

**ANALYSIS 7**  
WHY GWADAR PROTESTS  
AGAINST THE CPEC?**MONEY 8**  
PETROL, DIESEL PRICES TO FALL ONLY ON  
SUSTAINED DROP IN PRICES OF INTL OIL**SPORTS 11**  
IYER, SAHA SET UP  
INTRIGUING FINAL DAY

VIJAYAWADA, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

CHIRU CAMEO IN  
CHARAN-  
PRASHANTH NEEL  
FILM?

Page 12

**BIHAR MAN GETS LIFE TERM IN INDIA'S  
'FASTEST' RAPE CASE CONVICTION**

In one of the fastest trials ever, a POCSO court in Bihar's Araria district has sentenced a man in just one day's proceedings to life imprisonment for raping an eight-year-old girl. The verdict is possibly the fastest delivered by any POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) court in the country. POCSO Court Special Judge Shashi Kant Rai also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on the convict and directed him to pay a compensation of Rs 7 lakh for the survivor's rehabilitation. Though the order was passed on October 4, the order sheet pertaining to the case was made available on November 26.

**PUNJAB GOVERNMENT TO SET UP  
RESEARCH CENTRE ON HINDU EPICS**

Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Sunday said he will learn Sanskrit and do a doctorate on the Mahabharata as he announced to set up a research centre on the Hindu texts Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagvad Gita. Addressing after laying the foundation stone of a Bhagwan Parshuram Taposthal here, he also compared SAD patriarch Parkash Singh Badal to Mahabharata's Dhritarashtra, saying the 'putra moh' (blind love) for his son has led to the 'ruin' of his party. The CM said the research centre will showcase the message of the three Hindu texts.

**I HAVE BEEN COLOUR DISCRIMINATED  
ALL MY LIFE: L SIVARAMAKRISHNAN**

Former India leg-spinner Laxman Sivaramakrishnan has alleged that he has been 'colour discriminated' all his life, including in his own country. Sivaramakrishnan opened up about his experience with discrimination in the wake of the racism scandal that has rocked English cricket. "I have been criticised and colour discriminated all my life, so it doesn't bother me anymore. This unfortunately happens in our own country," Sivaramakrishnan said. The former leg-spinner, who was known for his prodigious turn and flight, was reacting to a Twitter post that hinted at trolling faced by commentators.

**222 DAYS, 6,500 KM: RETD COLONEL,  
RYOT COMPLETE GANGA PARIKARMA**

A retired Army colonel and a Gujarat farmer have completed the circumambulation of the Ganga, covering more than 6,500 km on foot in 222 days with an aim to make people aware the need to keep the river clean. Speaking at a felicitation ceremony at Qila Ghat on the banks of the river here, RP Pandey, a retired Army colonel, said they did not cross the river even once during their journey. He said the purpose of their yatra was to make villagers aware of the need to keep the river clean. His companion Hiren Patel said they started their journey from Prayagraj on December 16 last year.

# All eyes on AP HC as hearing in pleas on '3 capitals' begins today

SNV SUDHIR  
■ VIJAYAWADA

As the State government has repealed the laws related to the three capitals with both the Houses of the State legislature passing the Repeal Bills, focus has now shifted towards the High Court that will resume hearing from Monday onwards into the petitions filed against three capitals laws.

The State government has already filed an affidavit in the High Court informing about the passing of Repeal Bills in the State legislature and urged the bench to pass orders accordingly. The State government, in its affidavit, has also included the proceedings and the discussions that had taken place in the State legislature while passing the Repeal Bills.

The State government is hopeful that the laws related to the trifurcation of the State capital have been repealed and further hearing will be irrelevant and the court will dismiss all the petitions as they turned infructuous.

However, the Amaravati farm-



ers, who have been fighting with the government and the main petitioners in the case are of the opinion that since Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has said the State government will move better legislation in the future that will stand legal scrutiny, High Court should not dismiss the petitions.

It would be interesting to see what the High Court bench would do.

The High Court has taken up daily hearing of the petitions by constituting a special bench headed by Chief Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, Justice M Satyanarayana Murthy and Justice

DVSS Somayajulu.

While the hearing was underway last Monday, the Advocate General sought leave of the court and informed that the State Cabinet has passed a resolution to repeal both the legislations.

2

## More rain in store for AP

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Under the influence of the low-pressure area formed in the Bay of Bengal, the IMD alerted the Andhra Pradesh government that heavy rain was a threat to the south coastal Andhra region.

The IMD sources said favourable conditions are currently prevailing for the formation of yet another low-pressure area over the south Andaman Sea around November 30. It is likely to become well-marked and move west-north-westwards during the next 48 hours.

Under its influence, rainfall is likely to increase over North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Odisha from the night of December 3. Squally wind speeds reaching 40-50 kmph and gusting up to 60 kmph are likely during the same period.

With inclement weather conditions prevailing in the Bay of Bengal, the IMD advised the fishermen not to venture into the sea for the next three days. Due to the present weather conditions, heavy rainfall has been predicted at many places in Nellore and Chittoor districts.

## Don't worry about prospects of another spell of rain: Dy CM

PNS ■ KADAPA

Deputy Chief Minister S B Amzath Basha has appealed to the people not to be panicked at the second spell of heavy rains. He assured the people to extend all the needed help.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that before recovering from the early heavy rains, the district is again receiving heavy rains under the influence of low pressure in the Bay of Bengal.

The Deputy CM, along with mayor Suresh Babu, visited Utakuru irrigation tank, located at the outskirts of the city. He said that all the irrigation tanks and reservoirs were brimful with the heavy rains that occurred a few days ago. Now the rains are lashing the district again.



"In the wake of the heavy rain forecast, I have inspected the condition of the Utakuru irrigation tank. No need to panic as all precautionary measures are being taken to tackle the rain situation effectively," he said. He directed the irrigation officials

to be alert in the next few days in the wake of the heavy rain forecast. He asked the parents not to allow their children near the canals, streams, tanks and rivers as there is a scope for heavy floods in the view of rains in the catchments areas.

2

## Winter session of Parl from today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Winter Session of Parliament is set to begin on a stormy note on Monday, with the government listing a bill to repeal the three contentious farm laws on the first day itself even as the Opposition plans to push for a law on minimum support price on agriculture produce.

The Farm Laws Repeal Bill is slated to be introduced in Lok Sabha on Monday.

Thousands of farmers have been protesting for the past one year against the three legislations and demanding they be repealed.

Several farmer unions have pressed for a law on minimum support price (MSP).

Various opposition parties on Sunday raised the issue of legal backing for MSP at an all-party meet called by the government ahead of the session.

The opposition also raised the issue of compensation for family members of farmers who had died during the year-long protests against the laws.

The Congress has demanded a condolence resolution for the farm-



ers who died during the protests.

At the meeting, opposition leaders also demanded discussion on the Pegasus snooping row, fuel prices and unemployment in the session.

While Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not present at the all-party meeting convened by the government, Defence Minister and Deputy Leader of Lok Sabha Rajnath Singh sought cooperation from all parties for productive and smooth functioning of the House.

The government is ready for discussions on all the issues permitted by the Lok Sabha speaker and the Rajya Sabha chairman, he said.

## Repeal CAA: NDA constituent NPP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP's ally National People's Party leader Agatha Sangma on Sunday demanded the repeal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) at a meeting of constituents of the ruling NDA as well as at the all-party meeting convened ahead

of the Winter Session of Parliament. Sangma, the MP from Tura in Meghalaya, urged the government that as it has repealed farm laws keeping in mind the sentiments of the people, the CAA should also be repealed.

2

## Centre lists measures for states/UTs on Omicron

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In view of the possible threat that the new COVID-19 variant can pose to the nation, the Centre has asked all states and UTs to focus on intensive containment, active surveillance, enhanced testing, monitoring of hotspots, increased coverage of vaccination and augmentation of health infrastructure.

Listing a series of measures which states and UTs should undertake, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan also stressed on rigorous surveillance of international passengers, ensuring prompt dispatch of samples for genome sequencing and strict enforcement of Covid-appropriate behaviour to effectively manage this Variant of Concern (VoC).

As a proactive step, the government has already placed nations,



where this VoC has been found, in the category of 'at risk' countries for additional follow-up measures of international travellers coming into India from these destinations, he said in a letter dated November 27. "In view of the possible threat

### IN TROUBLED WATERS

## Bad weather and skyrocketing expenditure affect fishing activity

VKL GAYATRI  
■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The continuously changing climatic conditions, less catch and the rising fishing expenditure have hugely affected the fishing industry in the State. The prawn catch really disappoints the fishermen and the quality is also not up to the mark. The fishermen have been incurring huge losses for the past two years and the majority of the boats are not even venturing into the sea.

For the State, which has a 975-km-long coastline, fishing is one of the major revenue-generating activities. The Visakhapatnam fishing harbour is big with 750 mechanised boats, besides country boats and trawlers. In total, there are 1,500 mechanised fishing boats in various fishing harbours in the State. The mismatch between investment and returns has forced the operators to stop fishing and tag the boats at the harbours. Presently, only 35 percent of boats are venturing into the sea, that too suffering huge loss.

Desperately seeking a good catch, the fishermen enter the



deep sea and also engage in heated arguments with their counterparts from the neighbouring Odisha State. Several times, AP fishing boats have crossed the border and entered the Odisha waters.

"The expenses of diesel, ice, ration for the crew etc. have increased twice. However, the quality of the catch is poor and prawn is not even available. We have no other option but to return with whatever fish we got," says P.

Appalanaidu, a senior fisherman from Visakhapatnam fishing harbour. "The operators are also struggling to continue in the business and have temporarily stopped the boats," he adds.

With the diesel prices skyrocketing, the operators have to invest Rs. 4-5 lakh for a 14-day voyage. However, there are no encouraging returns.

2

## Sameer gets 6-month extension as AP CS

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Secretary Dr. Sameer Sharma's service tenure has been extended by six months. The Andhra Pradesh government received a communiqué from the DoPT about his service extension on Sunday.

Sameer Sharma was due to retire on November 30. He received an extension of his service just two days before his scheduled retirement. He is the third chief secretary in a row to have secured an extension of the service tenure. Interestingly, while his predecessor Adityanath Das had got an extension of his service only for three months, Sharma got the extension for six months. Former chief secretary Neelam Sawhney got six months of extension but in two tranches.

As per his extended tenure, Sameer Sharma will be in service till May 2022. Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy wrote to the Centre on November 2 seeking Sharma's extension. On Sunday DoPT under Secretary Kuldeep Choudhary wrote to the state government informing that the Centre had granted the request of the chief minister to



extend the service tenure of Sameer Sharma.

The 1985 batch, IAS officer Sameer Sharma, assumed charge as the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh on September 30.

He succeeded 1987-batch officer Aditya Nath Das, who retired from service at the end of his extended tenure.

Sameer Sharma returned to the State cadre from Central deputation in July this year, after having served as the Director-General of the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs.

2

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

Kartik &amp; Krishna Paksha

**Tithi** : Navami upto 05:30 AM**Nakshatram** : Purva Phalguni upto 10:05 PM

Time to Avoid

**Rahukalam** : 04:08 PM to 05:33 PM**Yamagandam** : 11:55 AM to 01:20 PM**Variyam** : 05:11 AM, Nov 29 to 06:45 AM**Gulika** : 02:44 PM to 04:08 PM**Amritakalam** : 03:36 PM to 05:13 PM**Abhijit Muhurtham** : 11:33 AM to 12:18 PM**HYDERABAD****WEATHER**

Forecast: Sunny

Temp: 31 °C

Humidity: 56%

Sunrise: 06:18 AM

Sunset: 05:33 PM

Updated NOVEMBER 28, 2021 5:00 PM



# Monday Mirchi

## Is he an IC or TRS' unofficial spokesman?

Habits die hard. Those who get into public service need to shed even inveterate habits if they do not get with their current role. For, they need to be above politics and go strictly by the rule book. Yet, some babus choose to use the trappings of power to further the ruling party's interests just to be in the good books of powers that be. Telangana Information Commissioner Katta Shekar Reddy is one good example. Despite being in public service for over a year now, off late he has been expressing his aversion towards BJP at the Center and Andhra leaders as if he is still in his past role as editor of a vernacular daily. Shekar has become hyper active on Twitter so much so that he is facing wrath on the social media platform. Reacting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comments on dynasty rule, Shekar listed out all the BJP 'families' which are into politics. He even arrogated to himself the role of a psephologist and predicted that the BJP will not win in the upcoming elections. He would do well to realise that his salary comes from public money; hence, he must stick to his role as IC. According to a recent survey, it takes about four years to dispose an RTI query in Telangana. What else can we expect if Information Commissioners are like this?

## Treating staff as important as tackling pandemic

During a Covid-like pandemic, the key to success for a health administrator lies in how deftly he handles his or her staff while remaining focused on effectively tackling the raging outbreak. He cannot afford to nurse the perceived wounds or opportunistically aired aspirations of staff in the face of the larger problems related to the pandemic. Post Covid-19 second wave, like all governments, the AP administration also faced the music from nurses who sought regularization of their services and equal pay for equal work. A little bird told us that the government is looking at moving out Health Commissioner Katamaneni Bhaskar from his current role as the Chief Minister himself is not satisfied with the way things were handled by the official. Reports suggest that the official could not handle the restive health workers. So, he may be handed a different role.

**Practical lesson on the field**

Babus thinking hard in AC rooms do not appeal to people; people like only those officials who mingle with them and can feel their

pulse. Some IAS officers do get close to crowds occasionally for photo-ops, but people see through their designs. The authenticity of some officials who really feel for their people cannot be missed. Visakhapatnam District Collector Mallikarjun belongs to this ilk. He has won people's hearts with his hands-on approach. Recently he went to a high school in the jungle on the outskirts of Visakhapatnam. He saw the bad condition of the toilets there. He did not fly into a rage or lecture anyone there. He quietly cleaned the toilets and thereby motivated the awe-struck students who are future citizens. The Collector gave a practical lesson that our work is not only that which we do; there is so much else that needs to be done to keep the surroundings clean. Teachers got their lesson that day and since then local people have been praising the low-key Collector's impressive ways.

## The allure of Hyderabad

Traditionally officials have liked being collector of any district, but the newer batches of IAS officers seem to prefer posting in Hyderabad. Several senior officials who had been posted as collectors of various districts over the past couple of years have shared their love for working in Hyderabad and that they miss being in the vibrant city. GHMC previously had many IAS officers as Zonal Commissioners, but now there are only a couple of them. Many collectors have expressed their interest to return to the city ASAP. If the administration heeds, they can reinforce their love for the city.

## Flip side of official with too many things on plate

One bureaucrat having too many roles to fulfill seems to be unwittingly hurting a few sectors. For instance, recently realtors decried that RERA was not strong enough in the state. Calling it 'lenient', they wanted it to be strengthened in view of Ponzi schemes surfacing in the sector. Previously CREDAI had suggested that the Chief Secretary had too many departments to handle and that until the 'real estate bubble bursts', RERA might not get a full-time authority. For, every time the real estate sector raises this issue, the administration says: "CM is considering a retired judge or a real estate expert". But nothing concrete has happened so far. Until then, some sectors have to suffer at the behest of Babus handling multiple portfolios.

— Yours truly

# Centre lists measures...

Continued from Page 1

Emphasising that ample testing infrastructure need to be operationalised to tackle any surge due to this mutated virus, Bhushan said it has been observed that the overall testing as well as the proportion of RT-PCR tests have declined in some states. "In the absence of sufficient testing, it is extremely difficult to determine the true level of infection spread. States must strengthen the testing infrastructure and strictly implement the testing guidelines," he said. Bhushan also stressed on continued monitoring of hotspots, the areas where recent cluster of positive cases have emerged. "In all such 'hotspots', saturation testing and sending of positive samples quickly for genome sequencing to designated INSACOG labs must be ensured in collaboration with Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). States should keep a close check on the emerging trend of cases and the positivity in an area and quickly delineate hotspots for effective containment of COVID-19," he said. The health secretary said states should aim at achieving positivity rate below 5 per cent while focusing on increasing the number of tests and share of RT-PCR tests to aid in early identification.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹200
Without Skin	₹220
Broiler at Farm	₹108
EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	448
HYDERABAD	444
VISAKHAPATNAM	402
RETAIL PRICE (IN VIZAG)	₹4.48

# Repeal CAA: NDA constituent

Continued from Page 1

Sangma made the demand at the all-party meeting called by the government as well as at a meeting of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Union ministers Pralhad Joshi and Piyush Goyal. "Since the farm laws have been repealed and this was done primarily keeping in mind the sentiments of the people, therefore, I requested the government to repeal the CAA keeping in mind the same sort of sentiments of the people from the Northeast," she told PTI after the NDA meeting here. There was no response from the government but it has taken detail notes of the demands made by the floor leaders of all parties, Sangma said. When asked whether other parties from the Northeast which are part of NDA also share the same sentiments, she said, "I made this demand on behalf of my party and people from the Northeast. I know a few others who also share the same view."

