybrid work model. Undoubtedly majority companies are perplexed by both situations when it comes to getting their remote employees back to the office. Companies are embracing the concept of freedom, but many are unsure whether or not to

empower employees to choose when, how, and where they work. As a result, talent management teams are guiding remote workers back to the office, which is beneficial to all parties.

High levels of health safety

According to various market polls, if given the option during the Covid-19 epidemic, employees would prefer to work from home even after the crisis is passed. Employees are hesitant to leave their homes for work. Companies are introducing strong safety measures in the workplace to make them feel safe and comfortable.

Health screening methods are being implemented by companies that are worried about their employees' health. Temperature checks are required, and touchless

technologies are installed to reduce the danger of transmission. Apart from that, physical separations such as workstation space and rotary shifts play a role.

Deepens connections

Having employees in the office is beneficial to create deeper connections by interacting face to face. This results in establishing trust and building connections with the team. As a result, it fosters innovation and productivity that

contributes to business growth and scalability. Furthermore, emphasising team-building activities

reignites bonds between the staff.



Besides this, companies are planning virtual games and activities in which employees can participate, work together and build better relationships at work. Companies are planning regular team lunches, happy hours and other activities to engage the employees in fun activities. In addition, employees returning to the office can leverage reskilling programs organized to accelerate their careers.

Enabling clear communication

Despite the fact that the companies have adopted advanced digital tools to keep remote working seamless and easy yet they still thrive on establishing clear communication. During the remote work period, communication at the workplace has dynamically progressed. Undoubtedly the use of technology in today's time has set new standards of communication. Therefore, returning to the office will require a strategic plan for employees.

On-site communication structures the communication protocols at the workplace. It helps employees develop a better understanding of roles than off-site communication. This will contribute to creating deep connections and culture at the workplace. Apart from this, employees communicating in offices can lead to innovative ideas that are less likely to take place on email or video conferencing.

Flexibility in workplace

Undoubtedly returning back to the office after a long period of flexibility can be overwhelming to employees. Majority of the compa-

nies are adopting a gradual transition approach to make it comfortable for employees. On the other hand, employees are concerned about the fixed number of working hours every week. To address this concern, companies are allowing their staff to determine their own working hours and prioritize their mandatory meetings and in-office attendance. In addition, companies are redesigning their leave policies for employees even with mild colds to avoid infecting others at the workplace.

Summing up

Working from home has its own advantages including flexibility for employees and reduced operating costs for employers. However, working from home has many distractions. Returning to the office makes it easier to streamline communications, work and develop innovative ideas. Additionally, it is expected to make the employees stay functional and aligned with business objectives.

(The writer, Yogita Tulsiani, is the MD & Co-founder, iXceed Solutions (Global Tech-Recruiter Provider))

Eyes on Rahane as ‘second string’ India take on gutsy Black Caps

PTI ■ KANPUR

A captain battling existential crisis, a veteran pacer about to be phased out and a white-ball maverick trying to earn his red-ball stripes makes for a heady combination as Ajinkya Rahane’s second-string India aim to size up a gritty New Zealand in first Test starting Thursday.

Rahane, with his career on line, gets to lead India may be one last time while 100-Test veteran Ishant Sharma will be praying that young turk Mohammed Siraj doesn’t nudge him out.

Shreyas Iyer is set for Test debut and would like to reaffirm ‘Bombay (not Mumbai) School of Batmanship’ whose philosophy transcends beyond the white-ball riches of Indian Premier League.

“Shreyas Iyer will be making his debut but I can’t reveal anything about combination,” skipper Rahane confirmed ahead of the match.

It is indeed a rarity to find an Indian Test team that is without its hit opening pair of Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul. Also missing from line-up is skipper Virat Kohli and a genuine match-winning keeper-batter Rishabh Pant.

But this also gives head coach Rahul Dravid a chance to check out what his back-up bench strength is before the away tour of South Africa which starts in less than a month’s time.

