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SETTING UP 'BAD BANKS'
FOR THE GOOD

MONEY 8

MARKET SNAPS 7-DAY WINNING RUN ON
PROFIT-BOOKING; ITC TANKS OVER 6 PC

SPORTS 12

SINDHU WINNING
RETURN

HYDERABAD, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

AHA PLANS BIG
FOR SAMANTHA

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EX-BJP, NOW TRINAMOOL LEADER
BABUL SUPRIYO RESIGNS AS MP

Former BJP leader Babul Supriyo formally resigned as a Member of Parliament or MP today, a month after he quit the party to join the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress. Supriyo thanked the BJP leadership for the confidence they had shown in him. The development comes after the two-term MP from West Bengal's Asansol had on September 20 - two days after joining the state's ruling Trinamool Congress party - written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, seeking a 'brief' appointment with him to formally resign as a member of the House.

INDIAN BANKS FACE RISE IN BAD
LOANS TO 8-9% OF LENDING -CRISIL

Indian banks are likely to see a rise in gross non-performing assets (NPA) to 8-9% of total lending at the end of this fiscal year from 7.5% last year, rating agency CRISIL said in a report on Tuesday. The rises will be led by retail clients and the micro, small and medium (MSME) segments, said Krishnan Sitaraman, senior director and deputy chief ratings officer, noting they represent 40% of total bank credit. "Stressed assets in these segments are seen rising to 4-5% and 17-18%, respectively, by this fiscal year-end. The numbers would have trended even higher but for write-offs, primarily in the unsecured segment," Sitaraman said.

AMARINDER TO FORM PARTY, OPEN TO
SEAT PACT WITH BJP IN PUNJAB POLLS

Punjab's former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh today declared that he will form a new political party and provided the farmers' protest is resolved, will consider an alliance with the BJP and breakaway Akali groups ahead of next year's assembly elections in the state. Mr Singh had brushed off the possibility of joining forces with the BJP last month after his meeting with Union minister Amit Shah set off a huge buzz, claiming they discussed the farmers' protest.

SUMMONING OF OFFICERS DISCHARGING
PUBLIC DUTIES TO COURT NOT OK: SC

The Supreme Court has set aside an order of the Allahabad High Court summoning Chairman and Regional Manager of a bank saying summoning of the officers discharging public duties is unwarranted. The top court was hearing an appeal filed by Prathama UP Gramin Bank and others challenging an order passed by the High Court through which it summoned the Chairman of the bank to apprise him of how the officers of the Bank are working. The high court had also directed the Regional Manager of the Bank to appear in person and to file an affidavit stating the number of persons working in the Bank as daily wages.

Telangana to buy 125 kg gold
from RBI for Yadadri temple

- CM KCR family to donate 1.16 kg gold
- TRS legislators to donate gold for Vimana Gopuram
- 'Muhurat' for reopening of Yadadri temple fixed on March 28, 2022

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The auspicious date for reopening of the Yadadri temple has been fixed by Sri Ramauja Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar Swamy as March 28, 2022 with 'Maha Kumbha Samprokshana' marking the event.

Announcing this at a media conference at Yadadri on Tuesday evening, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao said that it would be preceded by 'Ankurarpana' ritual on March 21. The Chief Minister announced the auspicious time on Tuesday evening after he handed over the hand-written 'Muhurat' patram of Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swamy to the Temple Executive Officer Geeta to be placed at the feet of the deity first. Earlier in the day, KCR



Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, Ministers Jagadeeshwar Reddy, Indrakaran Reddy, MLA Suneetha Mahender Reddy and others at Yadadri temple on Tuesday

undertook an aerial survey and then a field inspection of the ongoing works in the temple and

temple premises that lasted several hours.

2

'EC crossed limits
on Dalit Bandhu',
says CM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has said that the Election Commission has crossed its limits in imposing restrictions on the implementation of Dalit Bandhu scheme.