The CAA, which facilitates granting of Indian citizenship to persecuted non-Muslim minorities of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, was passed by Parliament in 2019 and had led to protests in different parts of the country. The President had given his assent to the legislation on December 12, 2019. The objective of the CAA is to grant Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities -- Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian -- from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. People from these communities who had come to India till December 31, 2014 due to religious persecution in these countries will not be treated as illegal immigrants but be given Indian citizenship. After the CAA was passed by Parliament, widespread protests were witnessed in the country. Those opposing the CAA contend that it discriminates on the basis of religion and violates the Constitution. They also allege that the CAA along with the National Register of Citizens is intended to target the Muslim community in India.

# Provide subsidy for diabetic care: CJI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana on Sunday said it is essential that the State provides support and subsidy for diabetic care as the human cost is "immense" and it is an "expensive disease". Terming diabetes a lifelong disease and an enemy of the poor, the CJI said it is imperative to conduct India-specific studies targeting the local population, which will help develop appropriate treatment protocols. He said the government needs to train and introduce more healthcare professionals to deal with the disease. Speaking at the "Ahuja Bajaj Symposium on Diabetes", CJI



Ramana said COVID-19 has already exposed the fragility of our "overburdened healthcare system" and the need of the hour is to innovate and develop modern drugs to find a cure for diabetes. "The human cost is immense. The economic cost to the nation is immeasurable.

Therefore, it is essential that the State provides support and subsidy for diabetic care. The government also needs to train and introduce more healthcare professionals to deal with this problem," he said. The CJI said the medical profession is widely regarded as the most noble one and "Vaidyo Narayano Hari" (a doctor should be considered as a form of Lord Narayana) is the most apt way to describe doctors and medical professionals. "The health of the nation and its citizens is paramount and naturally, is a precondition to achieving the developmental aspirations we have set for ourselves," he said. The CJI said he was elated

when Indian scientists and researchers came up with a COVID-19 vaccine within a few months of the outbreak of the pandemic. However, "we are nowhere near finding a permanent cure for diabetes, which is an ancient disease", CJI Ramana said. "My only wish is that a cure is found. For this, scientists and researchers have to pay full attention. The pivotal role played by doctors in spreading awareness about the disease and its control is praiseworthy," he added. The CJI said insulin and the associated healthcare products for diabetes are highly unaffordable for the vast majority of the population and in this

context, free walk-in tests assume great significance. "This disease is an enemy of the poor man. It is an expensive disease, which is a recurring financial burden for the lifetime of the patient," he said. Stressing the need for India-specific studies on diabetes, the CJI said though abundant literature is available on this issue, unfortunately, most of it is based on western studies. He said according to studies by the World Health Organization (WHO), of the total expenditure incurred in connection with diabetes, nearly 65 per cent is on treatment and medicines, while the remaining 35 per cent is the social cost as per global estimates.

# Phule fought for rights of downtrodden, tweets Jagan...

Continued from Page 1

Meanwhile, YSRCP paid floral tributes to Jyotirao Phule on his death anniversary at the party's central office in Tadepalli. Speaking on the occasion, MLC Dokka Manikya Vara Prasad said Phule believed that everyone is free and equal and Dr. B R Ambedkar also considered Phule as his mentor. He said it was Phule who had suggested to the Hunter Commission to introduce English as a medium of instruction in government schools and Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy is following in his footsteps.

MLA Jogi Ramesh said Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy was striving to fulfil the ideals of Jyotirao Phule and added that he had given utmost importance to the uplift of BCs. Though there are many other BC Chief Ministers in the country, it was only YS Jaganmohan Reddy who had adopted a resolution in the Assembly for caste-wise census of the Socially and Educationally Backward Classes. MLAs Jogi Ramesh, Kaila Anil Kumar, MLCs Lella Appi Reddy, Dokka Manikya Vara Prasad and other leaders were present on the occasion.

# 84% women in Telugu States back men beating their wives

## Women cite 'disrespect to in-laws' as the main reason to justify beating

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Nearly 84 per cent women from both the Telugu-speaking states -Telangana and Andhra Pradesh -justify men beating their wives under certain circumstances, while lesser percentage of men rationalised such behaviour, according to the recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS). Karnataka (77 per cent), Manipur (66 per cent), Kerala (52 per cent), Jammu and Kashmir (49 per cent), Maharashtra (44 per cent) and West Bengal (42 per cent) were the other states and Union Territory where a large number of women justified men beating their wives. To a question by the NFHS, "In your opinion, is a husband justified in hitting or beating his wife...?", over 30 per cent women from as many as 14 states and Union Territories said, "yes". The survey put forward the probable circumstances under which a husband beats his wife: if he suspects her of being unfaithful; if she disrespects in-laws; if she argues with him; if she refuses to have



sex with him; if she goes out without informing him; if she neglects the house or the children; if she doesn't cook good food. The most common reasons given by the respondents to justify beating were neglecting the house or children and showing disrespect to in-laws. Of the 18 states, women respondents in 13 States - Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Gujarat, Nagaland, Goa, Bihar, Karnataka,

Assam, Maharashtra, Nagaland and West Bengal - cited 'disrespect to in-laws' as the main reason to justify beating. In Telangana, where as much as 84 per cent women justified beating by their husbands, the government runs various schemes, some with the support of the central government, for protection and empowerment of women. The schemes include Sakhi - One Stop Centre, Women Helpline - 181, Swadhar Greh

and Ujjwala Homes, Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) and Mahila Shakti Kendras, official sources said. The lowest population of women that justified beating by husbands was in Himachal Pradesh (14.8 per cent). Among men, 81.9 per cent respondents from Karnataka said such behaviour is justified as against 14.2 per cent in Himachal Pradesh. Ushasree, director of 'Roshni', a Hyderabad-based NGO which provides counselling and other services to those in emotional distress, said her organisation has seen a rise in sexual abuse and domestic violence during Covid. "Some men appear to vent their frustration, caused by loss of income and other reasons due to the pandemic, on their family members," she said. "There is an increase in the number of calls we received because friction has grown among family members as they stay confined within four walls round-the-clock due to the pandemic," she said. Though the number of calls is on the decline of late, women are generally facing domestic

violence, she said. Roshni is a member of Befrienders Worldwide, an international organisation. It has two helpline numbers, 040-6620 2001 and 040-6620 2000, she said. Amita Pitre, lead specialist, Gender Justice: Oxfam India, said the organisation's work in five states shows that harmful gender social norms help justify violence against women. "They are the tools of patriarchy and women are as much a part of the patriarchal society as men. In fact, women are trained in society to be strict guardians of these norms, especially for daughters and daughters-in-laws, and that is one of the most common ways they are perpetuated," Pitre said. "All the reasons cited to justify violence on women are a product of these norms: if she neglects the house or children, if she refuses to have sex with the husband, if she doesn't cook food properly... all these define how women should behave in society. It is as important that women move away from such thinking as men if gender-based violence against women has to stop," she said.

## All eyes on...

Continued from Page 1

As the petitions are likely to become infructuous once the twin legislations are repealed, the Advocate General told the High Court there is no need for further hearing on the matter. Initially, the Advocate General on Monday morning informed the High Court he would submit the details of the latest Repeal Bills in the afternoon. However, he had sought some more time. Responding to the Advocate General, the High Court bench had ordered to file a detailed affidavit instead of a memo. The State government, after the Repeal Bills were passed in the State legislature, filed an affidavit and the petitions will come up for hearing before the High Court bench on Monday.

## Sameer gets 6-month extension...

Continued from Page 1

Sameer Sharma is an academician and scholar and has authored many books like Smart Cities Unbundled, A Textbook on Urban Planning and Geography, and Hourglass Management Paradigm. An expert in urban development affairs, Sharma had earlier served as Director of National Smart Cities Mission. He was the only IAS officer to have served as the Commissioner of three major municipal corporations of Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada and Greater Hyderabad in the erstwhile united AP and contributed to their financial turnaround.

# Karnataka police crack Andhra woman's murder

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The murder case of an elderly woman from Andhra Pradesh who went missing from Bengaluru in March this year has been solved and two persons arrested in this connection, police said on Sunday. According to police, Seeta K.A. from Mantralayam village of Kurnool district went missing from the Rajajinagar area of Bengaluru on March 26. Police have now found that she was kidnapped, murdered, and her body was thrown into a canal near Hospet in Vijayanagara district. The cause was said to be a property grab. Seeta had come to her sister's house four months ago. She never returned after going out for some work. The Subramanyanagar police of Bengaluru couldn't trace her even after searching in



Bengaluru and Mantralayam. Meanwhile, Venkatesh Achar, the missing lady's younger brother was kidnapped in Mantralayam, and released only after getting his signatures on stamp papers. The property document read that they are selling their two-acre ancestral property to those persons and they, in turn, are selling it to a third party. After police got the information, the investigation was expedited and based on the clues, they nabbed two

persons who spilled the beans in preliminary investigations. The accused had kidnapped Seeta from Bengaluru on March 26 and took her to Hospet in Vijayanagara. They forcibly took her signatures on property documents, made her swallow a cyanide capsule, and dumped her body into the canal. The police have launched the hunt for other accused persons, and will also launch a search operation to track the body.

# Winter session of Parl from ...

Continued from Page 1

Talking to reporters, Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge said leaders wanted to ask more from the prime minister about the farm laws as there were some apprehensions that these legislations might again come in some other form. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said there is no tradition of the prime minister attending the all-party meet. Some opposition leaders raised the issue of extended

jurisdiction of the BSF in some states, including West Bengal. TMC leaders Sudip Bandopadhyay and Derek O'Brien raised the issue of bringing laws on MSP and disinvestment of profitable public sector units. AAP leader Sanjay Singh, however, walked out of the meet, claiming he was not allowed to speak and raise issues related to farmers, especially on MSP. Several parties demanded that the women's reservation bill be taken up in the session,

sources said. The ruling BJP and main opposition party Congress have issued whips to their MPs to be present in higher attendance during the session. The Congress has convened a meeting of various opposition parties on Monday which is likely to be skipped by TMC and NCP leader Sharad Pawar. According to Kharge, while TMC MPs would be busy at a party event in Kolkata, Pawar has to attend a marriage. The BJP in its parliamentary

party meeting on Sunday stressed on higher attendance of its MPs and asked them come prepared to take on the opposition. Even in the NDA meeting, also held on Sunday, allies called for better coordination among partners of the ruling alliance, while few allies also thanked the government for its decision to repeal the farm laws. Prime Minister Modi who usually attends these BJP and NDA meets, was not present in any of them.



# State govt employees to intensify stir from Dec 7

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Leaders of the Andhra Pradesh State employee associations on Sunday announced their action plan to intensify their protest against the State government demanding immediate implementation of the Pay Revision Commission (PRC) recommendations.

AP JAC Chairman Bandi Srinivasa Rao, AP JAC Amaravati Chairman Bopparaju Venkateswarlu and other leaders representing nearly 100 State government associations attended the meeting organised at the APNGOs State office at Gandhi Nagar here on Sunday evening.

The leaders announced a Statewide agitation programme from December 7. The JAC leaders decided to serve notice on demands and agitation to the Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma on December 1.

Addressing the media persons, AP JAC Chairman Srinivasa Rao and chairman of the AP JAC, Amaravati, Venkateswarlu, said the government would be held responsible for the agitation launched by the State government employees and pensioners. They alleged that the State government is neglecting their just demands for a long time now and that



they have no other option but to launch an agitation.

As per the agitation plan, the employees will attend duty wearing black badges from December 7 to 10. They will stage lunch-hour demonstrations at the government offices on December 10 and stage protests in all mandal and revenue divisions on December 13. The employees will stage protests at taluka, division and APSRTC head offices on December 16. Later, the employees will stage protests at district headquarters from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on December 21.

The JAC leaders decided to organise division-level conferences in four cities in the State. As part of it, the first conference will be held at Visakhapatnam at 4 pm on December 27. The conferences will be held at 4 pm at Tirupati on December 30, at Eluru on January 3, 2022 and at Ongole on January 6.

They said more than 90 employees associations are extending their support to the agitation and assured them of joining the agitation to put pressure on the government to concede their demands. They

said they were astonished at the response of the heads of various government departments on conceding the demands of the employees. They said the employees were questioning them for not starting the agitation against the attitude of the government on conceding to their demands.

Earlier on Sunday, the JAC leaders submitted many representations to the government officials for the past few months. But there is no response from the government on conceding their demands.



## Phule a great social reformer: Collector Nivas

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Floral tributes were paid to Mahatma Jyotiba Phule portrait on the 131st death anniversary by Krishna District Collector J Nivas at the Collector's Camp Office here on Sunday.

On the occasion, Collector Nivas said that Mahatma Jyotiba Phule was a great social reformer who had made a special contribution to the upliftment and education of the weaker sections of the society. Phule was a great philosopher and educator who fought for the advancement of women for social justice. Poole has been instrumental in eradicating economic inequalities in society, as well as in the pursuit of higher education for all, including women, the Collector said.

Joint Collector Dr. K Madhavilatha, BC Welfare department deputy director Ch Lakshmi Durga and others were present.

# TDP demands MSP for agricultural produce

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP MP from Guntur Galla Jayadev has made a public appearance after a long gap. Galla Jayadev, along with Kanakamedala Ravindra, showed up at the all-party meeting demanding that the Central government announce a minimum support price (MSP) for farm produce.

Galla Jayadev and Kanakamedala from TDP attended the all-party meeting in Delhi on Sunday.

The TDP MPs demanded the Central government not privatise the Visakha Steel and other companies. They also wanted the Centre to clear the uncertainty on AP capital and ensure that Amaravati is the only capital for Andhra Pradesh.

The TDP MPs alleged that without visiting the flood-hit places in the State, Chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy was washing off his hands by writing a letter to the Central government. The duo further said that Andhra Pradesh should be made financially vibrant and the details would be discussed during talks, they said in the meeting.

The other issues discussed at the all-party meeting were about the new Covid variant, the Omicron.

## Naidu for adequate relief to rain-hit people

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Leader of the Opposition N Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday urged the Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh to provide a 'comprehensive relief package' so as to restore normal livelihoods of recent cyclone-affected people in the Kadapa, Chittoor, Nellore and Anantapur districts. Immediate and adequate relief should be provided in view of the huge loss of life and livelihoods amid severe blows to agriculture, poultry, livestock and other sectors. In a letter sent to the Chief Secretary here, the TDP chief urged the CS for ensuring a per hectare price of Rs. 30,000 for paddy, Rs 50,000 for banana, Rs 25,000 sugarcane, Rs 30,000 for cotton, Rs 25,000 for groundnut, Rs 15,000 for jowar, Rs 20,000 for maize, Rs 20,000 for sunflower, Rs 50,000 for cashew, Rs 3,000 per plant for coconut plant, Rs 40,000 for mango and Rs 2,500 per palmyra palm tree. Naidu urged the Government to provide compensation of Rs 50,000 per hectare for aquaculture, Rs 2 lakh for partially damaged boats, Rs 8 lakh for completely damaged boats, Rs 20,000 for fishing nets, 75 percent subsidy for buying fishing nets and Rs 5 lakh subsidy for buying new boats.

25,000 while Rs. 10,000 shall be provided as compensation where rain or flood water has entered the houses. Farmers and agriculture labour have been the worst affected. The Government should not only buy the damaged agricultural produce, but it is equally important to provide compensation for the partially or completely damaged crops. The TDP chief urged the CS for ensuring a per hectare price of Rs. 30,000 for paddy, Rs 50,000 for banana, Rs 25,000 sugarcane, Rs 30,000 for cotton, Rs 25,000 for groundnut, Rs 15,000 for jowar, Rs 20,000 for maize, Rs 20,000 for sunflower, Rs 50,000 for cashew, Rs 3,000 per plant for coconut plant, Rs 40,000 for mango and Rs 2,500 per palmyra palm tree. Naidu urged the Government to provide compensation of Rs 50,000 per hectare for aquaculture, Rs 2 lakh for partially damaged boats, Rs 8 lakh for completely damaged boats, Rs 20,000 for fishing nets, 75 percent subsidy for buying fishing nets and Rs 5 lakh subsidy for buying new boats.

# Energy awards in December

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

With an objective to drive massive awareness about the importance of energy conservation and energy efficiency, the Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Mission (APSECM- energy department), for the second consecutive time, will announce Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Awards - 2021 on the occasion of National Energy Conservation Week in December 2021.