In the batting line-up for the first Test, only Rahane, Cheteshwar Pujara and Mayank Agarwal have played more than 10 Tests.



India vs New Zealand
Live from 9:30 am (IST)
STAR SPORTS

If Agarwal does well, that will keep KL Rahul on his toes and a good show from Shubman Gill will keep the team management interested in slotting him in the middle-order when the two regular openers come back.

In any sport, leader of the side is considered to have a secured slot in the side but in this Indian team, the skipper will be batting to save his career after an average of 19 in 11 Test matches in the current season.

Two more failures in two home games could effectively mean end of the road for Rahane. Even Dravid will also find it difficult to justify the Mumbaikar’s inclusion in the Johannesburg-bound flight next month.

A look at Rahane’s net ses-

sion doesn’t inspire much confidence. He tried an ugly hoick off Jayant Yadav off break and was clean bowled. Prasad Krishna induced an outside edge which would have been regulation catch.

But it was scary to see net bowler Shivam Mavi bowling a perfect bouncer and hitting him on the chest.

It is never easy to lead a side when your own batting form has deserted you. How Rahane strikes a balance in this Test between being a ruthless captain and also the batter his team expects him to be will decide in which direction his career goes from here.

If he plays the game of survival against a Tim Southee or bumper-happy Neil Wagner, it might bring about downfall but as Pujara said, “being a bit fearless” will relieve him a bit from the gigantic pressure that’s on his shoulders to save his career.

Similarly, for Ishant, the senior-most player in the current set-up with 100 plus games and 300 plus wickets, the situation is getting bleak by the day.

He didn’t look in good rhythm during the net session and if Siraj is dropped from the eleven, the lanky pacer will once again need to prove that team management’s decision isn’t a travesty.

Umesh Yadav however remains the first-choice new ball bowler. Shreyas, who has a had a decent red ball record but has not played a long for-



mat game since 2019, will have his task cut-out.

Dravid made him negotiate short ball throw-downs from left-arm specialist Nuwan in order to simulate Neil Wagner’s round the wicket tactic. A solid debut with an aggressive mind-set might give them a shot at permanent middle-order place in future.

If one goes by cues from nets, the sequence of batters appears to be Gill and Mayank, followed by Pujara and Rahane. Next in line was Shreyas, which confirmed that Surya will have to wait for his Test debut.

While it’s not known if Axar Patel’s workload is being managed but Jayant Yadav had an extended run in the nets

under watchful eyes of Dravid.

A middle-order with three defensive players like Pujara, Rahane and supposedly Hanuma Vihari, won’t be a great proposition when India plays away from home in coming days.

But one man, itching to go out there and reaffirm his status as world’s number one spinner will be Ravichandran Ashwin, who had been licking his wounds for the past few months after a royal snub by regular captain Kohli during the last series.

The third spinner is likely to be Axar Patel, who had a brilliant debut home series against England (27 wickets) when he last donned the

INDIA-NEW ZEALAND IN TESTS				
Venue	Played	Ind won	NZ won	Drawn
In India	34	16	2	16
In New Zealand	25	5	10	10
In England	1	-	1	-
Total	60	21	13	26
Last five matches:	5	2	3	-
At Kanpur	3	2	-	1
HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS				
India:	583-7 dec at Ahmedabad			1999-00
NZ:	680- 8 dec at Wellington			2013-14
LOWEST INNINGS TOTALS				
India:	81 in 26.3 (8- ball) overs at Wellington			1975-76
NZ:	94 in 38.2 overs at Hamilton			2002-03
HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES				
India:	231 Vinoo Mankad at Chennai			1955-56
NZ:	302 Brendon McCullum at Wellington			2013-14
BEST BOWLING PERFORMANCE IN AN INNING				
India:	8-72 S. Venkatraghavan at Delhi			1964-65
NZ:	7-23 Richard Hadlee at Wellington			1975-76