Responding to a query at a media conference at Yadadri on Tuesday, KCR said that Dalit Bandhu was an ongoing scheme in Huzurabad or other constituencies. "People are quite aware that if I start any scheme, I will ensure it is implemented. How long will the EC stop the scheme?" he asked. He said that once the election process was completed on November 2, he himself would distribute the amount under the Dalit Bandhu. He said there was no need for people to feel disappointed.

Cong and BJP colluded in Huz'bad;
yet, TRS will win hands down: KTR

- 'Revanth would do well to stop speculating about KCR's future plans and focus on helping Cong candidate retain his deposit'
- KCR is a visionary and opposition leaders are 'tele-visionaries' confined to TV shows

ML MELLY MAITREYI
■ HYDERABAD

TRS working president K T Rama Rao has predicted that the TRS candidate will win hands down in the Huzurabad bye-election as people are bound to show their anger towards the BJP, which has been fleecing people, by defeating its candidate Eatala Rajender.

Asserting that the Congress had colluded with the BJP in Huzurabad "not 100 per cent, but 1,000 per cent", KTR said it was evident from the fielding of a dummy candidate by the Congress to help Eatala Rajender. After one or one a half years, the Congress would invite Rajender into their party fold, he said. There were rumours that BJP leader Vivek also would follow suit. KTR said he was mak-



ing these statements in all seriousness. Even during the Lok Sabha elections in the past in Karimnagar and Nizamabad, the BJP and the Congress had an understanding,

and the Congress had helped BJP candidates sail through.

The two parties were back to the same game in Huzurabad. "We are now smarter and have more clarity to see through their game," he said.

In a chat with media persons at Telangana Bhavan here on Tuesday, KTR was forthright while responding to queries on many issues, ranging from strengthening of the party's organizational structure, upcoming election of party president and the Huzurabad bye-election.

Justifying his allegation that the Congress and the BJP were on the same page in Huzurabad, KTR sought to know whether the Congress party had a presence in Huzurabad and what role the PCC president had been playing there.

2

Bureaucrats have to clear
RTI response in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After putting a stop to uploading of government orders on the website, Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar, in his latest move, has issued a note that all those responding to RTI queries must seek information from Special Secretaries and HoDs. The note, issued on 13 October, reads: "All the Special Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries/Secretaries to the Government are requested to instruct the Public Information Officers designated/appointed in their office to obtain orders of Spl. Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries/Secretaries to the Government/Head of the Department, before furnishing the information to the applicant under the Right to Information Act 2005". This order was issued because some of the "State Public Information Officers designated or appointed under the Right to Information Act, 2005 in certain administrative units or offices are furnishing information to the applicants in a routine manner without proper verification of the records with reference to the infor-



mation sought for by the application". Activists took to Twitter to condemn this move, stating that it was against the core values of RTI. Advocate Seshagiri B.V., who first raised the issue in a tweet, said that this is an attempt to dilute RTI Act. Anti-corruption activist Vijay Gopal, said, "An extremely dangerous proposition, to weaken and delay the RTI replies, so whims and fancies of babus' can prevail". RTI activist Robin Zacheus said that this order was passed because the RTI activists were exposing the true image of the TS govt. He said, "Instead of coming up with the online portal, the Govt is further disabling the citizens from obtaining the information & disrupting the entire process".

Rains batter Utt'kand as 42
more die, UP sees 4 fatalities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Uttarakhand reported at least 42 rain-related deaths on Tuesday with many people still trapped under the rubble after landslides, while Uttar Pradesh witnessed four fatalities, even as heavy downpour in Kerala filled several dams to the brim and multiple districts were on alert.

In view of the incessant rains, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami reiterated his appeal to Chardham yatris to stay where they are and not to resume their journeys before the weather improved.

"The number of casualties in Kumaon region alone has crossed 40," DIG Nilesh Anand Bhanu told PTI. The hill state had reported five deaths on Monday.