The awards will help to encourage and recognise the endeavors of the industry, institutions and buildings sectors in reducing energy consumption and showcase AP's achievements in energy efficiency and energy conservation.

Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) Director-General Abhay Bakre has communi-

cated to State Energy Secretary, Srikanth Nagulapalli that apart from other states, BEE, has decided to provide sizeable financial support to Andhra Pradesh also for National Energy Conservation Week activities including AP State Energy Conservation Awards.

The Energy Secretary thanked BEE for its continuous support to APSECM for scaling up energy conservation and energy efficiency programs and other innovative programs in various sectors of the State.

In view of this, the state government has decided to take forward the energy efficiency movement in a mission mode in the State for which it had decided to recognize and encourage the stakeholders, who are actively implementing energy efficiency mea-

sures, by facilitating AP State Energy Conservation Awards. As part of this, State Level Energy Awards competition for the second consecutive time would be held in December.

The competition is being conducted this year among different categories of consumers in industries, buildings and Institutions. Textile, cement and Micro small and medium enterprises under Industries category, municipalities/ urban local bodies under institutions category, commercial buildings like hotels, hospitals, shopping malls, plazas, universities and engineering colleges (both government & private) under buildings category, which have implemented energy conservation and efficiency measures, are covered in the awards competition.

# Cordon & search operation conducted

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As per the instructions of Vijayawada Police Commissioner B Srinivasulu, cordon and search operation was carried out at the Chenchula Colony within Gannavaram police station limits, Railway station area within Satyanarayanapuram police station limits, Annadana Samajam Road within Suryaraopet police station limits and Indiranagar within Penamaluru police station limits.

As part of the operation, every house was thoroughly searched and details of culprits as also of lonely elderly women were collected. The police were closely monitoring the movement of people engaged in anti-social activities.

During the cordon and search operation, the police



checked 549 houses, 1,491 persons, and an iris scan was done for 223 suspects and found that three were rowdy sheeters, eight persons were law & order suspects and six were crime suspects.

In all, 581 motorcycles were checked and it was found that 20 motorcycles that did not have valid documents were seized and challans were issued to 30 motorcycle riders.



## Car plunges into Hussain Sagar, 3 persons injured

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The driver of a new car lost control and the car fell into Hussain Sagar at NTR Marg, injuring three occupants in the car, early on Sunday. Police suspect that the mishap was caused due to over speeding.

The injured persons Nitin, Sprutrik and Karthik had a ride in a new car in the morning. They were going to have breakfast at Afzal Gunj and while passing by Necklace Road at NTR Marg, the car went out of control and fell into Hussainsagar.

As the water level was low near the banks of Hussain Sagar a big tragedy was avoided. All the three passengers in the car were injured.

## Prepare with interest to crack UPSC exams: Official

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Income Tax Assistant Commissioner T Saveesh Varma has said that one should prepare with utmost interest to crack UPSC exams. The officer was the chief guest at the cultural fest and interaction programme organised by Sarat Chandra IAS Academy here on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that to serve the people of the nation through civil services gives immense pleasure. "By clearing UPSC one can serve the people for a better society. Many UPSC aspirants feel that getting through UPSC is an uphill task, but with dedication and interest, one can clear the exams. Many candidates from the Telugu medium have cleared the UPSC and are serving the nation as officers," he said.

# Quiz, debating contests cap Constitution Day valedictory

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

An enriching experience of learning and knowledge sharing with the quiz and debating competitions heralded the valedictory function of 72 Constitution Day at Waltair Park Auditorium HPCL on Sunday. The quiz competitions were conducted among prominent law colleges and the competitors fought in the four tough rounds, followed by debating competitions which again witnessed an intense debate.

Y Satyanarayana, Vice-Chancellor of Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Ravindranath, President of the Bar Association and Ramakrishna, Legal Advisor to Police and CID, graced the occasion.

Principal Sessions Judge Hari Harnadha Sarma,



addressing on the occasion, through virtual mode underscored 'Justice for All' and the need to be aware of the law of the land and further went on to emphasise upon 'ignorance of the law is not an excuse'. He lauded the initiative of HPCL-Visakh Refinery in reaching out to the student fraternity of law colleges and promoting the ideals of the Constitution in letter and spirit.

Executive Director, HPCL-Visakh Refinery V. Ratan Raj has mentioned the immense contribution made by the members of the Indian Constitution under the chairmanship of Dr. B R Ambedkar. The constitution is the foundation of Indian democracy and the ideals enshrined in our Constitution would guide the country and make it more vibrant.

## Simhachalam land row will be settled by Sankranti: MLA

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Expressing his strong confidence that the long-pending issue of Sri Varahalakshmi Nrusimha Swamy lands dispute will be settled by the Sankranti, Pundurty YSR Congress Party MLA A Adeepraj has said that as per the pre-election assurance, the Chief Minister has directed to find out an amicable solution to the issue. The high-power committee, which met on November 25, has finalised an action plan and submitted it to the government and as well as the court. The Committee has decided to settle the issue in four stages, the MLA said. The committee has recommended that the land below 100 yards will be regularised free of cost and in 100 to 300 yards land proposed to be regularised by levying 70 percent on the government price of 1998 tag list.

# 734 paddy procurement centres in Krishna district: Kodali Nani

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Civil Supplies Minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao (Nani) has said that the paddy crop will be purchased at 734 centres in the Krishna district. The minister added that the farmers could sell their paddy through Rythu Bharosa Kendras for the minimum support price. The minister released a poster pertaining to the purchase of Kharif season crop at the collector's camp office in Vijayawada in the presence of District Collector J Nivas and Joint Collector Dr K Madhavilatha on Saturday.

On the occasion, the minister said that all the farmers shall sell their crop at the minimum support price by registering through e-crop by giving the details at the RBK centres. If the farmers find any problem in selling their crop,



they can file a complaint with the control room set up at all civil supplies offices and all district centres. The toll-free numbers are 1902 and 155251.

The minister said that A-grade quality paddy was purchased at Rs 1,960 for 100 kg and at Rs 1,470 for 75 kg, while normal quality paddy was bought at Rs 1,940 for 100 kg and at Rs 1,455 for 75 kg. "The farmers should ensure that the moisture in the paddy is not

more than 17 per cent and the amount will be deposited within 21 days," said the minister. All the district joint collectors in the state shall monitor the purchase of crops from the farmers. In the Krishna district, the control room number is 1800-425-4402.

Civil Supplies Department District Manager K Rajyalakshmi, Accounts Officer Srujana and others were present.

# Diet and exercise vital for treatment of diabetes

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Efforts have been initiated to raise awareness on the impact that diabetes can have on a family and the support network of those affected. The initiative promotes the role of a family in the management, care, prevention and education related to diabetes. This global awareness campaign focuses on various aspects of diabetes mellitus.

Diabetes, today, is a serious epidemic and lifestyle disease, affecting millions around the world, and India is known as the Diabetes Capital of the World.

The symptoms of diabetes are excessive thirst, excessive hunger, excessive urination

(especially at night), extreme weakness and tiredness, burning sensation in the feet and hands, and unexplained weight loss. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should consult a doctor immediately to check for diabetes.

On a broader note, there are two types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. (There are other types of diabetes too, such as gestational diabetes and diabetes due to endocrine causes, drugs, etc.) Type 1 diabetes is mainly seen in children and teens, and it occurs due to autoimmune causes. Type 2 diabetes is commonly seen in people above 40 years of age. However, in an alarming trend, diabetes is now seen in people of much younger age too. Type



2 diabetes arises due to genetic causes where one or both of your parents might be having diabetes or it could be due to your sedentary lifestyles, extreme stress in day-to-day life, obesity and dietary habits.

When you get the first suspicion of diabetes, get it confirmed or negated by checking fasting sugar, two hours post-meal sugar level, and a test called the HBA1C, which provides the three-month average sugar levels.

We also need to check our cholesterol levels, conduct a kidney function test, and ascertain the cardiac status every six months. Most diabetics suffer from hypertension and high cholesterol levels. Eye check-up every six months is also suggested in diabetics. The cornerstone of diabetes treatment is lifestyle modification and diet.

"Usage of medicines is advisable only after considering the above two factors. First and foremost is to do exercise (not

heavy workouts, though) like 'brisk walking' or 'cycling'. Doing these for 30 to 45 minutes a day is sufficient. Timely drug intake and following your doctor's instructions regarding the frequency and timing of diabetic drug intake daily are very important. Some drugs need to be taken before food and some after food. If you are on insulin, make sure you're taking it correctly, storing it correctly (preferably in a refrigerator) and never take your insulin shot at the same site on your body every day. Good exercise and a healthy diet help maintain an ideal weight," says Dr. Vardhan Nannapaneni, Senior General Physician, Kamineni Hospitals, Vijayawada.

## DIET

The basic rule is a zero sugar diet. Rice (preferably brown rice) or a wheat-based diet in normal quantities is absolutely fine. Prefer green vegetables and one or two servings of fruits in a day is good. Fish or chicken is preferable than meat for diabetics. Fiber-rich diet (like beans, apples, pears and green leafy vegetables) is preferable. This helps in reducing your post-meal sugar excursions.

"Let us control diabetes, do not let diabetes control us. If you don't pay attention to today's fitness, you will have to pay for tomorrow's sickness," Dr. Vardhan adds.

## Grandeur marks farewell to ENC chief

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Eastern Naval Command (ENC) bid farewell to Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh at a ceremonial parade held at the Naval Base on Sunday.

The Vice-Admiral inspected the ceremonial guard and reviewed platoons of naval personnel drawn from various ships and establishments of the ENC. The ceremony was con-

ducted by Vice-Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta, Chief of Staff of ENC and attended by all flag officers and commanding officers of ships, submarines and establishments. Later, AB Singh was accorded a farewell by the flag officers and commanding Officers in a traditional ceremonial pulling-out ceremony. Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, moves to Mumbai to assume charge as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command.







# Rich tributes paid to Phule

PNS ■ ELURU/GUNTUR

Rich tributes were paid to social reformer Jyotirao Phule on his 131st death anniversary on Sunday, at various programmes organised in Eluru and Guntur.

In Eluru, District Collector Kartikeya Mishra garlanded the portrait of Jyotirao Phule. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that recognising the importance of women's education, Phule established a school especially for women in August 1848.

"He also encouraged his wife Savitri to pursue education. He opposed child marriages and created awareness among people on various issues. He established the organisation Satya Sodhak Samaj through which he encouraged widow and inter-caste marriages," Mishra said. Joint Collector Padmavathi, DRO David Raju, BC Welfare Officer R V Nagarani, ZP CEO Hari Haranth and BC Corporation ED Pushpalatha were among those who were present.

In Guntur, MP Mopidevi Venkata Ramana paid tributes to Jyotirao Phule by garlanding his statue at the municipal corporation guest house here on Sunday. MLA Mohammad Mustafa, Deputy Mayor Bala Vajragiri Babu, ZP chairperson Henry Christina, State BC Welfare Association president K Shankar Rao and corporators were present.

Speaking on the occasion, the MP said that Jyotirao Phule and B R Ambedkar had striven for the formation of mod-



Deputy Chief Minister Kali Krishna Srinivas paying tributes to Jyotirao Phule in Eluru

ern society and to eradicate social disparity. "Drawing inspiration from them, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is providing education to all. People fondly call Jagan Mohan Reddy as Jyotirao Phule of today's society," he said.

The MP said that the AP Assembly passed a resolution seeking a BC census and the

issue would be raised in the winter session of Parliament by the YSRCP MPs. The government is providing the fruits of welfare schemes to all eligible people.

Meanwhile, MLC Lella Appireddy also paid tributes to Jyotirao Phule. He said that Phule was the first social reformer. The MLC garlanded the statue of Phule on the

premises of the YSRCP state office at Tadepalli. MLC Dokka Manikya Varaprasad, MLAs Jogi Ramesh and K Anil Kumar, Navaratnalu Executive Chairman Narayanamurthy and other leaders were present.

Meanwhile, in Eluru, Deputy Chief Minister Kalikrishna Srinivas paid tributes to Jyotirao Phule on his 131st death anniversary here on Sunday in his camp office.

He garlanded the portrait of Phule and paid tributes. Speaking on the occasion, he recalled that Phule fought against the oppression of a section of people in the name of caste. He had striven for the social equality and uplift of underprivileged sections.

In Ongole, Prakasam District Collector Pravin Kumar, SP Malika Garg and Mayor G Sujata were among those who paid tributes to Jyotirao Phule.

## Diversion of panchayat funds unconstitutional, says Kanna

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

BJP national executive member Kanna Lakshminarayana has taken strong exception to the AP government's diverting village panchayat funds, granted by the 15 FC, and demanded to release the funds to the panchayats immediately.

In a letter to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy here on Sunday, he said that diverting Rs 965 crore funds of the 15 Finance Commission, released to the sarpanches, is unconstitutional.

The government also diverted Rs 344 crore of 14th FC funds, released to panchayats. All these diversions are not only unconstitutional but also disrespectful to the sacred mission of Gandhiji's Gram Swarajya.

These acts of siphoning of their funds are throwing the democratically elected sarpanches into chaos. They are very much agitated about taking care of the basic needs of people in their villages.

"I request you to immediately release all the funds to the gram panchayats", Mr.Kanna Lakshminarayana urged the Chief Minister.



# YSRCP govt put AP into financial doldrums: Manohar

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Jana Sena Party (JSP) political affairs committee chairman Nadendra Manohar has alleged that the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy headed government has put AP in doldrums and the State is going towards bankruptcy. The people will teach a lesson to the government, he said.

Addressing party activists in Jagampeta in East Godavari district on Sunday he flayed that AP had lacked efficient administration. Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy had become work from home Chief Minister as he was not evincing any interest to know the ground realities by visiting the places.

"The Jagan Reddy-headed government has failed in achieving minimum development. It is borrowing huge money from various institutions to implement unworthy welfare schemes", he flayed.

The Janasena leader alleged that repairs had not been taken up to the damaged roads, and new industries had not been established. The generation of employment had come to a halt. The interests of farmers were being ignored. The working style of the Chief Minister surprises all, he lambasted.

"The Chief Minister native district, YSR Kadapa district suffered huge loss due to floods but he has released a meagre Rs 2 crore, which reflects his indifference. The flood victims are being extended support by the locals and some voluntary



organisations as the government failed to extend any help to them", he deplored.

Mr.Manohar said that Janasena chief Pawan Kalyan had given two years of time to Jagan Mohan Reddy to understand the administration and provide good governance. Even after two and half years, Jagan Reddy failed to provide good governance. The sand crisis deprived the livelihood of lakhs of construction workers. The government had brought

five sand policies but even now the common men are unable to get sand easily at an affordable price.

He said that the Janasena is gaining the confidence and goodwill of people. The local polls results proved it, he said and exhorted the activists to reach out to people to strengthen the party. District president Kandula Durgesh and other leaders were present.

Manohar earlier consoled the bereaved family of Janasena activist Kondapalli Venkateswarulu and handed over a cheque of Rs 5 lakh. He also handed over Rs 5 lakh cheque to the bereaved family Mummidi Ramesh at Panduru who died in an accident recently.

Later, Manohar participated in repairing the damaged road at Achampet junction. Later he planted saplings. He also distributed sewing machines to women sponsored by the Janasena-Tadekam foundation jointly.

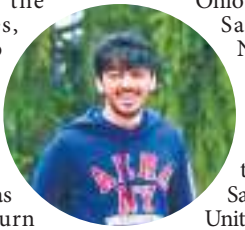
## Telangana man dies in accident in the US

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A youngster hailing from Suryapet died and another woman injured critically in a car accident that took place in Ohio state of the United States, according to reports reaching here on Sunday.

The victim identified as 22-year-old Narendr-chiru Sai was planning to return home on December 15 and had gone shopping to get gifts for his family members.

He went shopping to purchase gifts and was driving home in a car driven by him.



He had also booked his tickets to India on December 15.

His car, it was reported, skidded and collided head on with an oncoming truck. Sai is pursuing his masters degree in the

Ohio State University. Sai is son of Narendr-chiru Lingamurthy and Sudha Rani, residents of Nallabavi locality in Suryapet town. Sai had gong to the United States a year ago for his higher studies. A woman, also belonging to Nalgonda district was travelling with Sai in the car. She was also injured and is being treated in a hospital, reports said.

## Prathipati demands compensation to chilli, cotton farmers

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Former minister and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) senior leader Prathipati Pulla Rao demanded the government to announce Rs 50,000 compensation per hectare for the damaged chilli and cotton crops in the flood and rain-affected areas.