FAISEL FEATURES

TEAMS	
INDIA Ajinkya Rahane (captain), Mayank Agarwal, Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Yadav, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Umesh Yadav, Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Siraj, Jayant Yadav, Srikanth Bharat (2nd wk) and Prasad Krishna	NEW ZEALAND Kane Williamson (captain), Tom Latham (wk), Ross Taylor, Henry Nicholls, Tom Blundell (wk), Will Young, Glenn Phillips (wk), Daryl Mitchell, Tim Southee, Neil Wagner, Kyle Jamieson, William Somerville, Ajaz Patel, Mitchell Santner and Rachin Ravindra

whites even though Jayant looked in good rhythm.

For Black Caps, Tim Southee and Neil Wagner will be the two pacers with left-

arm spin duo of Ajaz Patel and Mitchell Santner along with off-spinner William Somerville likely to complete the attack.

KL Rahul gains a slot to fourth in T20I rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India opener KL Rahul gained a slot to occupy the fifth spot while middle-order batter Suryakumar Yadav galloped 24 places to the 59th position in the ICC men’s T20I player rankings released on Wednesday.

Pakistan’s wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan, too, gained a slot to occupy the fourth position.

Rizwan’s upward movement is courtesy his 90 runs in the three-match series against Bangladesh that his side won 3-0, while opener Rahul is only six rating points behind after scoring 80 in two matches against New Zealand, a series also won 3-0 by India.

New Zealand’s Martin Gupthill has gained three slots to reach 10th position scoring 152



runs against India while Rohit Sharma is 13th, gaining two places after topping the series with 159 runs.

Pakistan’s Fakhar Zaman is another one to move up the batters’ list, from 40th to 35th. The rankings for bowlers

see Mitchell Santner gain 10 slots to reach 13th position with four wickets in the series against India and Bhuvneshwar Kumar up five to 19th with three scalps. Deepak Chahar has moved up 19 slots to reach 40th position.

NEUFC, Kerala Blasters eye first points

PTI ■ MARGAO

Coming off big defeats, both NorthEast United FC and Kerala Blasters would look to open their account and get their campaign up and running when they face off in the Indian Super League (ISL) here on Thursday.

While the Khalid Jamil-coached NorthEast United conceded four goals against an experienced Bengaluru FC, Kerala Blasters too lost by a 2-4 margin to last edition’s runners-up ATK Mohun Bagan in their opener.

Kerala Blasters’ pre-season performances provided hope but they found the going too tough against a strong and thoroughly professional ATK Mohun Bagan.

At the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here on Thursday, the southerners will get another opportunity to impress and open their account in this edition of the league.

It is not going to be easy though against the Highlanders who fought hard against a fancied Bengaluru FC outfit. The team from the eastern part of the country came back twice to level things in the first half, but the lack of concentration and inexperience at the back cost them dear, as they leaked four goals.

Paine should play in Ashes: Harris

AP ■ BRISBANE

Tim Paine has the full support of the Australian team and deserves to keep his place for the first Ashes Test against England, opener Marcus Harris said on Wednesday.

Paine suddenly quit as Test captain last week over a series of lewd text messages with a female colleague in 2017 that were about to be made public. Harris said the news came as a shock to the playing group who only learned about it 30 minutes before the official announcement. But he backed Paine to come through the scandal and said he deserved to play in the opening Test at Brisbane on December 8 on his wicket-keeping abilities alone.

“Yes, absolutely,” Harris said when



asked if he should be in the starting eleven. “He’s done a really good in the last few years under tough circumstances, and I think you can still probably argue that he’s the best gloveman in the country.”

“I know he’s got the support of all the players,” he added, with most of them personally contacting Paine in the wake of the scandal.

“Obviously Paine is a very popular member of the group, and he was as skipper as well. So we’re looking forward to him getting up here in the next week or so and getting on with cricket.” The 36-year-old Paine has made it clear he still wants to play for Australia with selectors needing to decide whether to cut him loose and start afresh or show loyalty.