A view of the marooned houses in Uttarakhand

Of the 42 fresh deaths, 28 people were killed in Nainital district, six each in Almora and Champawat and one each in Pithoragarh and Udham Singh Nagar districts, the official said.

Chief Minister Dhami under-

took an aerial survey of the rain-hit areas and later interacted with the affected people on ground zero to make an assessment of the damages caused.

2

Hyderabadis stuck in Utt'kand
receive support from KishanNAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad residents stuck in Uttarakhand due to flash floods have received support from Union Minister of Tourism Kishan Reddy. Earlier, the Radha Krishna Nagar Welfare Association took to Twitter and sought help for their colony residents stuck in Uttarakhand.

A resident of Malkajgiri - Sushma and her group of friends were marooned following floods



at Lemon Tree Resort, Jim Corbett Park, Uttarakhand. They pointed that they were not getting the desired help as the hotel was submerged until the first floor.

Responding to their plea, Kishan Reddy said that there was nothing to worry.

He said, "Have spoken to the local administrative authorities and Ms. Sushma as well.

Necessary help & support has been provided and they are on their way back to New Delhi."

Buddha relics from Lanka to be
accorded state guest-like statusPage
5

TRS trends 'anti-Dalit BJP' to send a 'message to nation'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A day after The Election Commission of India halted the Direct Benefit Transfer to the beneficiaries of Telangana's Dalit Bandhu scheme in Huzurabad, TRS activists took to social media to amplify the issue.

The #AntiDalitBJP was trending across India on Twitter on Tuesday with nearly 4,743 tweets.

Krishank Manne, TRS leader, said, "ECI has stopped implementation of the Dalit Bandhu Scheme after the BJP complained about it. We wanted to send a message to the

nation and grab their attention so that people know about the scheme and how BJP obstructed the scheme that can change the lives of Dalits".

TRS social media convenor Jagan Patimeedi said, 70 years back, Dalits used to be abused, scolded, slapped and led a life of slavery. To wipe that mark #KCR launched #dalitbandhu scheme to uplift the dalit community but not for #huzurabad bypolls temporarily. #AntiDalitBJP". Soon Telangana BJP retorted to the trend with #KCRBetrayed TelanganaDalits.

2

ECI order to impact only 10% Dalit
Bandhu beneficiaries

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Election Commission of India's order to suspend Dalit Bandhu scheme in poll-bound Huzurabad will apparently impact only 10% of the beneficiaries. The passbooks bearing 9.9 lakh have already been given to 90% of the beneficiaries. Highly placed sources confirmed that nearly 18,000 beneficiaries, out of the 20,000 identified, had already

benefitted from the scheme. Sources in the ruling party said that nearly 2,000 families were yet to get benefit and that they were putting all efforts to ensure that these families did not feel left out. Even though TRS leaders launched a bitter campaign against the BJP for halting the Dalit Bandhu scheme, sources indicated that the impact of ECI order was not a big dent for them.

2

TRS leaders to study
organisational structure
of DMK, AIADMK

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A delegation of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) leaders led by working president K.T. Rama Rao will visit Tamil Nadu after November 15 to study the strong organisational structure of DMK and AIADMK.

Rama Rao revealed this during an informal chat with reporters here on Tuesday.

2

TDP offices in Andhra attacked; YSRCP denies role

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Ruling YSR Congress Party cadre on Tuesday allegedly ransacked Telugu Desam Party's headquarters at Mangalagiri near here, offices at Visakhapatnam and other places, blaming that a spokesperson of the opposition party made objectionable comments against the Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in a press conference.

TDP spokesperson K Pattabhi Ram earlier in the morning, objecting to police notices to former minister Nakka Ananda Babu, made caustic remarks against Jagan Mohan Reddy. "Telugu Desam Party strongly



TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu visiting those injured in the attacks

condemn the attacks by YSRCP goons on the party's headquarters

and office in Visakhapatnam and on the residences of the party leaders.