The TDP leader, along with other leaders, visited some of the rain-affected fields in Nadendla and Yadlapadu mandals on Sunday. He saw the withered cotton and chilli crops and knew the problems of farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, Prathipati Pulla Rao demanded that Rs 50,000 compensation should be disbursed per hectare for the damaged chilli and cotton crops to the farm-

ers in the rain-affected areas. He said that the farmers in the Rayalaseema district had lost their crops completely due to the heavy floods and the farmers in other districts were losing the crop due to various pests. The incessant rains caused the pests to spread all over the fields ruining the crop, he said.

"The farmers of chilli have invested up to Rs 1 lakh and the cotton farmers have invested up to Rs 70,000 to raise their crops. The incessant rains caused massive damage to the crops and the government had left the farmers in the lurch", he deplored.

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy was citing lame excuses that if he goes to the flood-affected areas, the relief



operations will be hampered. He confined himself to the Tadepalli palace when the farmers were in a pathetic state with loss of crops, he criticised.

In the wake of the rain forecast, the government machinery should take all precautionary steps to save the crops. The former minister

also demanded the government to take steps to purchase soaked and discoloured paddy from the farmers. The government is asking the farmers not

to raise paddy crops but did not tell them which crops they should sow instead of paddy, he slammed. Due to inept handling of the flood situation, lakhs of people suffered losses and were put in a miserable state, he flayed.

The Chief Minister should visit the flood and rain-ravaged districts, interact with the farmers and flood victims to personally know their problems.

Telugu Rythu State president M Srinivasa Reddy said that due to mishandling of the flood situation by the government, the life of people in the flood and rain-affected areas has become miserable. The Chief Minister should go and rescue the victims and disburse input subsidies to the farmers.

## TMC party in Telangana? Mamata's team contacts Congress leaders

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

All India Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has big plans. Mamata had sent her team to Telangana a month ago to launch her party here as part of her plans to make the TMC a national party.

It is learnt that Mamata's team met former Chevella MP Konda Vishweshwar Reddy, TJS chief Kodandaram and some other Congress leaders and discussed about Mamata's plans to launch her party in Telangana in a big way.

When contacted, Kodandaram told The Pioneer that nobody from the TMC met him. When we tried to contact, Konda Vishweshwar Reddy's

phone was not reachable.

A Telangana Congress leader said that former All India Women's Congress president Sushmitha Dev, former NSUI and Youth Congress president and former Haryana PCC president Ashok Tanvar are trying to contact Congress leaders who are unhappy with the leadership.

It is learnt that Mamata assigned this job to Sushmitha Dev and Ashok Tanvar as they have contacts with Congress leaders across the nation.

It is learnt that Sushmitha Dev and Ashok Tanvar have already launched moves to attract unhappy Congress leaders from across the nation.

It is learnt that Mamata has plans to field candidates in the

next Parliament elections in all states. As part of it, Mamata had been saying that the Congress is not playing the role of an opposition party. It is learnt that both Sushmitha Dev and Ashok Tanvar concentrated on Telangana as well as Karnataka. It may be recalled that Sushmitha Dev joined TMC and Mamata also sent Sushmitha Dev. Ashok Tanvar joined TMC a couple of days ago.

The Trinamool Congress stated on Saturday that it is not interested in coordinating with the Congress during the winter session of Parliament, but maintained that it would cooperate with other opposition parties on issues concerning the people.

## TS Cabinet reshuffle likely in Feb

SNCN ACHARYULU  
■ HYDERABAD

Cabinet hopefuls will have to wait till New Year to know their fate.

The much awaited Telangana Cabinet reshuffle may take place only by New Year, that too in the month of February. The reason is that there are no auspicious days after December 10 till February 3.

It is not possible to take up Cabinet reshuffle until the MLC elections from the local bodies' quota are completed. Of the 12 MLC seats, TRS candidates have been elected unanimously from six seats. For the other six MLC seats polling will be held on December 10 and results will be declared on December 14.

As there are no auspicious days after December 10 Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Rao may take up Cabinet reshuffle only in the New Year. The New Year may bring happy news for some and unhappy news for some others, but that will be known only in February.

The CM strongly believes in astrology. The proposed new Cabinet will be an election Cabinet and there will be no changes till the next Assembly elections as per sources close to the CM. There is pressure from KCR's family to induct KCR's daughter K. Kavitha into the Cabinet. KCR has almost decided to take Banda Prakash into the Cabinet to give representation to the Mudiraj community.

After Eatala Rajendar was

removed from the Cabinet there is no representation for the Mudiraj community in KCR's team. So the CM has made Banda Prakash an MLC who was earlier a Rajya Sabha Member. Prakash has another three years to go.

Panchayat Raj Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao will be sent to the Rajya Sabha in place of Prakash. In the place of Errabelli KCR will take Kavitha as both belong to the Velama community.

KCR does not want to increase the number of Velama community members in the Cabinet. Now there are four Velamas including KCR in the Cabinet.

Meanwhile, the CM wants to maintain the same number for the Reddy community in the Cabinet.

## Heavy rain forecast: Prakasam SP asks people to be alert

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam district Superintendent of Police Malika Garg has asked the people of the district to be alert and directed the police officials to deal with any situation as there is a possibility of heavy rains.

The SP, here on Sunday, asked the police officials to form rescue and relief teams with Special Forces. She directed the police to alert the people in the low-lying areas near rivers, streams, canals and ponds and to undertake rescue measures by spotting relief camps and rehabilitation centres. The SP suggested that people living alongside the coast should be evacuated and moved to safer areas or cyclone shelters as advised by police and Revenue officials.

The SP also directed the police to take precautionary measures in coordination with the Revenue and other departments to periodically assess the water levels in ponds and canals and Rallapadu reservoir. Uprooted trees on the roads will be removed and traffic will be diverted without causing



disruption. The people of flood-prone villages will be alerted and rehabilitated in safer areas.

The SP directed the police officers to patrol near fast-flowing river runoffs and basins, set up barricades at impassable roads, routes, submerged roads and divert vehicles to pass through other routes. Malika Garg cautioned that entering into streams and ponds would be dangerous as they might receive heavy inflows. Fishermen were

advised not to venture into the sea, rivers, streams and ponds in the wake of heavy rains.

The SP told all police officers and staff to remain vigilant and carry out their duties without any loss of life. She informed the public to call 100, contact the police WhatsApp number 9121102266 or the local police officers concerned for immediate assistance in case of emergency.

Meanwhile, District Collector Pravin Kumar said that heavy to very heavy rains accompanied by gales were likely to occur in the district in the next couple of days and asked the official machinery to be prepared for any eventualities. In a statement here on Sunday, he said that the officials should be on high alert and take all precautionary measures. He asked people to contact him in the toll free numbers 1077 and 08592-281400.

The Collector said that three control rooms were set up in three revenue divisions. The phone numbers are: Kandukur - 08598-223235, Ongole RDO office - 8886616044, Markapuram -9110393042.



## Three including a home guard held for extortion

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Ghatkesar Police on Sunday arrested three persons, including a home guard working in the same station, in an extortion case.

The arrested persons were identified as E Balaraju, 35, D Srinu, 36, both drivers from Ghatkesar and B Shiva, 44, a home guard.

According to the police, Balaraju earlier worked as a home guard with the Vanasthalipuram Police from 2010 to 2014, after which he did not report for duty.

On November 25, the driver of a sand-laden lorry was proceeding from Kaleshwaram to Ghatkesar when he crashed into a car on NH 163.

Upon receipt of information, the Ghatkesar Patrol Mobile-1 rushed to the spot and Shiva, who was on duty as the patrol mobile driver, only found the lorry driver along with the

crime vehicle on the spot. Shiva then told the lorry driver to move his lorry from the scene and stop at some distance as no one witnessed the incident. Shiva then asked Balaraju and Srinu to go to the lorry driver and send a message about his details and other particulars. The two then went to the lorry driver, introduced themselves as Ghatkesar Police and took his details and sent them to Shiva. Shiva then told them to take some money from the driver and release him as there was no witness in the accident. Balaraju then took Rs 20,000 from the driver, gave Rs 15,000 to Shiva and kept the rest with him. During the investigation of the accident, police learnt of the trio's extortion and launched a probe into it.

Police apprehended the three persons on Sunday and a report was being sent against Shiva for his removal from service.

## Antiques handed over to Kondaveedu Musuem

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Andhra Pradesh State Madya Vimochana Prachara Committee chairman Vallamreddy Lakshman Reddy handed over cannonballs, a sword and a wooden pot to the Kondaveedu Fort Heritage museum on Sunday.

A resident of Narasaraopet,

Venkata Reddy unearthed the antique sword and wooden pot. A farmer belonging to Puttakota village Palnati Guraviah unearthed two cannonballs. The farmer handed over them to Kondaveedu fort development committee convener Kalli Shiva Reddy.

The three antique articles were handed over to the

Kondaveedu fort heritage museum today to put on display. Speaking on the occasion, Kondaveedu fort development committee convener Shiva Reddy said that the museum was set up at a cost of Rs 9 crore and some more antique articles and relics were to be procured to display in the museum.









## Impending crisis?

The new mutation of Coronavirus signals danger and we are not prepared to tackle it, yet again

In India where normalcy has come to by and large mean rejecting COVID-appropriate behaviour and a consensus that the viral pandemic has left Indian shores, the new South African variant gives a serious wake-up call. There are as many people wearing masks as are consciously not wearing them. The fact that the festive season did not lead to any viral surge even though all safety precautions were ignored has led to a false complacency that the worst is past us. Sadly, that is wrong. The WHO has declared the new variant, named Omicron, is a 'variant of concern'. That is to say, do not take any avoidable risk. Here is what the world knows about Omicron, which is not much. Omicron's prevalence is more than noticeable in South Africa. Botswana, Belgium, Hong Kong and Israel have also reported cases. The variant has landed in Europe too, with the UK reporting two cases. Scientists have no idea if it can lead to a surge, but say that it carries a high re-infection risk. Initial research has shown that the variant is associated with mutations that indicate it can be highly transmissible and increasingly infective. Omicrons' risk potential is being tested in a laboratory setting to check the efficacy of existing vaccines in containing its infection. The important question awaiting an answer is whether Omicron can evade the immune response.

The answer should better come from a scientific laboratory than from a population infected through ignorance or complacency. What does this mean for India which has just announced its phase-wise policy of opening up the skies? Not much if the Government strictly follows the screening of passengers coming in from abroad and decrees automatic quarantine for two weeks without exception. The health ministry has listed the countries reporting the new variant in the high-risk category. The Ministry should now revise its order of allowing resumption of flights to these countries irrespective of bilateral air bubble agreements. India has also to ensure that hesitancy, complacency or logistical problems no longer hamper the vaccination process. Scientists are insisting now, more than ever, that vaccination is critical to protect the aged and those with comorbidities as well as healthy individuals who have fully returned to normal activities. Both groups run a high risk of hospitalisation and death if they are not fully vaccinated. Till Friday, over 120 crore doses were administered of which only a third, 42.62 crore, were second doses. This figure has to pick up and fast. Secondly, the latest studies show that one of the vaccines available in India, the home-made Covaxin, is only 50 per cent effective against symptomatic COVID-19 disease. Many surveys have come out in the past giving different efficacy figures. They range from 81 per cent to 77.8 per cent to 65.2 per cent. There would be scientific explanations for each of the figures no doubt, but that does not help the lay person who may be intimidated by them.



Villagers participate in a rowing competition on the Hooghly river in Nadia

## Tight fight

The need of the hour is to call for reining in our raging urge to heedlessly travel

Amid growing global concerns over the new COVID variant, a lot of heat and dust seems to be gathering intensity over India's political horizon, too. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stressing the need to be proactive in the wake of this scary development, has already directed the Government officials to review the stated plans for easing of international flight restrictions in the light of "emerging new evidence" against Omicron, labelled by the WHO as a "variant of concern", there are others politicians who are also exploiting this opportunity to add to their political muscle, especially ahead of the Assembly elections in five States early next year. While the Prime Minister's directive to the officials came a day after the Ministry of Civil Aviation announced the resumption of scheduled international flights beginning December 15 (after nearly 20 months of the Coronavirus-induced suspension), the Opposition leaders — like Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal — have upped the game by urging Modi to stop the flights coming into India, especially from those countries which are in the grip of the new variant of the Coronavirus infection.

In what can only be termed a political statement, Kejriwal sought to pitch the nation's people against the ruling party at the Centre when he said that India had "recovered" "with immediate effect" from the COVID-19 pandemic "with great difficulty". Of course, it must be underlined that the new variant, feared to have a high potential for another spike in mutations as unseen ever before, was detected in a handful of South African nations. In view of this breakout, a number of countries, including the European Union, have already suspended travel to the affected regions. In this light, there's an understated but expedient and dire need for the nation's people to be more cautious in following COVID-appropriate measures like masking up, maintaining personal hygiene and social distancing, besides ditching vaccine hesitancy and going for the double-dose inoculation. It can't be stressed enough that people, especially the young and frequent travellers, need to understand that this is not the time to be complacent or engage in any false sense of security. We, all of us, must understand that we need to stand united in the face of this looming new threat to the world's health and do everything in our control, and a bit more, to defeat this pernicious virus.

# Jinnah could never fight for Pakistan

Jinnah would not have enjoyed being the head of Pakistan for long. He delighted himself mixing with the elite, whether Parsee, Hindu or Muslim



PRAFULL GORADIA

What Akhilesh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party and Rajbhar Singh of SBS Party said about Mohammed Ali Jinnah being offered the first prime ministership of India to avoid Partition is incorrect. The offer was made by Gandhiji and was not supported by Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel or anyone else in the Congress. Jinnah did not even care to reply. He wanted a place in history's hall of fame which he could do best by finding a new country. According to his brother Ahmed Ali, Jinnah was obsessed with becoming the *numero uno*, nothing less or lower. Ahmed had said this to his friend and my grandfather Dharamdas Vora in 1946.

Holding a post can be a fleeting phenomenon as with any ministership while finding a nation is forever. In any case, the atmosphere amongst Muslims was so charged that they would have accused Jinnah of selling out himself to the Hindus. And certainly not followed him into remaining in India. Also, remember, Jinnah's health was generally known to be on its last legs; although everyone might not be aware of him suffering from tuberculosis. Compare prime ministership for one or two years with being the founder of a nation for eternity. Which one would an intelligent person prefer? I would go to the extent of saying that Jinnah would not have enjoyed being the head of Pakistan for long. He delighted himself mixing with the elite, whether Parsee, Hindu or Muslim. Rubbing shoulders with the common folk was not for him, who wore mostly Savile Row (London) hand tailored suits and English or Swiss shoes. His fancy for these items of attire was so great that he had himself buried in a suit and such shoes and not in pyjamas and a shervani. On his return from England to take over the Muslim League as President for life, he got down to building a magnificent bungalow which is still well known as Marble House on Malabar Hill, Bombay. As Claude Batley, its English archi-



tect told Hector Bolitho, Jinnah's first biographer, "He insisted on choosing the colours of the marble for the terrace, and standing by when the pieces of stone were fitted, much to the annoyance of the Italian stone masons doing the work." Besides the Italian stonemasons, Jinnah also hired a Muslim clerk of works, an English builder and a Hindu plumber."

People including the Muslim League members gossiped that when Jinnah moved in 1940, he was no longer Qaid but Qaid-e-Azam. That was how his admirers were impressed by the talk, if not also the sight, of the Marble House. It was rumoured to be worth ₹20 lakhs in 1941. Sri Prakasa, as Governor of Bombay came away impressed, he said, "I do not wonder that Mr Jinnah's heart even as Governor General of Pakistan, was not in his Government House in Karachi, but in his house in Malabar Hill in Bombay."

Such a person could not fight for Pakistan with his heart in it. Remember, until he returned from London in



ACCORDING TO JINNAH'S BROTHER, THEY WERE CULTURALLY PARSEE AND NOT COMMITTED MUSLIMS. THEY DID NOT PRAY AND DID NOT KNOW HOW TO OFFER NAMAZ. THEY ATE AND DRANK WHAT THEY LIKED

1935, there were no politics in his life. And until 1928, he attended the plenary session at Calcutta and felt insulted; he had been a Congressman. So much so that Sarojini Naidu, the poetess politician had described Jinnah as the best ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. His heart was in his law and its practice. He was reputed to be the highest paid barrister in the British Empire. He had presided over a function in Bombay to welcome Gandhi when he finally returned to India in the year 1915. When Gandhi got up to reply, he began by saying that he was so happy because he was welcomed by a *Mahomedan* leader. Jinnah publicly showed his irritation, if not also his anger, at reference to his religion for no rhyme or reason.