Australia will be without captain for 15 years if it is looking for perfect skipper: Clarke



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

The Australian Test team will be without a captain for the next 15 years if the country’s cricket administrators are looking for someone with a “perfect” and unblemished record, feels former skipper Michael Clarke.

Cricketer Australia (CA) is set to appoint a new captain after Tim Paine stepped down from the post in the wake of a ‘sexting’ scandal. Fast bowling spearhead Pat Cummins has emerged as the frontrunner to succeed Paine and former skipper Steve Smith is also in the reckoning.

Clarke pointed out how Ricky Ponting became one of Australia’s greatest captains after overcoming an erratic start to his international career.

“Go back in my time even to Ricky Ponting. If that’s the case, he never would have captained Australia,” Clarke told ‘Big Sports Breakfast’.

“He had a punch up in the middle of a Bourbon & Beefsteak. Are you not going to give him the job because of that?” He’s a great example. He’s shown you how time, experience, maturity, playing at the highest level and even the captaincy turned him around.”

Paine is the only specialist wicket-keeper in Australia’s 15-man squad to face England in the upcoming Ashes but chairman of selectors George Bailey said he is not final for the first Test starting in Brisbane on December 8.

Clarke admitted that the Australian Test captain needed to be held to a high standard, but he said the team would end up with few options if it has unrealistic expectations.

Benzema handed 1-year suspended sentence

AP ■ VERSAILLES

France and Real Madrid forward Karim Benzema was given a one-year suspended jail sentence and a fine of 75,000 euros (\$84,000) Wednesday in a sex-tape case that rocked French soccer.

Benzema was found guilty of being involved in an attempt in 2015 to blackmail France teammate Mathieu Valbuena.

The Versailles court decision is unlikely to affect Benzema’s immediate sporting future. The forward is regarded as one of the favorites to win the Ballon d’Or award on Nov. 29 in Paris following an impressive season with Madrid. French federation president Noel Le Groat has already said Benzema would be allowed to keep playing with France even if found guilty.

Sindhu, Srikanth, Praneeth advance to second round

PTI ■ BALI

India’s double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu showed great determination to outwit her opponent in the women’s singles opening round, while B Sai Praneeth and Kidmabi Srikanth also advanced to the men’s singles second round of the Indonesia Open Super 1000 event here on Wednesday.

After a slow start, Sindhu, the reigning world champion, engineered a turnaround to register a hard-fought 17-21 21-17 21-17 win over a tenacious Aya Ohori of Japan in one hour 10 minutes.

With the win, Sindhu improved her impressive record against the



Japanese shuttler to 11-0. World number seven Sindhu, who made a semifinal exit after suffering a straight game defeat to Japan’s Akane Yamaguchi here last week, will meet 23-year-old German shuttler Yvonne Li in the second round.

It will be the first meeting

between the third seed Indian and world number 26 Li.

In the men’s singles, world number 16 B Sai Praneeth clinched a 21-19 21-18 win over France’s Toma Junior Popov.

In a repeat of last week’s Indonesia Masters quarterfinal, Srikanth once again got the better of compatriot HS Prannoy.

The former world number one Srikanth, who is coming off two back-to-back semifinal finishes at Hylo Open and Indonesia Masters, continued his good run of form as he eked out a 21-15 19-21 21-12 victory over Prannoy in 56 minutes.

While Praneeth will next take on Christo Popov of France in the

second round, Srikanth will meet the winner of the first round clash between Tokyo Olympics gold medallist second seed Dane Victor Axelsen and Japan’s Koki Watanabe.

The mixed doubles pairing of N Sikki Reddy and Dhruv Kapila, however, made a first round exit, falling to the Japanese duo of Kyohei Yamashita and Naru Shinoya, 7-21 12-21.

It was a bad day in the office for Reddy who made a first round exit in the women’s doubles event as well.

Reddy and veteran shuttler Ashwini Ponnappa went down 27-29 18-21 to the fifth seeded Bulgarian duo of Gabriela Stoeva and Stefani Stoeva.