2

TSRTC earns Rs.111.91 cr
during Dasara days

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation earned Rs.111.91 crore revenue from October 8 to October 18 during the Dasara festival. According to TSRTC, the government earned Rs.10.33 crore on October 8, 10.46 crore on October 9, Rs.9.79 crore on October 10, Rs.11.78 crore on October 11, Rs.11 crore on October 12, Rs.10.42 crore on October 13,

Rs.9.92 crore on October 14, Rs.5.74 crore on October 15, Rs.7.42 crore on October 16, Rs.10.21 crore on October 17, and Rs.14.79 crore on October 18. The TSRTC stated that it earned on average Rs.10.17 crore every day. The TSRTC pointed out that before the Dasara festival days, the RTC's average revenue was Rs.9.71 crore. However, it increased to Rs.47 lakh per day during the Dasara festival.



TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Ashwin & Shukla Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Purnima 20:25

Nakshatram : Revati 14:02

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

Rahukalam : 12:00 pm - 1:27 pm

Yamagandam : 7:40 am - 9:07 am

Varjyam : Nil

Gulika : 10:34 am - 12:00 pm

Good Time : (to start any important work)

Amritakalam : 11:27 am - 1:10 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham : Nil

HYDERABAD
WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 30/20

Humidity: 61%

Sunrise: 6:10 am

Sunset: 05:51 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated OCTOBER 19, 2021 5:00 PM



Two-decade-long journey of Telangana’s political *musafir*

Chief Minister of Telangana K. Chandrasekhara Reddy is moving forward cautiously with what seems to be a perfect political strategy to tackle any situation that may emerge against his interests ahead of the next General Election, which is slated to be held in 2023.

After seeing the successful completion of 20 years of Telangana Rashtra Samiti, he seems to be drawing a new political graph for securing the future of his party. With the TRS emerging as a viable political force in the new state of Telangana, KCR's stature has grown substantially at the national level.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, while expanding its mass base across the country, has been playing hide and seek with regional political forces, leaving its own cadre confused. During Atal Behari Vajpayee's regime, the BJP had given freedom to its AP unit to fight against the Telugu Desam Party for the purpose of strengthening the state unit. But during the elections of 1999, to every-



PIN POINT

body's surprise, BJP sought support of TDP in the form of seat-sharing agreement for furthering the BJP's numbers game to grab power at the Centre. Expectedly both parties were in a comfortable position during that particular term. But this arrangement damaged BJP's reputation as the TDP shelved the issue of separate Telangana State for the purpose of getting power.

The TRS, during its 20-year journey, has seen ups and downs. KCR now foresees no further spell of positive wave for Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the 2024 General Election.

The Telangana Assembly elections will be held ahead of the General Elections i.e. in 2023.

There has been talk in some quarters that, like in the case of the previous Assembly elections, the TRS could advance the Assembly polls so as to hold them before the General Election, given the party's bright chances to register a third consecutive victory in Telangana State since the

Naidu ostensibly implemented the policy of allotting one cabinet post for one caste. But he chose to relax that norm in the case of Bojjala Gopalakrishna Reddy of Chittoor district as he was also kept aside on the lines of KCR.

formation of the new state. However, KCR has just ruled out early polls to T-Assembly this time.

He had cleverly advanced polls for T-Assembly ahead of the General Election in 2018 with a view to avoid positive wave for Modi across the country.

For the General Election, the focus of attention of the electorate might be on national political forces, with the regional forces not getting ample attention of people.

BJP surprisingly bagged four Lok Sabha constituencies in Telangana on its own strength. Going by those results, BJP missed the chances of winning as many

as 28 Assembly seats -- more than enough to get the status of principal opposition in the state legislative Assembly.

The TRS, within a few months of its inception, had participated in the local bodies' polls of 2001 and got nearly 100 ZPTCs, including that of Nizamabad, paving way for expansion of the party.

TRS had taken birth on 27 April, 2001 on the premises of 'Jaladrushyam', which is the residence of former minister Konda Lakshman Babuji, a stalwart among the torch-bearers of Telangana agitation of 1969.