According to his brother Ahmed, they were culturally Parsee and not committed Musalmans. They did not pray and did not know how to offer *namaz*. They ate and drank what they liked. Mohammed Ali loved pork sandwiches and ate them openly. They enjoyed whisky

soda in the evening before dinner. His wife, Ruttie, was a Parsee until she died; his only child married a distinguished Parsee called Neville Wadia.

Campaigning for the 1945/46 general elections, he had stopped to make a speech at Jalandhar. Pran Chopra, who later became Editor of *The Statesman*, was then reporting on the election campaign. In the middle of the speech, reported Chopra, the *azan* (call to prayer) was heard. So the crowd retired for *namaz*. Jinnah remained on the stage, sat down, reached out to his *achkan* pocket and pulled out his cigar and smoked until the crowd returned and later resumed his speech in eloquent English (Jinnah knew only English and Gujarati). How much the Jalandhar crowd understood, no one knows.

(This is part of an ongoing series on Indian Partition.)

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

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### MALNOURISHMENT IS A SAD REALITY

Sir — The percentage of children who are stunted, wasted, underweight, anemic and obese is on a steady rise in India as per the National Family Health Survey released a few days ago. Over the years, India has become home to the largest number of malnourished children. Despite the States with a high burden of malnutrition having Public Distribution System (PDS) in place to ensure that the poor get food grains at subsidised rates, frequent child deaths are reported due to malnutrition. Scientists say the initial 1,000 days of an individual's lifespan, from the day of conception till he or she turns two, is crucial for physical and cognitive development.

According to the Registrar General of India, under-five mortality in India is 59 per 1,000 live births, which is one of the highest in the world. In 2012, the London based non-profit organisation 'Save the Children' reported that 1.83 million Indian children die every year before the age of five and pinned malnutrition as the prime reason for the deaths. These findings indicate that India is dangerously slipping into a vicious cycle of malnutrition and it is high time that we start investing in child welfare schemes.

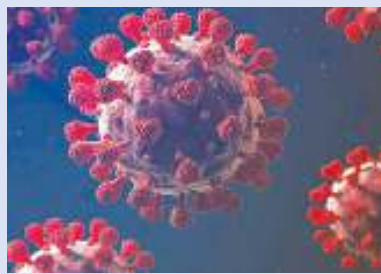
Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

### UNFAIR PLAY AGAINST THE CONGRESS

Sir — There lies no doubt that from Indira Gandhi to Rajiv to Sonia to Rahul — all have attained the Post of Prime Minister or Party President smoothly just because they are/were privileged enough to take birth or wedded to the Nehru family. But at the end of the day, the fact also remains that Indira and Rajiv Gandhi had won elections not by brute force; but by winning the hearts or votes of the Indian electorate through the free and fair democratic process. Be it 2004 or 2009, it is the common people who had voted the Sonia Gandhi-led Congress to power in New Delhi.

Still, if the Gandhis are constantly character-assassinated through the hue of "Family rule" or "Dynasty regime", none other than the free will of the

## New threat knocks on the door



The WHO has named the newly discovered COVID-19 variant after the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet — Omicron — and designated it 'a variant of concern' (VOC). The worldwide concern over the new variant, initially referred to as B.1.1.529, is explicable in terms of the early indications that it could be more transmissible than the previous variants of the virus including the Delta variant that currently dominates global infections and prove to be resistant to the current vaccines.

The biggest worry is that the multiple mutations in Omicron might blunt the vaccines and reduce immunity. Meanwhile, drug makers have already started to test their vaccines against the new variant to see if they can be tweaked. Now that the new variant has been found in several countries, it could inevitably spread worldwide in the next couple of months despite travel restrictions and border controls imposed after the discovery of the ominous Omicron. A virus has the knack for spreading far and wide. Omicron has shaken the global economy as is evident from global markets tumbling; it has given rise to fears of another slowdown in the global economy. As of now, it is an evolving situation; we need to know more about the composition, characteristics and behaviour of the new variant to know if another surge of the pandemic is imminent for the world to contend with and science to combat.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

Indian electorate gets continuously maligned, mocked and abused as Gandhis did not elect themselves, rather people elected them to power. The BJP should also not forget that it is the people who threw out the saffron regime of "India Shining" to bring in the "Family" in 2004. Do the self-declared guardians of the Constitution mean to say that the electorate are all "bunch of fools" and got "brainwashed" to elect the Congress at the Centre or various States?

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

### SUICIDE IS A PREVENTABLE CAUSE OF DEATH

Sir — Suicide is defined as intentionally taking one's own life and comes from the Latin 'suicidium', which literally means "to kill oneself." Now, Suicide is a serious public health problem. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young adults worldwide. There is a growing recognition that prevention strategies need to be tailored to the region-specific demographics of a country and to be implemented in a cultur-

ally-sensitive manner. This review explores the historical, epidemiological and demographic factors of suicide in India and examines the strategies aimed at the prevention of suicide.

A person suffering from the problem of suicidal thoughts starts getting thoughts of destroying his own life, he also starts feeling depression and behavioral changes during this time. Suicidal thoughts are a common problem and most people feel it when they are going through stress or depression. The reasons for suicide are different in different cultures and sections of the society. But we must keep in mind that suicide is the most preventable cause of death. It is preventable. Suicide attempts are often just a call for help and are increasingly being viewed as a psychological emergency. It's our responsibility as humans and as a part of the same society to prevent suicides.

Nripendra Abhishek Nrip | Saran

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

## SOUND BITE

If a Congress Government is formed in Uttar Pradesh, the loan of farmers will be waived.

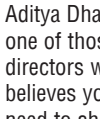


Congress general secretary — Priyanka Gandhi



The new COVID variant has some mutations that are raising concerns with regards to possible evasion of immune response.

NIAID director — Anthony Fauci



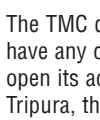
Aditya Dhar is one of those rare directors who believes you don't need to shout on your set to make a point.

Actor — Yami Gautam



Obviously it feels great. The victory is a reward for all the hard work I've put in.

Indian squash player — Saurav Ghosal



The TMC did not have any chance to open its account in Tripura, they only made noises.

BJP national vice-president — Dilip Ghosh



FIRST COLUMN

INNOVATING BUSINESSES FOR THE CUSTOMER

With external influences such as the pandemic, the digital ecosystem has had more takers



SHAAN RIZVI

In one of his interactions, the Founder of US e-commerce company Amazon, Jeff Bezos, said, “I do get asked, and quite frequently ‘What’s going to change in the next 10 years?’ I rarely get asked ... what’s not going to change?” He essentially went on to explain how the very fundamentals of the business largely remain unchanged. It is around these fundamentals that stable business empires are built. So, what’s essentially not going to change is the consumers demanding better quality of products and services which are more easily accessible and at more affordable rates. The consumer wants to be spoilt for choices. These fundamentals have stood the test of time, remaining constant throughout the evolution of human civilization and its economics. The changing models, technologies, and business practices cater to the same fundamentals. Today, most countries in the world have consumer-driven economies. The growth, development, and prosperity of these countries largely depend on public spending. Being one of the largest consumer markets, India too is driven by consumerism. Around 55 per cent of the country’s population form the consuming class, with a spending power of over \$11 per day. As per a McKinsey Global Institute study, it is expect-



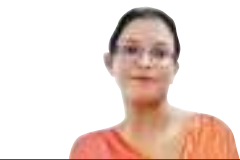
ed that consumption in India will grow by \$1.8 trillion in the next decade. Simultaneously, the consumer share in the two highest income tiers (those consumers who spend more than \$30 to \$70 per day) could double by 20 per cent by 2030. At the other end of each business, it is the customers who matter the most. The idea of customer-centricity is principally rooted in the fundamentals of businesses. With external influences such as the ongoing pandemic crisis, the digital ecosystem has had more takers. The digitalised consumer class is growing, and the increasing penetration of data connectivity and technologies is powering the next generation to consume content digitally and shop online. Unlike other species on the planet, human beings have always vied for the ability to maximize the utilization of time. Functioning in a fast-paced world, the 21st-century consumers want to utilize their time for more productivity in their field of interest or profession, outsourcing various tasks to service providers. For instance, online food ordering has significantly replaced the number of home-cooked meals in a month from our dining table. Consumers increasingly want to cut down on travel time or chores and get services, ranging from home cleaning to retail shopping, at their doorstep. A major part of the banking system has transferred to their phones. Increasingly, tech-start-ups have observed the gap between products or service owners and the customers, which has made business owners foray into the service delivery segment.

Thus, disruptive hyper-local solutions have entered the market. Many emerging start-ups have also bridged the gap by making local sellers available to their nearby customers digitally. Home-grown businesses have a greater potential of efficiently leveraging the advantages of a digital platform to make businesses more profitable and capitalise on a wider consumer base. Going hyper-local provides more resiliency and agility to these businesses. The pandemic is a direct testimony of how businesses operating with hyper-local models made a quicker comeback in the market. It is high time now for all the independent home-grown businesses to foray into the digitalisation of their businesses. Hyper-local apps for home-grown businesses can aid local businesses to serve customers locally. The longstanding relationship with the nearby store owner or seller adds to the strength of local businesses, as it acts as a major motivation for promoting customer loyalty. A digital platform gives local businesses a competitive edge to capture a wider consumer base by receiving both in-store and off-store orders and achieve trust within hyper-local customers for a shorter delivery time.

(The writer is founder and CEO of ITES company, Plaxonic. The views expressed are personal.)

# Why Gwadar protests against the CPEC?

The Pakistan army is now determining the economic and social conditions of the people in Pakistan, which will hurt the geo-political interests of the region



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

Recently, sudden protests erupted in Gwadar against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project. Slated to be an ‘upliftment project’ for the people of Pakistan, it has instead become a hallmark of Chinese expansionism resulting in crushing the rights of those very people who have hosted it. Due to Pakistan’s fragile governance mechanisms, a weak economy marred with corruption; the situation has turned grave. The protestors were supported by the local political groups and NGOs that had genuine interests against the CPEC Project. The Head of the ‘Give rights to Gwadar’ rally, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman, has often been speaking on the rights of the people of Gwadar. Further, the role of the National Party and Baloch Student Organisation also has to be duly recognized in raising their voices against injustice. CPEC goes much beyond the commercial corridor route. It has more penetrative, severe effects on Pakistani society.

First, the CPEC Project has a long belt of ‘coastal enjoyment industry’, which will supposedly have a vibrant nightlife with luxury hotels, spas, theatres, golf courses. Undoubtedly, the coastal land that would be appropriated for this purpose has nothing to do with Pakistan’s small-scale farmers or fishers. Instead, the facilities will ensure ‘entertainment’ for the Chinese and Pakistani retired Army personnel at the cost of the fishing industry, which has a share of 2 per cent in Islamabad’s economy.

The news of the Pakistani government giving licenses to the Chinese fishing trawlers has been around for quite some time now. It is in addition to the Chinese illegal and unregulated fishing in the Arabian Sea even during the critical spawning period. These trawlers possess state of the art technology to fish, process and store fisheries immediately, thereby making the competition with the local fishermen asymmetric in nature. These developments will surely leave behind a trail of unemployment and poverty, resulting in people moving towards drugs and human trafficking.

Second, the CPEC has given immense opportunities to grab huge pieces of fertile agricultural land of the farmers. As the world knows, Pakistan is by and large a praetorian state, i.e., with the Army having the upper hand in most of the government’s decisions. CPEC aimed to cover all parts of food production and distribution in the agricultural sector, ranging from seeds and fertilizer manufacturing to storage and transportation. However, the Project is implemented through land acquisitions under the direct supervision of the Army. These acquisitions have been without proper compensations and sometimes even without the consent of their rightful owners. The usurped land is rented out further with ‘land rights’ to the Chinese enterprises. In other cases, the agricultural projects convert to Chinese private corporations forging joint ventures with



THE CPEC AUTHORITY HAS DECIDED TO CONSTRUCT A FENCED WALL WITH ONLY ONE ENTRY AND EXIT POINT TO ENSURE THAT THE VOICES ARE SUPPRESSED AND GLOBAL MEDIA DOES NOT HIGHLIGHT THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. THE DEVELOPMENT HAS LED TO SOCIAL ALIENATION OF THE PEOPLE OF BALOCHISTAN AND GWADAR AND CAN LEAD TO A FULL-BLOWN CONFLICT AND DEMANDS FOR SECESSION

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The views expressed are personal.)



Pakistani companies. Also, when the Pakistan-based private enterprises own the land, the owner turns out to be retired army personnel or someone who holds influence via the armed forces. It is for this reason that the army land grabs has been time and forth been brought to the notice of the international community by the judiciary of Pakistan itself. In April 2021, the Lahore High Court Chief Justice Mohammad Qasim Khan went on record to say that “the Army seems to have become the biggest land grabber in the country and the uniform of the Army is for service and not to rule as a king”.

The CPEC Authority has decided to construct a fenced wall with only one entry and exit point to ensure that the voices are suppressed and that international media does not highlight the human rights issue. The city would be guarded fiercely with round-the-clock, AI-enabled CCTV cameras and other high technological types of equipment providing ample surveillance. Sources indicate that this wall is 30 kilometres in length and 10 feet high. Further, Pakistan raised its 34th Light Infantry Division, also known as Special Security Division (SSD), to protect the CPEC. One can hardly come across any other such example where a loan Project of “commercial importance” requires raising a military Division. The development has led to the social alienation of the people of Balochistan, Gwadar in particular and will undoubtedly lead to a full-blown violent conflict and demands for secession.

Agricultural and urban residen-

tial and commercial land appropriation by the Army through concessional purchases in the name of supporting the economy has taken deep inroads into its national character. Various Military subsidies, such as the National Logistics Cell and Fauji Foundation, have at a rapid pace nibbled out the civilian competition in various sectors such as cargo transportation, real estate, fertilizers, oil and gas etc. With each sector dominated by the Military, CPEC only seems to augment a military economy and the lust for land grab. Given the times to come, the farmers would have no legal standing over their land, and in the name of securitizing the Project, it is beyond doubt who will be the actual owner. The Army thus has a nation to itself which is shared with the Chinese Army. On the other hand, in China, the penetrative extent of the Project is that it is often called an ‘internal corridor’, and hence, it would not be wrong to say that it is a Military Project instead of an economic one.

Last year, Criminal Law [Amendment] Bill 2020 was passed that proscribed ridiculing, bringing into disrepute or defaming Pakistan’s armed forces or its members. Of course, given the brewing discontents and recent developments, the role of this Bill is well understood. Usually, the Uniform is accorded much respect, and people worldwide express their gratitude towards their respective forces. The emerging role of the Pakistani Army now seems to encapsulate the idea of defending the Taliban and other extremists apart from the Chinese Project. It is now determining the

economic and social conditions of the people in Pakistan, which will hurt the geopolitical interests of the region.

Further, the military government deepened the Baloch alienation with the murder of Akbar Khan Bugti in 2006, who at the time of his death was 79 years old. The killing of Mufti Hidayatullah in 2018, another Baloch leader, also raised the intent of the Military presence in Balochistan. Early this year, a Pakistani army Major General Ayman Bilal, confessed TO China’s role in suppressing the Baloch movement and the Sino-Pak intentions against Iran’s activities in Balochistan. The CPEC and housing societies predominantly being given to the Pakistan Army personnel probably intend to replace Balochs with the Pakistani Punjabis to contain the Baloch independence movement.

So closely related to this land plunder is a geopolitical question. Where does more land come from to settle the new batch of military officers who retire every year? The answer to this question lies in the current Afghan conundrum. In case the Afghan corridor is integrated with CPEC, then where do the Afghan people go? It seems that the Afghan refugee crisis would be a problem of Europe and Russia and not a Sino-Pak one. The appointment of new ISI Chief Lt. Gen Nadeem Anjum, who was previously the awardee of ‘Mohsin e Balochistan’, sets the agenda for Afghan ‘land grabs’ and increased suppression of the Baloch and the Afghan people. More mess, it seems, awaits the region.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

**MANISH TEWARI SHOULD FOCUS ON CHINA INSTEAD OF CRITICISING THE UPA GOVERNMENT OVER ITS HANDLING OF THE 26/11 ATTACK.**  
—CONGRESS LEADER  
**ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY**



**ADHIR DADA, CHINA’S CONTINUED INCURSIONS AND THE RESPONSE OF THE NDA/ BJP GOVERNMENT FORM A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF MY BOOK.**  
—CONGRESS LEADER  
**MANISH TEWARI**

# We must be on guard against ‘third wave’ of radicalisation

Although the ISIS has experienced territorial defeat, it’s been able to confuse the enemy with its continual subterfuges, turning weaknesses into strengths

Radicalisation that is being felt in India of the present can be attributed to the growing persuasion of the Hanbali school in the country by way of the revival of groups such as the Popular Front of India (PFI). Although PFI—whose top leadership are primarily from Kerala—deny the allegation that the organisation has any truck with the Hanbali school (another name for Wahabi and/or Salafi), the fact of the matter is that they have been radicalising Indian Muslims towards the conservative strain of Islam whatever be the denominations.