Cristiano sends Red Devils into UCL last 16

Ronaldo, Sancho score in Man Utd’s 2-0 win in 1st game after Ole’s exit; Chelsea thrash Juve

AP ■ VILLARREAL

Manchester United booked their place in the Champions League last 16 as Cristiano Ronaldo scored in a 2-0 victory at Villarreal on Tuesday, while holders Chelsea also reached the knockout phase by thumping Juventus.

Three-time European champions United went into their first game since sacking Ole Gunnar Solskjaer at the weekend needing a win to confirm a top-two finish in Group F.

But they were under massive pressure as defeat would have left their fate out of their own hands.

David de Gea made two

crucial saves and United, with Michael Carrick in caretaker charge, took advantage through Ronaldo’s 78th-minute lob.

Jadon Sancho, so often a peripheral figure since his big-money move from Borussia Dortmund in the close-season, capped a fine individual display with his first goal for the club late on.

Ronaldo’s goal was the 799th of his career, his 140th in the Champions League and his sixth in the competition this season.

The other qualification spot in the group remains up for grabs after Young Boys and Atalanta played out a thrilling 3-3 draw in Bern.



Atalanta face a winner-takes-all match against Villarreal in Bergamo next month.

CHELSEA THRASH JUVE

Chelsea romped into the last 16 and to the top of Group H with an impressive 4-

0 thrashing of Juventus at Stamford Bridge.

Thomas Tuchel’s men knew that qualification would be secured if they could avoid defeat or if Zenit Saint Petersburg failed to beat Malmo.

The Blues dominated the early stages and took the lead through young defender Trevoh Chalobah’s third goal of the season.

It was a defender who doubled Chelsea’s lead in the 56th minute.

England right-back Reece James hammered a fine volley into the bottom corner to net for the fifth time already this term. Chelsea grabbed their third goal less than two min-

utes later, Ruben Loftus-Cheek prodding the ball to Hudson-Odoi, who smashed home from close range.

KEY NUMBERS

50

Chelsea vs Juventus was Thomas Tuchel’s 50th match in charge of Chelsea in all competitions, and 32nd win (D11 L7).

1

Jadon Sancho has scored his first ever Man Utd goal, in what is his 15th appearance in all competitions.

3

Juventus have lost a game with a margin of 4+ goals in all competitions for their first time since Feb 2004, vs AS Roma in Serie A (0-4).

Xavi’s Barca held by Benfica

Barcelona: Barcelona’s hopes of qualifying for the Champions League last 16 go down to the final Group E matchday after an entertaining 0-0 draw against Benfica on Tuesday.

With Xavi Hernandez taking charge of his second game since replacing Ronald Koeman in the Barca dugout, the Catalan side produced a performance a world apart from the sorry outfit Benfica

saw off 3-0 in Lisbon in September.

A win would have earned Barca qualification alongside Bayern Munich, whom they must now beat on December 8, if Benfica down Dynamo Kiev, to progress. Bayern had already qualified for the last 16 before its 2-1 win at Dynamo Kyiv and the result secured the German champions first place in the group.



There was still time for Timo Werner, making his first appearance since an injury lay-off, to come off the bench and score in added time.

In Group G, Lille made Salzburg wait to reach the

last 16 as Jonathan David scored a first-half winner in a 1-0 victory in France.

All four teams in the group can still go through, after Sevilla saw off Wolfsburg 2-0.

Recently the trailer for upcoming Telugu crime-thriller *Drushyam 2* starring the super talented Venkatesh Daggubati reprising his role from the Telugu hit *Drushyam* was released. Director Jeethu Joseph now opens up about his journey with thrillers and what made him tag as a thriller director. He has films, where he has struck a balance in creating nail-biting suspense thrillers and out-and-out comedy.