KCR then literally threw into the air his letters of resignation from the posts of



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

Deputy Speaker of AP Assembly and Member of Legislative Assembly as well as the membership of Telugu Desam Party from the dais at the historic meeting that witnessed the birth of TRS for achieving a separate state for Telangana people.

This columnist was among the journalists who covered the inaugural event of TRS at 'Jaladrushyam' on that particular day.

Noticeably, most of the leaders who were present there on the formation day of the party are not in the party now. None of the members of

KCR's cabinet, except one or two like T.Harish Rao, were at his side on that day.

KCR's son and IT and Municipal Minister K.T.Rama Rao was in America then. He joined the party six years after its inception.

KCR chose to leave TDP in protest against the treatment meted out to him at the hands of then chief minister Chandrababu Naidu. Chandrababu decided to accommodate former Director of CBI K.Vijayarama Rao, who defeated Congress giant P.Janardhan Reddy (PJR) in the Khairatabad constituency, in place of KCR as both leaders belongs to the same caste Velama.

Naidu ostensibly implemented the policy of allotting one cabinet post for one caste. But he chose to relax that norm in the case of Bojjala Gopalakrishna Reddy of Chittoor district as he was also kept aside on the lines of KCR.

Interestingly both Bojjala and KCR were very good friends and colleagues in TDP. This idea of 'one cabinet post for one caste' per-

haps cropped in the mind of Naidu as Vijayarama Rao was his good friend.

Vijayarama Rao had helped Chandrababu Naidu a lot during the former's tenure as Police Commissioner of Hyderabad in avoiding the arrest for inviting the wrath of the Legislative Council for objectionable writings against the Upper House at the state level.

KCR's alleged adamant attitude had caused heavy loss of as many as 16 MLAs out of 26 it had in the AP Assembly as they deserted the party at the behest of then chief minister Dr.Y.S.Rajasekara Reddy. Challenges and counter challenges levelled against each other between KCR and Congress leaders led to the bye-election in the Karimnagar Lok Sabha constituency. He resigned from that seat in response to a challenge thrown at him by then minister in YSR's cabinet M.Satyanarayana Rao. Nobody expected then that KCR would respond positively to such challenge.

KCR's dwindling popularity got a boost in that bypoll

with his thumping victory. In other words, TRS was given a new lease of life by the Congress minister's challenge. Otherwise, TRS would not have grown in popularity during the tenure of YSR.

KCR has since become powerful in the party.

But the promises he had made, including those of making a Dalit the chief minister and allocation of 3 acres of land for the poor, are literally haunting him personally. Nobody in TRS would dare to question him regarding the same, but the principal opposition has initiated a tirade against KCR in this regard.

The Congress has received death blows from KCR in the two successive elections of 2014 and 2018, though it was the Congress that granted Telangana State.

It will be interesting to see how KCR will handle the next Assembly elections. Will there be a magic like that of Nitish Kumar (Bihar) and Shivraj Singh Chowhan (Madhya Pradesh), who grabbed opportunity for the third time in a row, for him to rule the state of Telangana?

Political foresight behind TRS plenary, Vijayagarjana Sabha

SNCN ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

Is there any political strategy behind holding the plenary and the Vijayagarjana Sabha by the TRS?

The TRS is conducting the party plenary just five days before the Huzurabad Assembly by-election and the Vijayagarjana Sabha 12 days after declaration of the Huzurabad Assembly by-election result.

When the Huzurabad Assembly by-election turned a prestigious battle between the BJP and the TRS, surprisingly the TRS decided to conduct the plenary just five days before the

by-election.

Sources said the TRS leadership has a strong reason for holding the plenary as the result of the Huzurabad Assembly by-election result has become unpredictable.

If the plenary is conducted after the by-election and if the result goes against the TRS, the cadres and leaders will be demoralised, and it will impact the plenary. Another reason is that through the plenary Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Reddy can campaign on behalf of TRS candidate Gellu Srinivas Yadav from the capital city itself.