The Hifazat-e-Islam Bangladesh (HIB) and Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IOB)—Islamist formations that have re-emerged in current times



JAIDEEP SAIKIA

(The writer is a conflict analyst and author of Terror Sans Frontiers: Islamist Militancy in North East India. The views expressed are personal.)

and are becoming increasingly active after the Taliban takeover of Bangladesh—are close associates of PFI. The HIB and IOB are working inside Bangladesh as over-ground activists of al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliated organisations such as Jama’atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT). Bowing to immense pressure from the Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime apparatus of Bangladesh, both JMB and ABT have curtailed their activity for the present, proping up instead its surrogates by way of HIB and IOB. The stratagem is simple. The methodology is to instill a sense of complacency in the establishment that JMB and ABT has disappeared. The



reality is that they have activated “Op Confusion” in Bangladesh as well as rejuvenated Islamism in Bangladesh.

Indeed, the timeline of the Islamist threat is quite simple. The author was able to plot a perceptible timeline during the period of his advanced research in the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. The study unearthed a “progression of wave” in the modus operandi of Islamist action which incidentally would never cease until the end of

time: the “transformative moment in Islam” is going to be never-ending. In fact, the manner in which the United States-led coalition has sought to de-territorialise ISIS from the area that the latter had occupied in order to sustain the neo-caliphate has ascertained that the “war against the infidels” would now not only be a ceaseless one but an accelerated course of action.

The point that is being made is that although ISIS has experienced territorial defeat it has been able to confuse the enemy with its continual subterfuges, turning disadvantages into advantages. A clear-eyed analysis would, therefore, bring to the fore the simplicity with which the Islamists are readying themselves for the next onslaught.

Therefore, whereas there was exhibition of massive violent movement and radicalisation between 1999 and 2005 which the author describes as the “First Wave”, the “Second Wave” began with the “oath of allegiance” or Bay’ah by groups such as JMB and ABT to ISIS in the wake of the formation of the neo-caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The territorial setbacks witnessed persistent “lone-wolf” attacks throughout the world including places such as Orlando and Nice and observers of Islamist action in Bangladesh would recall the “hostage situation” in Dhaka on July 1, 2016 and the machete killings and suicide bombings of the years following the event. The new “call to arms” was to decimate the infidel wherever found as the

hijrah was no longer an undemanding affair. However, relentless action by the Bangladesh security forces against the Islamists have quietened the radicals momentarily and the “battle” has been—temporarily—handed over to the good offices of HIB and IOB who are keeping the movement alive by demanding aspects such as the enactment of “Blasphemy Laws”.

However, with the almost total territorial ouster of ISIS from the areas that it had occupied in Iraq and Syria the strategy is about to witness a sea change. Egged on by al-Qaeda and ISIS which is already inside India, its affiliates (including PFI) would throw open the gates of radicalism and don a form that would be hitherto the most menacing. It

would be a combination of a mass recruitment b) protests against acts, laws and ministrations that a combined grouping of radicals considers un-Islamic—bringing thereby into their fold fence-sitters and moderates among the minority community and c) let loose sophisticated forms of violence that most agencies would not be able to even imagine.

Memories of Shakira, wife of Rashidur Rahman Sumon, a hardcore pro-ISIS, Neo-JMB cadre blowing herself up with her infant in her lap on 26 December 26, 2016 should be sufficient proof about the manner in which an “aping-exercise” would be engendered by Indian counterparts in what the author presages as the dawn of the “Third wave” of Radicalisation.



# Petrol, diesel prices to fall only on sustained drop in prices of intl oil

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel prices will be reduced only if the current drop in international oil prices is sustained for a few more days, as domestic retail prices are fixed on a 15-day rolling average, official sources said.

Global benchmark Brent crude oil prices remained largely range bound at around USD 80 to 82 per barrel, levels during November (till November 25).

On Friday, November 26, prices fell by around USD 4 per barrel till Asian timestamp. However, subsequently after the opening of the US market, with the drastic sell off in Brent Futures, prices fell further by around USD 6 to close at USD 72.91 a barrel at ICE London.

Sources said, this seems like a knee jerk reaction from fears that the new COVID-19 variant discovered in Southern Africa might dampen economic growth and trigger



another demand slump. State-owned fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise petrol and diesel prices on a daily basis. But this revision is based on the average benchmark inter-

national fuel rate in the previous fortnight. So, the price on Sunday is decided by the average in the previous 15-days. "Natural expectation from the drop in rates on Friday is that retail pump rates will also go down. But that is not how retail rates move. Since the international oil prices have

been range bound in most of November, the drop on Friday when averaged out with the previous fortnight does not translate into any significant change.

"Only when the fall in rates is sustained for a few more days will we see a reduction in retail petrol and diesel prices," a source said.

The reason why a 15-day rolling average is taken to fix prices is to insulate domestic consumers from extreme volatility in international prices. If day rates are taken to fix prices, it would result in massive fluctuations in pump prices every day, he explained.

Recently, major oil consumers such as the US, Japan and South Korea as also India had announced releasing crude from their strategic reserves as part of a joint effort to reduce international crude oil prices. Even these announcements could not impact international prices much.

However, renewed COVID-

19 concerns have now brought about the desired objective.

Oil producers cartel, OPEC+ might still have a say in this, with the group's scheduled meeting on December 1-2, potentially resulting in a reduction in production targets for 2022. Thus, international crude oil prices may recover again, if OPEC+ announces slower than expected production rollout coming up, sources said.

Retail prices of petrol and diesel have remained unchanged since November 5, after a decrease in excise duty by Rs 5 per litre and Rs 10 a litre respectively was announced. Decrease in prices consequent to VAT rate revision by 27 States/UTs have provided further relief to consumers.

That excise cut and VAT reduction helped bring down fuel prices from record highs.

Petrol in Delhi currently costs Rs 103.97 a litre and diesel is priced at Rs 86.67 per litre.

## 438 infra projects show cost overrun of Rs 4.34 lakh crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 438 infrastructure projects, each worth Rs 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns totalling more than Rs 4.34 lakh crore, according to a report.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation monitors infrastructure projects worth Rs 150 crore and above. Of the 1,680 such projects, 438 reported cost overruns and 539 were delayed.

"Total original cost of implementation of the 1,680 projects was Rs 21,74,182.86 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 26,08,330.02 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of Rs 4,34,147.16 crore (19.97 per cent of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for October 2021 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till October 2021 is Rs 12,64,545.31 crore, which is 48.48 per cent of the anticipated cost of the projects.



However, the report said that the number of delayed projects decreases to 377 if delay is calculated on the basis of the latest schedule of completion. Further, for 837 projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative gestation period has been reported. Out of the 539 delayed projects, 98 have overall delay in the range of 1-12 months, 109 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 211 for 25-60 months and 121 projects have delays of 61 months and above.

The average time overrun in

these 539 delayed projects is 47.16 months.

Reasons for time overruns as reported by various project implementing agencies include delay in land acquisition, delay in obtaining forest and environment clearances, and lack of infrastructure support and linkages.

Delay in tie-up for project financing, delay in finalisation of detailed engineering, change in scope, delay in tendering, ordering and equipment supply, and law and order problems are among the other reasons.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Mcap of 9 of top-10 valued firms erode by Rs 2.62 L-cr

The market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued companies eroded by Rs 2,62,146.32 crore last week in tandem with an overall weak broader market, where Bajaj Finance and Reliance Industries took the biggest hit. During the last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex plunged by 2,528.86 points or 4.24 per cent. Bharti Airtel was the only gainer from the top-10 companies' list. The valuation of Bajaj Finance tumbled by Rs 41,518.24 crore to Rs 4,10,670.50 crore. Reliance Industries (RIL) saw its market worth tank by Rs 38,440.66 crore to Rs 15,30,109.51 crore. The valuation of Infosys took a hit of Rs 37,950.03 crore to reach Rs 7,10,925.34 crore and that of HDFC plummeted by Rs 33,067.68 crore to Rs 4,96,168.98 crore. State Bank of India's market capital dropped by Rs 29,852.83 crore to Rs 4,19,902.97 crore and ICICI Bank lost Rs 28,567.03 crore to Rs 5,01,039.91 crore.



### Supply of coal by CIL to power sector rises 23%



The dispatch of coal to the power sector by state-owned CIL rose 22.7 per cent to 291.72 million tonne (MT) in the first seven months of the ongoing fiscal year. Coal India Ltd (CIL) had dispatched 237.75 MT of coal to the power sector in April-October period of 2020-21, according to

### FPIs net buyers in Nov; invest Rs 5,319 crore

Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) have pumped in a net sum of Rs 5,319 crore in Indian capital markets despite a massive correction seen in equities over the last fortnight. In October, they were net sellers to the tune of Rs 12,437 crore. As per depositors data, overseas investors put in a net Rs 1,400 crore into equities and Rs 3,919 crore into the debt segment between November 1-26. This translated into total net investment of Rs 5,319 crore. "Since FPIs have been holding large quantity of banking stocks, they have been major sellers in this segment. Sustained selling has made banking stocks attractive from the valuation perspective," said VK Vijaya Kumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. He further noted that sharp correction in the market on 26th November has been mainly triggered by concerns arising out of the new strain of the virus spotted in South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong.



### Goyal: Five focus areas can enhance Indo-B'desh ties

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday suggested five focus areas including trade, connectivity, health and tourism for further enhancing economic ties between India and Bangladesh. He also said that Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia with a volume of over USD 10 billion of trade and both the countries are looking to advance the CEPA. "I would like to suggest 5 focus areas for strengthening India-Bangladesh relationship: Trade, Technology, Connectivity, Entrepreneurship, Health & Tourism," he said while addressing the Bangladesh International Investment Summit. The minister added that efforts to further improve this connectivity is imperative for the expansion of bilateral trade and realisation of investment potential between Bangladesh and Eastern India.



## ED summons Amazon, Future Group executives in FEMA probe

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned senior executives of Amazon India, including its country head Amit Agarwal, and that of the Future group for questioning in a foreign exchange violation probe linked to the disputed deal between the two conglomerates, official sources said on Sunday.

The executives have been summoned along with documents for the coming week under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), they said.

Amazon India head Agarwal, some other senior officials of the company and those of the Future Group have been called, the sources said. The investigation is being conducted under various sections of the FEMA after the federal agency received a communication from the Commerce Ministry early this year seeking "necessary action" against e-commerce players like Amazon and Flipkart pertaining to certain multi-brand retail businesses and an observation made by the Delhi High Court in relation to Amazon.

The HC had said that the attempt made by the US-based



firm to control Future Retail through a conflation of agreements it has with an unlisted unit of the Indian company will be considered as violative of the FEMA and foreign direct investment (FDI) rules.

The executives have been asked to join so that investigation can be taken forward. The agency has gathered details from the documents submitted by the companies earlier and other sources over the last few months, agency sources said. An Amazon spokesperson said they were examining the ED summons.

"We are in receipt of summons issued by the ED in connection with the Future Group. As we have just received the summons, we are examining it and will respond within the given time frame," the

spokesperson said in a statement.

The Kishore Biyani-led Future Group did not respond to the queries over the development.

Amazon and Future Group have been battling it out in courts after the Kishore Biyani-led group in August last year agreed to sell its assets to billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Retail on a slump sale basis for Rs 24,500 crore.

Amazon is objecting to the sell-off plans, accusing Future Group of breaching its 2019 investment pact. Future Coupons was founded in 2008 and is engaged in the business of marketing and distribution of gift cards, loyalty cards, and other rewards programmes to corporate customers.

## Silver ETFs help investors in portfolio diversification

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the introduction of norms for silver exchange traded funds (ETFs), investors will be able to invest in silver in a more liquid manner and can help in diversification of the portfolio, experts said on Sunday.

The Sebi) came out with operating norms for silver ETF, whereby such scheme will have to invest at least 95 per cent in silver and silver-related instruments. The norms will be effective from December 9, 2021.

Currently, Indian mutual funds are allowed to launch ETFs tracking on gold.

"Now people will be able to

hold silver commodity by investing into silver ETF. Since it is a highly regulated product, investors will be certain about its purity unlike when they buy silver from open market," said Swapnil Bhaskar, Head of Strategy, Nijo-- a neo-banking platform for millennials to invest.

Priti Rathi Gupta, Founder, LXME -- financial platform for women -- said "now investors will be able to invest in silver in a more liquid manner compared to the traditional methods of investing in silver."

Also, this will help in diversification of the portfolio as silver has been a precious metal, after gold, she said.

## FMCG market to taper down due to high base effect: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The FMCG market will see further tapering down and decline in volumes, especially in the in-home consumption category due to a higher base effect, but there are some "silver linings" as some categories are maintaining higher penetration than the pre-pandemic level, data analytics and market insight firm Kantar said. The December quarter of 2020, was one of the fastest-growing quarters, with a 5.5 per cent growth and these high baseline numbers are likely to cause another steep drop in growth rates in the next quarter as well.

## Macro data, new Covid variant updates to drive stock markets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stock markets this week will be driven mostly by updates related to the new coronavirus variant that sent equities tumbling globally on Friday, macroeconomic data announcements and auto sales numbers, analysts said.

A World Health Organisation panel has named the new COVID strain 'Omicron' and classified it as a highly transmissible variant of concern, the same category that includes the Delta variant.

The potentially more contagious Omicron was first reported to the WHO from South Africa on November 24, and has also been identified in



Botswana, Belgium, Hong Kong and Israel. Many countries have introduced travel bans and restrictions on southern African countries in an effort to contain Omicron's spread. "New COVID variant, FII's behaviour along with macro numbers will be key factors to drive the market this week. COVID related develop-

ments will remain key triggers for the market where the market will remain keenly interested to know the efficacy ratios of various vaccines against a new variant of COVID whereas restrictions-related news across the globe will also cause volatility," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart Ltd.

## Prayer apps are flooding mkt, but how well do they work?

PNS ■ LOS ANGELES

(The Conversation) Hallow, a Catholic prayer and meditation app that claims over a million downloads, has raised over USD 52 million in investments.

Prayer apps are not new. Silicon Valley startups popularized mindfulness and meditation apps as early as 2010, although many have criticized those apps for being spiritually shallow.

Hallow's young founders -- devout lay Catholic millennials -- are among those who felt that mindfulness apps did not meet their religious needs and set out to create their own.

Hallow's accessible language introduces different methods of



prayer, along with inspiring talks, guides to spiritual practices and notifications to encourage users to set goals and stay on track.

As a priest, I know that

helping people develop healthy prayer habits is important. But both as a scholar of Christian spirituality and as someone who provides spiritual direction to others, I see limitations

in what prayer apps can achieve.

Tech and faith Churches have long adopted communications technology enthusiastically to spread their message. The Reformation started by Martin Luther and his followers in 16th-century Germany spread rapidly through the use of Gutenberg's printing press.

Currently, Catholic faith-based media include the Eternal Word Television Network, founded by Catholic nun Mother Angelica, which provides news, radio programming, live-streamed services and web-based religious instruction to an estimated viewership of more than 250,000,000 viewers.

Apps serve a purpose as well. As several surveys have shown, active membership in a religious community is declining. Religiously unaffiliated people, who are mostly young, make up about a quarter of the American population. At the same time, many of them yearn for a sense of religious belonging, and these apps appear to help in creating a faith-based community.

The kind of community that technology fosters is an important spiritual question to consider, however. Evidence suggests that the unstoppable reach of technology into all aspects of our lives is shaping how people think and relate to one another.

Research has shown that

while people have far more access to information, their attention span is less. Since prayer involves both the mind and emotions, this has spiritual implications.

Seeing how addicted people have become to their phones and other devices, I sometimes urge them to regain some spiritual freedom by giving up social media during Lent.

Collective identity is baked into many religious traditions, including Islam and Buddhism.

Commitment to community also runs deep in the Jewish roots of Christianity. Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Catholicism give particular emphasis to the communal aspect of prayer.