On being asked about his relationship with thrillers, Jeetu shares, "I have done comedy films, I have done family dramas, but people tag me as a thriller director. Personally speaking, I like to watch mystery movies. Since my childhood, I have watched the Amanda Christie novels, Sherlock Holmes, so of course I have an inclination towards the genre. But as a filmmaker, I want to do all kinds of films."

He further adds, "My first film was an investigation movie, my second film was *Mummy and Me*, which was a family film. I have also done a comedy film with Nidhi, but my 4th and 5th were thrillers — *Memories* and *Drishyam*. So two thrillers back-to-back, immediately people started expecting thrillers from me, alongwith the producers asking me on thriller subjects. So I like thrillers, and mystery, everything for that matter."

On speaking about his future plans, Jeetu shares, "Actually I'm planning for a family comedy, a love story, because doing back-to-back thrillers is also boring, as in the making the shots are almost the same. But I like thrillers."

On being quizzed about his reluctance to remake his own film, Jeetu reveals, "My inspiration was Kamal sir. When it comes to Telugu, my excitement is Bingde sir, Naresh sir, Barnee sir and I'm meeting different artists who are all very experienced, being in the industry for the last 20-25 years. So I love sitting with them and talking to them, which made me love making this film."

Jeetu Joseph's directorial, *Drushyam 2*, starring Venkatesh, Meena, Tanikella Bharani, Nadhiya, Naresh, Sampath Raj, Kruthika, Jayakumar and Esther Anil, is set to premiere on November 25 on Amazon Prime Video.

Family comedy, love story in line for Jeetu Joseph



'More comfortable doing films with Bhimavaram slang'

K RAMYA SREE

Actor Raj Tarun has made a mark for himself in every Telugu person's heart with his very first film *Uyyala Jampala* — thanks to his Bhimavaram dialect that got him even closer to the audience who oozes boy-next-door vibes. The actor is back with another family entertainer — *Anubhavinchu Raja* — set in the backdrop of Bhimavaram village. Directed by Srinu Gavireddy, the film, also starring Kashish Khan, will open in theatres on November 26. Ahead of the film's release, the actor converses with the media about the film, being produced by Annapurna Studios and Srivenkateswara Cinemas LLP, his character, and more.

Raj Tarun who shot most of his films in Bhimavaram is happy that this film too was shot there, as he could bring out the nativity in him to screens in an organic way. Speaking about the character he played in *Anubhavinchu Raja*, which is very new to him, the *Kumari* 21F

actor shares, "The character in the movie has nothing to do with my real life. I have personally seen the entire process that goes into becoming a security guard. Playing a security guard was not easy for me."

The actor's friendship with his director is long associated and that made it even easy for Raj Tarun while shooting for the film. "Srinu and I have been friends for the last nine years. There are many reasons for a movie to become a hit or a flop. I know Srinu's strengths and abilities. I am not scared about the film's final response. With the help of Annapurna Studios, Srinu got the opportunity to show his talent," he says about his director friend.

The story of this film was told to the actor long ago but Raj felt it was not for him. He says, "Srinu narrated this story to me long back but I never thought this film was meant for me. It was only after he narrated the story to Supriya garu, Naga Chaitanya, and Nagarjuna garu, my name popped up. That is when I heard the full story."

The actor says he is stuck to movies with Bhimavaram slang because those films never disappointed him at the box office, while the films he experimented didn't work out that well. "Bhimavaram slang suits me well. I am more comfortable doing films in that slang. *Anubhavinchu Raja* will be in the backdrop of Bhimavaram and Hyderabad."

Like many other films, even this film was delayed owing to Covid-induced lockdown, but that time gave the director and the actor to make some necessary changes to the script. The actor

feels *Anubhavinchu Raja* must be watched in theatres only, hence they waited till the theatres are fully functional in the Telugu states.

Furthermore, about the movie, he adds, "The movie is full of family emotions. It shows the father and son relationship so naturally. There is a message underlined."