TRS Working President and IT Minister K.T.Rama Rao said the tour programme of KCR to

campaign in Huzurabad is not yet finalised. If the Chief Minister cannot campaign in Huzurabad he will do so from Hyderabad.

There is a political strategy too behind the Warangal Vijayagarjana Sabha scheduled for November 15. Sources said the TRS leadership had decided the dates for conducting the Vijayagarjana Sabha with foresight.

Usually the TRS conducts huge public meetings after the plenary session. Moreover, the TRS has completed 20 years as a political party. Keeping this in view the TRS has decided to conduct the Vijayagarjana Sabha on November 15, 12

days after declaration of the Huzurabad Assembly by-election result.

If the TRS wins the by-election it will become a real Vijayagarjana. If the BJP wins naturally the TRS cadre will be demoralized, and it may create doubts in their minds about the party's future.

In that case the TRS leadership will give confidence to party cadres and create hope about the future of the party through the Vijayagarjana Sabha. The TRS leadership is holding the party plenary and the Vijayagarjana Sabha before and after the Huzurabad Assembly by-election with political foresight.

Rains batter Utt'kand as 42 more die, UP sees 4 fatalities
Continued from Page 1

He announced a compensation of Rs 4 lakh each to the next of kin of those killed in rain-related incidents across the state over the last two days.

Director General of Uttarakhand Police Ashok Kumar, who accompanied Chief Minister Dhami on a visit to the rain-hit areas of the Kumaon region, said roads, bridges and railway tracks have been damaged in Kathgodam and Lalkuan in Nainital and Rudrapur in Udhham Singh Nagar.

It will take at least four-five days to repair the damaged tracks, Kumar told PTI.

Veerappa: Where are Lokpal warriors Santhosh Hegde, Hazare now?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former Karnataka Chief Minister Veerappa Moily said that the UPA government had brought the Lokpal Bill, but the BJP-led NDA government had failed to implement it.

He asked Lokpal warriors - Santhosh Hegde and Anna Hazare - what they were doing as Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not implementing the Lokpal Bill which aimed to eradicate corruption by the Prime Minister, Ministers, MPs, Groups A, B, C and D officers and other officials of the Central Government.

Receiving the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award from the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Yatra Commemoration Committee at Charminar on Tuesday, Moily said that Rajiv Gandhi's five-year rule was a golden one.

Rajiv ruled the nation upholding secularism, peace, integrity and development.

He brought the Anti-Corruption Law to eradicate corruption. He introduced the Anti-defection Law to enhance values in politics, Moily said, alleging that Prime Minister Modi had been purchasing public representatives by paying crores.

He said that Rajiv Gandhi sacrificed his life for the sake of the nation like Mahatma Gandhi and Indira Gandhi. He said that Rajiv Gandhi solved the problems of Assam, Tripura and Tamil Nadu. He said the present generation is secure due to the sacrifices of several national leaders.

Moily exuded confidence that the Congress will come to power in 2023 in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Telangana Congress Affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore, TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy, former PCC chiefs V Hanumantha Rao, Ponnala Laxmaiah, N Uttam Kumar Reddy, APCC chief S Sailajanath, TPCC working president Dr J Geetha Reddy, PAC convener Shabbir Ali, TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki Goud, senior leader Marri Shashidhar Reddy, AICC Secretary Ch. Vamshichand Reddy and former minister G. Vinod participated in the program held under the guidance of TPCC Senior Vice-President G. Niranjan.



Telangana to buy 125 kg gold from RBI for...

Continued from Page 1

He was accompanied by Ministers Jagadeeshwar Reddy, Indrakaran Reddy and MLA Suneetha Mahender Reddy, among others.

Sharing the genesis of the reconstruction work taken up at Yadadri temple, being developed as a great religious and spiritual centre on the lines of Tirumala, KCR said the temple reconstruction was taken up as per the advice, and under the supervision, of Chinna Jeeyar Swamy, who in turn had consulted several Agama pundits and Vasthu experts.