# Laverne Cox confirms she's got a boyfriend who she 'met on Tinder'

**O**range is the New Black star Laverne Cox has confirmed she has a boyfriend whom she 'met on Tinder', as she says she's thankful for her partner but also "super happy" to be done with dating apps. Cox announced her relationship status on Twitter after responding to a tweet which slammed Hinge for being a "super toxic" place, as they suggested Laverne had been banned from the app because she is a transwoman, reports *femalefirst*. The initial tweet read: "Guess you gotta be a high profile transwoman like @Lavernecox to get a @hinge ban for being trans over-turned." And the actress replied to say she had been banned from Hinge a second



time before she met her boyfriend on Tinder. She said: "I have a bf now

and haven't been on the apps in over a year. But after being reinstated on @hinge I was banned again. Not sure why. I wasn't really meeting guys on Hinge anyway. So I just didn't bother to look into it.. Met my bf on Tinder." "Super happy to be off the apps." She first spoke about her boyfriend in January this year, when she said she had embarked on a romance with him six months prior. She gushed: "(Found love in 2020) almost sounds like a punchline, but, yeah, Laverne is in love again, it feels amazing. Love is an incredible thing. It's literally this chemical thing that's awesome and he is a really great guy and I didn't expect it. I thought he was going to be this hot dude I was going to be hanging out with and then it just kind of happened!"

# Actor Prithviraj's production house to present 83 in Malayalam

**T**he Malayalam version of one of the year's most eagerly awaited films, 83, which is based on India's historic 1983 cricket World Cup victory, will be presented by actor Prithviraj Sukumaran's Prithviraj Productions in association with Reliance Entertainment. In a statement, actor Prithviraj said, "83 is a true story of the greatest triumph of the Indian cricket team in the year 1983. It is a riveting tale that needs to be told and I take pride in presenting one of the most awaited films across India and the rest of the world." Kabir Khan, the film's director and producer, said, "We are honoured to have Prithviraj Productions on board and support the release of the Malayalam version of 83. The film has a pan-India connect and with the support



of Prithviraj, it is sure to appeal to the local audience." Ranveer Singh will be seen stepping into the shoes of the legendary Kapil Dev. The film will also feature Tahir Raj Bhasin, Jiiva, Sagib Saleem, Jatin Sarna, Chirag Patil, Dinker Sharma, Nishant

Dahiya, Harrrdy Sandhu, Sahil Khattar, Ammy Virk, Addinath Kothare, Dhairya Karwa, R Badree and Pankaj Tripathi. Deepika Padukone will be seen in a cameo, playing Romi, Kapil Dev's wife in the film which is slated for release on December 24.



# Himanshi Khurana takes to aerial silk for fitness

**B**igg Boss 13 contestant and actress Himanshi Khurana is learning the art of aerial silk for fitness. She says it is underrated and that it takes immense mental strength to perform it. "It needs immense mental strength and fortitude to perform this. It is underrated and we need more people to take this beautiful art to give its due. It needs so much core strength and one has to go

deep into their energy reserves to keep at it consistently," Himanshi said. She added: "I have a great team to help me with this and I am just loving this form. It's one day at a time for me and I am taking baby steps in this one. Pretty happy with the progress so far." Himanshi hopes she masters the art one day. The actress said: "Everyone should keep to some form of workout to keep healthy. Health is paramount and never can it be taken lightly. Love and light to all."

# Steven Spielberg on West Side Story: Most daunting film of my career

**A**claimed Hollywood filmmaker Steven Spielberg says the film adaptation of the musical *West Side Story* is the most daunting work of his career. From a screenplay by Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner Tony Kushner, *West Side Story* tells the classic tale of fierce rivalries and young love in 1957 New York City. Bringing together the best of both Broadway and Hollywood, Spielberg reveals how he felt directing the film. "This film is probably the most daunting of my career. *West Side Story* is arguably the greatest score ever written in

the theatre, and that's not lost on any of us," Spielberg said. "It's very intimidating to take a masterpiece and make it through different eyes and different sensibilities without compromising the integrity of what is generally considered the greatest music ever written for the theatre." Spielberg added: "But I believe that great stories should be told over and over again, in part to reflect different perspectives and moments in me into the work." The film stars Ansel Elgort, Rachel Zegler, Ariana DeBose, David Alvarez, Mike Faist, Josh Andres Rivera, Ana Isabelle, Corey Stoll, Brian d'Arcy James and Rita Moreno.

Spielberg said: "What is so wonderful about this story is that, no matter how much the world around us changes, the lessons and insights it offers us do not." "It's a story that has captivated audiences for decades because it is not just a love story but also a culturally significant work with a central premise — that love transcends prejudice and intolerance — that hasn't lost its relevance over me. *West Side Story* means so much to so many, and I'm thrilled to have this chance to give it new life and share it with a new audience." From 20th Century Studios, Disney India will release *West Side Story* on December 10.



ARCHIE

CALVIN AND HOBBS

GARFIELD

NANCY

GINGER MEGGS

REALITY CHECK

SPEED BUMP

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		
5					6
7			8		
9				10	
12	13		14		15
17			16		18
19					

ACROSS

1 In a battle

7 A baking ingredient

8 A clothing size

9 One or the other

10 A heavy metal

12 A small sharp carpet nail

14 Lump of gold

17 A smell

18 A body organ

19 A minder of sheep

5 A feeling of fondness or liking

6 An inscribed flat stone beside a grave

11 Speak unclearly

13 Fabric

15 Protect from danger

16 Hold tightly

DOWN

1 White frozen dew

2 Grow vegetables here

3 Have a conversation

4 A health professional

SOLUTION

H	Y	D	R	O	G	E	N								
O	R		O	I											
N	A	I	L		W	A	S	H	E	D					
E	L		N	E	T	A									
Y	O	L	K												
O	M	I	T												
O	M	I	T												
O	C														
N	E	P	H	E											
N	E	A													
D		N	A	P	O	L	E	O	N						





SHIKHA DUGGAL

The modern Indian bride is nothing like her predecessor. She is mostly in the age group of millennials, and she gives importance to individualism, has value for money, quality and utility. She is far from what brides used to do back in the day. The current bride needs comfort as much as style, her choices are unconventional and her wedding is designed according to her taste and sensibilities. On one hand she wants her parents to be happy and so doesn't mind going the traditional route to a limited extent. Young brides don't let up on what they want either

something exclusive and unique! So while there may be many brides who still opt for customary red for their wedding ensemble, there's another set that's opting for ivories and light tones for their big day. Case in point is producer-cum-stylist Rhea Kapoor, who got married to her long-time boyfriend Karan Boolani. Known as a trendsetter,

band. The year 2020 was so different that many gorgeous brides paved the way for uniqueness. There was a bride that went viral for ditching the lehenga only for an elegant pant-suit to make a rocking statement! To give an Indian touch, she draped a dupatta on her head.

Celebrity stylist Rima Mishra who is currently busy styling Bigg Boss 15 contestants tells The Pioneer, "When it comes to matters of hearts, it is important to make styling as meaningful and personal as possible. Even if it is not red, it can still be appealing

can always go the eccentric way and yet keep the tradition alive. There is no harm in going the inimitable way. "While classic silhouettes are evergreen and safe choices, brides today are also looking for pieces they can re-wear in the future. The idea of repurposing your wedding outfits is slowly but surely being embraced," explains a wedding stylist.

There was Yami Gautam's contrasting perspective quoted by a news por-

more convinced she became that it was not something she wanted for herself. So when she decided to get married to filmmaker Aditya Dhar, amid the hills of Himachal Pradesh, the couple made sure it was done with simplicity and only with people who mattered to them.

## Be the OG trendsetting bride now!

Kapoor chose a beautiful ivory hued Chanderi sari by designer Anamika Khanna, jewels gifted by her mother, Sunita Kapoor, and a vintage pearl veil by Birdhichand. A departure from the stereotypical big fat Indian wedding, hers was an intimate affair at her family residence in Mumbai. "Given its timeless appeal, clothing in ivory is having a major moment. The color is subtle yet very impactful," says celebrity stylist Surina Kakkar.

Patralekha's wedding was all love too! Her wedding outfit was so special in more than one way. It had an embroidered veil that was inscribed with a Bengali verse dedicated to her hus-

and dreamy. The content smile is what matters. A bride's unconventional choices in any manner should be appreciated."

To add glitz in the wedding, one of the Indian brides opted for an off-shoulder jumpsuit and all the eyes were on her. And, then there was this exceptional bride entry that was a sure shot.

A bride was seen making an entry on a lotus-shaped boat, which blew many minds. In another incident, a bride refused to enter the mandap because her chosen song wasn't being played. Many found her to be a share of memes, however, there was a section of society who could empathise with her since it was her only special day.

One of the Bengali brides from Hyderabad ditched her traditional 'Shankha Pola' outfit and went for the bridal lehenga instead. With another one not willing to go mainstream, one actually made a really cool bridal entry on her big day and rode to her wedding on a royal enfield herself. Acquainting with another fresh idea was the bride opting for 'Umbrella wali Phoolon ki Chadar', who made us go gaga. Hence, some brides

tal recently where she said that the more she attended lavish weddings, the



## Make sure the right doctor has got your back!

Many young Indians wake up every day with severe back or thigh pain. This is usually ignored or is addressed with temporary solutions in the form of balms or painkillers which help in getting through another day



of work. This is the trigger point for Ankylosing Spondylitis, a condition that is often misrepresented as a regular backache. It is, in fact, an inflammatory condition that affects the joints of the spine, reducing its flexibility, damaging the posture, and poses the risk of loss of mobility.

It is imperative to seek medical attention if one has a low back or buttock pain that comes on gradually and is worse in the morning or awakens you from sleep. If AS is not treated properly, it can affect the entire spine, leading to functional disability. Most of the time, the diagnosis is delayed due to late referrals to the Rheumatologist, the specialist who helps with diagnosis and management of systemic autoimmune conditions such as AS. Reports in India suggest that 69% of patients received an incorrect treatment and diagnosis before consulting a rheumatologist. Misdiagnosis or delayed diagnosis impedes treatments such as biologics that can help in slowing down the structural damage progression caused by AS and aim at preventing bone fusion.

Dr. Sarath Chandra Mouli, Rheumatologist and Diabetologist in Begumpet, Hyderabad, said, "It's critical to raise awareness about Ankylosing Spondylitis because there are many misconceptions that delay diagnosis. AS is a male-predominant disease that primarily affects young people, particularly those under the age of 45. Although genetics (HLA-B27) play a role in 90% of cases, symptoms such as backaches should not be ignored. In some cases, there is a distinct pain in the sacroiliac joints (over buttocks), mostly while resting or after a period of sleep. AS may also affect the neck and other joints in the limbs."

In India, another challenge is limited patient understanding and wrong references, as people opt for orthopaedic treatments. This can lead to disease progression which can eventually lead to a total fusion of the spine if not given proper medical attention. While AS is irreversible, its progress can be significantly slowed with daily exercises, right treatment, and timely help. Hence seeking medical aid and attention from specialists in the field i.e Rheumatologists, becomes imperative. "Regular exercise prevents joint stiffness and does not impair patient mobility. Anti-inflammatory painkillers and disease modifying drugs are prescribed for mild to moderate cases, but biologic drugs are strongly advised for severe cases. A minimum of 45 minutes of yoga per day, combined with swimming, aerobic exercises and physiotherapy, can help keep symptoms at bay. If adhered to proper treatment and exercises, patients suffering from AS can lead a normal work life," added the doctor.

## A 15-minute yoga routine for workaholics

With everyone's hectic schedules, we don't even notice how quickly a day passes and our health suffers as a result. How do you incorporate yoga into your daily routine with such a hectic schedule, and what can you practice?

For all the workaholics out there, here are some simple and efficient yogic techniques to get in shape. It only takes 15 minutes, and you don't even have to leave the house. These asanas can be done from where you are sitting and during short work breaks.

### Sukha Purvaka Pranayama

This pranayama is effortless breathing that focuses on breathing deeply into each section of the lungs, as the name says. There is a strong emphasis on both internal and exterior breath retention.

#### Steps:

- Simply breathe in for 4 to 6 counts, filling the lungs up.
- Hold the breath, ideally for the same count, or it can be as long as you can.
- Exhale for 4 to 6 counts, holding the breath out for the

same time or as long as you can.

- This completes one round.
- You can start with 10 rounds and increase the repetition with practice.

#### Benefits:

This pranayama is excellent for increasing the lung capacity, hence improving the oxygen level in the body along with the multitude of benefits it can give to mental and physical health. As a result, focus at work is improved benefit for all the workaholics, isn't it?

### Chair Garudasana

The Eagle Stance, also known as Chair Garudasana, is a balancing pose. You will feel a stretch in your shoulders, upper back, and thighs as you perform this sitting in your office chair. This stretch will relax your body and is a great way to unwind after a long day at work.

#### Steps:

- Sit at the edge of the chair with your feet on the floor.
- Breathe in to bend your elbows and open your arms.
- As you exhale, bring the right knee over the left.
- Send the right toe at the back of the calf muscles. Simultaneously, bring the left elbow under the right and single — or double rap the palms.
- Stay in this pose for 3 to 5 deep breaths.
- You can repeat it on the other side.

#### Benefits:

This pose is excellent for stretching the posterior chain of the body along with the triceps.

It is great to increase focus and release anxiety.

### Chair Pawanmuktasana

The Sanskrit words Pawan means air, Mukta means free, and asana means posture, therefore Chair Pawanmuktasana (Gas Releasing Pose) is derived from them. This position is beneficial to your digestive system, thus it relieves the discomfort that we typi-

cally have after our lunch break, which disrupts our work.

#### Steps:

- Sit at the edge of the chair with your spine elongated and your feet on the floor.
- Breathe in and bend the right knee and hug the right shin as you exhale, reducing the distance between the abdomen and thigh.
- Stay here for 3 to 5 breaths and with every exhalation, keep elongating the spine and pressing the thigh towards the abdomen.
- Repeat the same on the other leg. You can practise this 3 to 5 times and increase the repetitions with practice.

#### Benefits:

This asana improves and regulates digestion and helps release excess air in the digestive system. It also helps strengthen the

core muscles and aids weight loss.

### Chair Vakrasana

Chair Vakrasana, also known as the Half Twisted Pose, is a practice that most of us have been practising unconsciously because it feels so good. Back discomfort is relieved and side fat is reduced as you twist on both sides. If you work for long hours, this is a perfect asana to do every 2-3 hours.

#### Steps:

- Sit at the edge of the chair with your feet on the floor, knee and ankle in line with each other.
- Breathe in, raise your hands up and, as you exhale, twist to the right with the right hand on the head of the chair and the left hand on the outside of the right thigh.
- Use the resistance of your hands to press the right shoulder back to bring the shoulders into one line.
- Stay in this pose for 3 to 5 breaths and with every inhalation, lengthen the spine and twist deeper with every exhalation.
- Repeat the same on both

sides. You can repeat this asana 3 to 5 times and slowly increase the repetition with practice.

#### Benefits:

This pose is like a boon to your spine, it helps keep the spinal column healthy and supple.

This also helps improve digestion, and keeps the internal organs healthy.

### Chair Paschimottasana

Chair Paschimottasana (Seated Forward Bending Pose) is a stretch that targets your back and hamstrings while stretching your complete body. When you're in this position, both your mind and body feel at ease. Your body's blood circulation relaxes you and offers you the energy to return to work with a clear head. You won't have to worry about belly fat because it focuses on the core.

#### Steps:

- While sitting at the edge of the chair, straighten the legs as much as possible and keep the heels on the floor.
- Breathe in to raise your

arms up, breath out to hinge from the hip while keeping the back straight and fold forward as much as possible. If this is too difficult one can also simply fold forward with bent knees.

- Stay here for 3 to 5 breaths and try to deepen the fold with every exhalation.
- Repeat this 3 times and with practice increase the reps.

#### Benefits:

This pose helps stretch the back muscles and improves the function of the digestive system. It is perfect to release anxiety and brings you to a very calm state of mind.

Alternatively, you can utilise our SARVA app. Many soundtracks for relaxation and guided meditation are available on our app and can be accessed anytime, anywhere. You now have great yogic practices at your disposal to keep you healthy on the fly. These are easy to do and may be done anywhere and at any time. Don't let your hectic schedule keep you from being healthy; instead, apply these tips and take the first step now.



# IYER, SAHA SET UP INTRIGUING FINAL DAY

PTI ■ KANPUR

Debutant Shreyas Iyer showed his ice-cool temperament under pressure to stand tall with a fine half-century which placed India in a commanding position as they set up a stiff victory target of 284 for New Zealand on the fourth day of the opening Test here on Sunday.

India declared at 234 for 7 for an overall lead of 283 and gave the Black Caps four tricky overs to face under fading light during which they managed four runs and lost opener Will Young to Ravichandran Ashwin.