"I do not like gambling. I do not play those games. I watch *Kodi Pandalu*, but do not bet. The film starts at the Sankranthi festival. We will show the festive atmosphere there. I love animals. I genuinely got attached to the hen used in the film for shooting. Apparently, that hen is dull these days as it is not shooting," laughs the *Rangula Ratnam* actor.

The actor, who is proud of every movie he has made so far, says he doesn't take it to heart if a film doesn't perform well. He learns his lessons from his failures. "I had no idea about Hyderabad. Somehow, I came here and I have done 14 movies, now I have two other movies in the pipeline," concludes Raj Tarun who is also in plans to work in a web series soon.

Dil Raju likely to produce Mahesh Babu's next

After *RRR*, SS Rajamouli is soon going to shift his focus for his next with Mahesh

Babu and fans can't wait to know how their prince Mahesh Babu is going to look like in this upcoming film. While it has been announced that K L Narayana will bankroll this Rajamouli-Mahesh Babu film, rumours are that K L Narayana has asked noted producer and distributor Dil Raju to co-produce the film as the budget and scale will be huge for this adventure drama based on African forest.

So far, Dil Raju has not

produced any of Rajamouli's films. If everything goes accordingly, the duo will be come together for Mahesh Babu for the first time.



Though nothing much has been revealed officially since the maiden confirmation by Rajamouli, looks like the makers have gradually kick started the film's pre-production. It is also being heard that Tamil actor Chiyaan Vikram to play the lead antagonist in this drama.

After from the film's announcement, no official confirmations have been made about anything of this film.

Naga Shaurya's Lakshya coming on Dec 10

Young hero Naga Shaurya's landmark 20th film *Lakshya* gets its release date. The sports drama film

directed by Santhosh Jagarlapudi is all set for its theatrical release worldwide on December 10. This film is coming after Naga Shaurya scored a blockbuster with his last movie *Varudu Kaavalenu*.

Underwent unbelievable physical transformation to play the role of an archer, Naga Shaurya will be seen in a never seen before avatar. He sports two different getups in the sports drama based on ancient sport archery. Naga Shaurya underwent training to understand the nuances of the sport. Ketika Sharma is paired opposite him.

Presented by Sonali Narang, the film is produced by Narayan Das K. Narang, Puskur Ram Mohan Rao, Sharrath Marar in Sree Venkateswara Cinemas LLP, and Northstar Entertainment Pvt Ltd banners.

Director Santhosh Jagarlapudi came up with first of its kind story and Jagapathi Babu will be seen in a crucial role.

Kaala Bhairava rendered soundtracks for the movie, while Raam Reddy handled cinematography and Junaid is the editor.



Tamannaah Bhatia goes back to her roots as she enjoys eating on a banana leaf in a goddess. What netizens loved the most about this picture is her attire as a goddess. This post was flooded with comments with people adoring her look on social media.

Bhagat Singh Nagar sends out strong message

Tollywood's another small-budget movie that is making good noise for the last few days is *Bhagat Singh Nagar*. With people like Srikanth, Banerjee and YSRCP MLA Kolagatla Veerabhadra Swamy coming forward in support of the film, the makers of the *Bhagat Singh Nagar* seem confident about the film's success. *Bhagat Singh Nagar* marks the debut of actors Vidarth and Dhruvika in the lead roles. Directed by Valaja Kranthi, the film is



based on a line written by freedom fighter Bhagat Singh.

Bhagat Singh Nagar is being produced by Valaja Gauri and Ramesh Uddattu under the banner of Great India Media House.

Speaking at the pre-release event, the lead of the film Vidarth said, "This movie is a product of a group of passionate filmmakers. The film was made with the support of our families and friends. Many

people helped to complete this movie. My favorite thing about the *Bhagat Singh Nagar* is the response it has been receiving off late." "The film was made with the concept of responding if anything goes wrong with our families and people around us. Its core intention is to do good to as many people as possible. Our producer Ramesh Uddattu garu has completed the film with his support to make this film come out very well," he added.

The film will be released in theatres tomorrow.