The developmental works of the Yadadri temple town would continue after the re-opening of the temple. Some of the ongoing temple-related works would be speeded up. About 10,000 ritviks from various Peethams and temples from across the country would be invited to perform Sudharshana Yagam under the supervision of Chinna Jeeyar Swamy to mark the re-opening of the temple in the 'Uttarayana' period. It was

decided to do gold-plating of 'Vimana Gopuram' of the temple on the lines of the Tirumala temple and it would require 125 kg of gold, estimated to cost about Rs.65 crore. The gold would be bought from the RBI. Many devotees, people's representatives had offered to donate money for buying the gold, ranging from one kg onwards.

The Chief Minister, as the first donor, announced that personally he, on behalf of his family, would donate money to buy one kg and 16 tolas of gold and he would hand over the cheque to the temple authorities. Many Ministers, MLAs, MPs suggested that people in every constituency be given an opportunity to donate as per their capacity, starting with Rs.11 for the sacred cause, he said. "Many devotees are coming forward to offer their donations. We would like to encourage people to contribute to inculcate a sense of participation and a feeling that this temple and the State is theirs," he said.

Huzurabad Congress candidate unhappy over party leadership

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

The Congress candidate for the Huzurabad by-poll, Balmoor Venkat Narsing Rao, is not happy with his party leaders, it is learnt.

Venkat expressed his unhappiness over party leaders not joining the campaign although the election is just 10 days away. According to sources, Venkat expressed his unhappiness to none other than the Telangana Congress Affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore on Monday.

Venkat told Manickam Tagore that the party's star campaigners, in-charges and coordinators were not taking part in the campaign.

It may be recalled that Manickam Tagore, who had said that 224 hours of campaign was enough to ensure the victo-

ry of the Congress candidate, participated in the campaign on Monday at Huzurabad and Jammikunta. However, most of the star campaigners, in-charges and coordinators have not yet stepped into the constituency although they were appointed nearly 10 days ago. Except for some leaders like TPCC Election Management Committee Chairman Damoda Rajanarsimha, no other leader is campaigning in Huzurabad for Venkat. The party had announced Balmoor Venkat's name on October 2 amidst confusion after a long exercise. Venkat had expressed happiness about his candidature in Huzurabad.

He entered the campaign after filing nomination on October 8. However, only NSUI and Youth Congress activists are participating in the election

campaign full time. The party's leaders and star campaigners, in-charges and coordinators are not participating in the election campaign.

The party held a Zoom App meeting on Saturday (October 16) regarding this and took a decision that all leaders would participate in the campaign full time from Sunday (October 17) onwards. In reality, the star campaigners, in-charges and coordinators are not participating in the campaign. However, the in-charges and coordinators participated in the review meeting headed by Manickam Tagore at Huzurabad on October 18.

According to sources, even Manickam Tagore was also not happy with the attitude of party leaders. He too expressed his unhappiness over the leaders keeping off from the Huzurabad campaign, it is learnt.

TRS trends anti-Dalit BJP to send a message to nation

Continued from Page 1

Former MLC N Ramchander Rao participated in the trend. Sagar Goud of BJP said, "If not in Huzurabad, who is stopping him in the adjoining constituency? How many more days will this bankrupt politics do?? How many more times will Dalits be deceived. KCRBetrayedTelanganaDalits". A Dinesh Vaswani said, "Although the Naya Nizam of Telangana had approximately 4 months on hand to implement the Dalitha Bandhu scheme, he deliberately wasted time until the Model Code of Conduct was implemented. #KCR thinks he can fool Dalits too, like he fooled TRS sheep.#KCRBetrayedTelanganaDalits".

ECI order to impact only 10% Dalit Bandhu beneficiaries

Continued from Page 1

Sources pointed that even though the damage was less, we want to expose the behavior of the BJP towards Dalits. For the amounts to be used, beneficiaries had to submit to officials their business plan for approval.