With that scalp, Ashwin became the joint third highest wicket-taker in Indian cricket with Harbhajan Singh (417 wickets).

The highest ever fourth innings chase by a visiting team in India is 276 by Viv Richards' West Indies against the Dilip Vengsarkar-led India in 1987 at the Feroz Shah Kotla, which placed statistics on the home team's side.

The honours for India on the day were shared by Iyer (65 off 125 balls), who became the first Indian to score a hundred and fifty on debut and the plucky Wriddhiman Saha

(61 not out, 126 balls), who battled stiff neck to make an invaluable contribution which will certainly count a lot in the final context of the match.

Axar Patel (28 not out) then conjured another 67-run eighth-wicket stand with Saha to slowly take the match out of the Black Caps' grasp.

If New Zealand are still in the match, credit must go to their tireless seam bowling duo of Tim Southee (22-2-75-3) and Kyle Jamieson (17-6-40-3), who showed an exhibition of top class bowling on an unresponsive track.

However, it will now depend on how much time it takes for India's spin troika to roll over New Zealand, whose openers showed a lot of gumption on the second afternoon and third morning.

Also if skipper Williamson can do something mind-blowing with the willow, there might just be a great contest on the cards.

If the morning belonged to New Zealand's bowlers, who decided to prolong Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane's bad patch, the afternoon was Iyer's time under the sun while Saha did his bit, reaching his sixth half-century in the final ses-



sion of the day.

This is certainly an innings which will give Saha's Test career a new lease of life.

This was after stand-in captain Rahane and his temporary deputy Pujara's saga of failures continued leaving India tottering at 51 for 5 in the first 75 minutes of the morning session.

But credit to Iyer, who once again displayed steely temperament on the way to his second 50-plus score in the match, hitting eight fours and a huge six over long off against Will Somerville.

His best shot, however, was an inside out lofted drive off left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel. It was a difficult shot that was perfectly executed.

It was followed by a square cut in the same over as Williamson erred by bowling his spinners for way too long.

That was proved when Southee removed Iyer at the stroke of tea when he tried to pull one that was drifting down leg side.

Credit should also be given to Saha as he battled with an open-chested stance compared to his usual side-on which reduces the pronounced neck movement.

He played his customary game of dabs and flicks and also produced an occasional slog pull for six as his innings had four fours and a six.

However, on the fourth morning, Southee, a practitioner of conventional swing bowling, took a master-class on how to bowl on an unresponsive Indian track, classically setting up the batters.

But before Southee got into the act, Kyle Jamieson (13-6-26-3) targeted Pujara's (22 off 33 balls) ribcage, getting one to rear up on this dead track and it brushed the India No. 3's gloves into the hands of keeper Tom Blundell.

Rahane (4 off 15 balls) is out of form and the world knows about that. However, Ajaz Patel (17-3-60-1), who has looked way below Test class, then produced his best delivery of the match.

An arm ball that was fired in with the angle caught Rahane plumb in-front while he tried to play a forward defensive prod.

Mayank Agarwal (17) did all the hardwork in the first hour but Southee (15.2-3-48-3) set him up with deliveries that came into him from good length spot as he played with a closed bat-face.

## Batting coach Rathour 'understands' Pujara-Rahane lean patch

PTI ■ KANPUR

Batting coach Vikram Rathour "understands" fully that Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane are now India players living on borrowed time.

But the former opener on Sunday couldn't give a definitive answer as to who would sit out in order to accommodate skipper Virat Kohli's comeback in the next Test against New Zealand.

With Shreyas Iyer scoring 105 and 65 on debut, it would be almost criminal to drop the stylish Mumbaier, and understandably, Rathour had to fend questions on Pujara and Rahane's form going into the Mumbai Test, starting on December 3.

"Of course, you want the top-order to contribute but cricketers (Pujara and Rahane) you mentioned



they have played 80 (79 for Rahane) and 90 Tests (91 Test for Pujara). "Of course, to play that many games, they must have done well for us," Rathour tried his

best to defend the 2021 Test average of below 20 by the stand-in captain (19.57) and 30.42 by his deputy.

"We understand that both of them are going through a lean phase but we understand that they have both played very, very important knocks for us in the past. We are pretty sure that they are going to come back and play important knocks for us," Rathour's statement lacked conviction.

But what's the kind of long rope that one gives a senior player, who has been a past performer? Is it 15 or 20 Tests? The former Punjab opener, who played six Tests during the 1996-97 season, felt that it can't be quantified. "I don't think you can put a number to that. It really depends on situation the team is in and what the team is required to do," he sidestepped the question.

## Bangladesh leads Pakistan by 83 runs after day 3 of 1st test

AP ■ CHATTOGRAM

Pakistan's fast bowlers reduced Bangladesh to 39-4 in its second innings at the end of day three on Sunday to leave the first cricket test evenly poised.

Bangladesh had secured a 44-run lead after bowling out Pakistan for 286, thanks largely to left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, who returned figures of 7-116.

Instead, the home side ended the day by extending its lead to 83 runs but has just six wickets remaining. Mushfiqur Rahim, who made 91 in the first innings, was batting on 12 and Yasir Ali on 8 after surviving several close calls.

Despite the first-innings deficit, Pakistan fought back through its fast bowlers — Shaheen Shah Afridi and Hasan Ali — who used the short ball to precision, leaving Bangladesh



in a potentially precarious position.

Afridi cracked the game open, striking twice in his third over.

He trapped Shadman leg-before for 1 with a ball that swung sharply and then two balls later had Najmul Hossain caught at first slip for a duck with a short ball.

His short ball again worked for him when opener Saif Hasan gave the return catch and was dismissed for 14.

Ali also got into the act, dis-

missing captain Mominul Haque for a duck with a leading edge, leaving Bangladesh on 25-4.

Earlier, Taijul pegged back the Pakistan innings after the visitors began the day on 145 for no loss.

Opener Abid Ali top-scored with 133 off 282, hitting 12 fours and two sixes.

Taijul struck in the first over of the day, dismissing Abdullah Shafique and Azhar Ali via review with consecutive deliveries.

Shafique couldn't add any runs to his overnight total of 52.

Abid, who started the day on 93, flicked Taijul past square leg for a couple to reach his fourth century off 209 balls.

Skipper Babar Azam appeared to be in control before offspinner Mehidy Hasan's (1-68) quicker delivery rattled his stump for 10.

## Unfortunate but 'ideal' team man Saha's role is to do 'tough job' when Pant is not available: Rathour

PTI ■ KANPUR

Wriddhiman Saha is an "ideal team man" who can always be relied to do the "tough job" but unfortunately he will have to play the second fiddle when India's number one keeper-batter Rishabh Pant gets back from break, batting coach Vikra Rathour said on Sunday.

Saha, the oldest member of the current Indian set-up at 37, is playing his 39th Test in 11 years since his debut.

His first five years after debut went as legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni's understudy and even if it sounds crude, he is now a back-up for 24-year-old Pant. On Sunday, with his Test career on line, Saha battled hard with a stiff-neck for his gutsy 61 not out after Shreyas Iyer laid the platform with an attractive 65.

"He had a really, really stiff neck and know-

ing Saha who is an ideal team man, he is going to do whatever is required," batting coach Rathour waxed eloquent about the veteran keeper, who shared two fifty-plus stands with Iyer and Axar Patel.

"He would do the tough things for the team and he played an extremely important knock at the stage the team was at that point," Saha is a quiet

person, someone who is not known to be too expressive but the teams knows that the 'plod and grind effort' will come from the gritty man, who hails from North Bengal city of Siliguri.

"That is what we always expect from Wriddhi. He has always been that kind of a person, whom we can count on and today he showed why," Rathour said.

However, he made it clear that even at this juncture of his career, the Bengal stumper is nothing more than a stop-gap option for Team India as Pant has pushed him far back during away series in Australia where the senior man was given a first go.

"As far as Wriddhi is concerned, unfortunately for him, we have an extremely special player Rishabh, who is number one keeper for us and has done extremely well in past few years."



## Kedar Devdhar to captain Baroda in Hazare Trophy

PTI ■ VADODARA

Experienced batter Kedar Devdhar will lead Baroda in the upcoming Vijay Hazare Trophy while Bhargav Bhatt will be his deputy, a top official said on Sunday.

The development was confirmed to PTI by Baroda Cricket Association (BCA) secretary Ajit Lele. He said the decision was taken the selection committee.

The 31-year-old Devdhar, a right-handed batter, has so far played 73 List A games from which he has scored 2,402 runs with 148 as his highest score.

The development comes a day after Mumbai Indians and India all-rounder Krunal Pandya stepped down as Baroda captain, following the team's underwhelming campaign in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

PTI had on Saturday reported that Kedar Devdhar is



among the frontrunners to succeed Krunal, starting with the Vijay Hazare Trophy national ODI championships next month.

Baroda finished with the least points -- 4 -- from Group B, alongside Services, with one win and four losses in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy.

The 31-year-old Bhargav Bhatt is a left-arm orthodox spinner and a left-handed batter, and has taken 50 wickets from 42 list A matches.

For the Hazare Trophy, which begins on December 8, Baroda are placed in Elite Group B, along with Tamil Nadu, Mumbai, Bengal, Karnataka and Pondicherry.

## Chennaiyin FC eye second straight win

**Fatorda (Goa):** A rejuvenated Chennaiyin FC will aim for a second straight victory when they take on a winless Northeast United FC in an Indian Super League match here on Monday.

CFC started their campaign in ISL 2021-22 with a 1-0 win over Hyderabad FC while the Highlanders have lost one and drawn the other in the two games they have played so far.

However, in a blow to the two-time champions, they will be without the services of influential mid-fielder Rafael Crivallero, who will be out of action for four weeks owing to an injury.

"Rafael Crivellaro has incurred a muscle injury. The Brazilian will be out for four weeks while he continues with his rehabilitation with the medical team," the club said on its website.

CFC head coach Bozidar Bandovic will hope Vladimir Koman, who plays a role similar to that of Crivallero, can keep doing the job for the

team. About the absence of Crivallero, the coach said, "Rafa is an important player, a good player. Now that he is injured. We have to look at others who are playing...We need to keep working without him.

"We cannot depend on one player. Koman's role is important. Each and every player has an important role. We will try our best during rehab to get Rafa back as soon as possible."

CFC, who have struggled to score in the previous season, have started the new one on a positive note and will hope the team can keep up the good work. Koman, who scored the all-important goal in the win over Hyderabad, said, "I am always confident. With the first win, I hope that the other players also become more confident. Scoring in the first game is always nice. And when the team wins, there is double satisfaction."

PTI

## Chelsea hosts slumping Man U, Madrid vs Sevilla



AP ■ WASHINGTON

**ENGLAND**

For what could be his final game in temporary charge of Manchester United, Michael Carrick takes his team to Premier League leader Chelsea in the headline match of the 13th round.

Carrick's only match as interim manager was a 2-0 win at Villarreal in the Champions League. He could soon be replaced by German coach Ralf Rangnick, who has been in talks with United.

Manchester City came into the weekend three points behind Chelsea and plays before the leader, at home to West Ham. Having criticized the standard of the Tottenham squad he has inherited following an embarrassing loss in the Europa Conference League, Antonio Conte takes his team north for an away match at Burnley. Also, Watford manager Claudio Ranieri returns to Leicester, the team he surprisingly led to the title in 2016, and Brentford hosts Everton.

**SPAIN**

Sevilla's visit to leader Real Madrid is the high-light match on a day when the league's top four teams are all in action. Sevilla enters the match at Santiago Bernabéu Stadium in third place at two points back.

Carlo Ancelotti will once again entrust Madrid's attack to Karim Benzema and Vinicius Júnior with Eden Hazard still out recovering from a stomach virus and Gareth Bale still injured. Sevilla will likely also be without several injured players, including midfielder Suso and striker Youssef En-Nesyri.

Second-place Real Sociedad is just a point behind Madrid and will play earlier at Espanyol hoping to move to the top of the table. Atlético Madrid is in fourth before it visits Cádiz looking to bounce back from its home loss to AC Milan in the Champions League this week.

Sixth-place Real Betis has won two straight by a combined score of 5-0 — it hosts last-place Levante, the only winless side.

**ITALY**

After enduring their first league losses last weekend, Napoli and AC Milan will endeavor to get back on track in Serie A. The teams share the lead, one point ahead of third-placed Inter Milan.

Napoli hosts Lazio, shortly after Milan welcomes Sassuolo. Roma will be looking to close the gap on the top four with a win over Torino. At the other end of the table Udinese hosts fellow struggler Genoa, while Spezia welcomes Bologna.

**GERMANY**

Leipzig hosts Bayer Leverkusen in the Bundesliga's first game without fans for months due to spiraling coronavirus infections in the state of Saxony. The home team will be without a host of players due to infections, too. The club says it had six more positive test results for COVID-19, adding to the three previous cases it reported in midweek. Coach Jesse Marsch is among those infected, though it didn't stop the team routing Belgian club Brugge 5-0 in the Champions League on Wednesday.



## Parmjeet Kumar wins bronze in World Para-Powerlifting C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Parmjeet Kumar on Sunday became the first Indian para-powerlifter to win a medal in World Championships as he claimed a bronze at the ongoing edition in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Kumar, who trains at Sports Authority of India Centre in Gandhinagar, won the bronze in men's 49kg category with an effort of 158kg.

"History created for India in Para @Powerlifting by Paramjit Kumar of Punjab as he wins #bronze at the on-going World Para Powerlifting Championship in Tbilisi, Georgia," Paralympics Committee of India President Deepa Malik tweeted.

"Paramjit's 158KG Lift has created history!" SAI congratulated Kumar for the historic feat.

"Many Congratulations to our NCOE athlete, Shri Parmjeet Kumar (M-49kg) for winning the BRONZE medal IN WORLD PARA POWERLIFTING SR CHAMPIONSHIP 2021 — TBILISI," SAI said in a tweet.

## Manika Batra fails to create history for India in World TT

PTI ■ HOUSTON

Star India paddler Manika Batra failed to bag a medal at the World Table Tennis Championships after crashing out in the quarter-finals of the mixed and women's doubles events here.

Just one win away from a historic medal, Batra and G Sathiyan lost to Japan's Tomakazu Harimoto and Hina Hayata 1-3 (5-11 2-11 11-7 9-11) in the last eight round of the mixed doubles competition.

Batra had another opportunity to create history but she faltered yet

again, losing the women's doubles quarterfinals with her partner Archana Kamath in straight games.

Batra and Kamath were no match for Luxembourg duo of Sarah De Nutte and Ni Xia Lian, losing 0-3 (1-11 6-11 8-11) in a lop-sided contest.

## Germany beats Djokovic's Serbia at Davis Cup



AP ■ WASHINGTON

Not even Novak Djokovic playing back-to-back could help Serbia avoid losing to Germany in the Davis Cup finals group phase.

After Djokovic helped Serbia pull even at 1-1 by beating Jan-Lennard Struff, the world's top-ranked male player immediately joined Nikola Cicic in doubles.

But German pair Tim Puetz and Kevin Krawietz showed more mettle in a tight 7-6, 3-6, 7-6 victory to take the decider and the tie victory 2-1.

"It's a great performance to beat the team who have the world No. 1," Germany captain Michael Kohlmann said. "Before the tie, we all thought that we had a good chance. We really believed it and it paid off."

Serbia could still go through to the quarterfinals,

which will include two runners-up to go with the six group winners. But Germany can seal its spot as the Group F winner with a victory over Austria, which Serbia has already beaten.

Playing without a public in Innsbruck due to virus restrictions by Austrian authorities, Germany took the lead when Dominik Koepfer downed Filip Krajinovic 7-6, 6-4.

Djokovic defeated Struff 6-2, 6-4 in the Serb's 50th Davis Cup match.

After a short break, he was back out there for the doubles that lasted more than two hours.

"We will have to wait until tomorrow and see (if we advance)," Serbia captain Viktor Troicki said.

"Filip had a tough one, and in doubles, what can I say after this match? A 7-6 loss in the third (set), and we had a lot of chances.

I am still proud of my team. It wasn't our day in the end. I hope we still have a chance."

Italy became the first team to book its spot in the final eight after it beat Colombia to take two points from Group E, which it also shares with the United States.

Lorenzo Sonego beat Nicolas Mejia 6-7, 6-4, 6-2, and Jannik Sinner followed with a 7-5, 6-0 win over Daniel Elahi Galan, in the matches in Turin.

Second-ranked Daniil Medvedev helped Russia beat Ecuador, setting up a clash with Spain to decide which will go through as group winner.

Medvedev eased past Emilio Gómez 6-0, 6-2 after breaking his serve five times to give Russia an insurmountable 2-0 lead.