The scheme was officially launched by Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao in Huzurabad on August 16. Each beneficiary Dalit family was assured of Rs 10 lakh as assistance in the form of a direct benefit transfer to their bank account in saturation mode. The government released Rs 2,000 crore for implementing the scheme in Huzurabad.

Cong and BJP colluded in..

Continued from Page 1

"Let his party candidate retain deposit in Huzurabad before indulging in guessing game about early elections and KCR's political plans," he quipped.

Dismissing the challenges thrown at the TRS by opposition leaders, KTR said let the Congress PCC chief prove his strength first. "There may be a variety of paper tigers and those created by media. TRS president and Chief Minister KCR is a visionary and others are 'tele-visionaries,' confined to TV shows, he said, taking a dig at some opposition leaders. "Everyone thinks they can compete with KCR, but it is not that easy. Setting up and strengthening a party, sustaining it, withstanding several challenges, and winning election after election is not easy at all," he reminded them.

Everyone knew the kind of effort KCR would put into every election, small or big. Even in the Nagarjuna Sagar bypoll, people were boasting but a veteran leader, nine-time MLA and former Minister Jana Reddy was defeated with a margin of over 18,000 votes by a political novice and young man Nomula Bhagath from TRS."

CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹253
Without Skin	₹273
Broiler at Farm	₹140

EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	416
VISAKHAPATNAM	470
VIJAYAWADA	441
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.16

TRS leaders to study organisational...

Continued from Page 1

He said since both the DMK and AIADMK survived for generations in Tamil Nadu, the TRS has decided to study their model.

He pointed out that in the undivided Andhra Pradesh only two political parties -- TDP founded by N.T. Rama Rao in 1982 and the TRS by Chandrasekhara Rao in 2001 -- were there.

Revanth Reddy challenges KT Rama Rao for a debate

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy has thrown a counter challenge to TRS working President KT Rama Rao stating that he is ready for any debate on any issue before November 15. He said that KT Rama Rao is a junior to him in all aspects.

Revanth said that he is the state president of a national party and that KTR is only the working president of a region-

al party.

The TPCC chief said that he had functioned as ZPTC, MLC, MLA and MP. He said that KTR is not an equal to him in politics.

Revanth challenged KTR to come for a debate on any issue if he had the guts. He said that KTR is not competent to speak about him as he had failed to ensure the victory of his own sister (K Kavitha) in the Lok Sabha elections.

Revanth lodged a complaint with state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Shashank Goyal alleging that TRS leaders had attacked an unemployed woman named Nirosha, a B.Pharm student, on October 18, when she tried to bring to the notice of Finance Minister T. Harish Rao problems regarding unemployment allowance.

Revanth said that later the police arrested Nirosha and shifted her to the Veenavanka

police station and threatened her. Revanth alleged that TRS leaders are resorting to attacks on unemployed youth.

He said the Congress had condemned the attack by TRS leaders on persons who had questioned its government. He said the Congress had fielded Balmoor Venkat, who exposed the government's faults and faced police attacks in Huzurabad. Revanth alleged that Minister T. Harish Rao and

BJP candidate Eatata Rajender were violating election codes, and had made the Huzurabad by-poll the costliest one held so far. He alleged that both Harish Rao and Eatata had entered into a war of words when differences arose regarding distribution of goodies. The TRS and the BJP are distributing hundreds of crores in Huzurabad. He said that they had lodged a complaint with the EC urging it to take action

against Harish Rao for spending hundreds of crores for the Huzurabad by-poll.

Revanth alleged that the TRS and the BJP had stopped the Dalit Bandhu scheme. Why did they stop Dalit Bandhu when they had deposited Rythu Bandhu during elections in the past, he asked.

He asked as to why the TRS and the BJP are not meeting the EC for implementation of Dalit Bandhu.

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Old city comes alive on Milad-un-Nabi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Amid the ongoing Covid pandemic, a festive atmosphere prevails across Telangana's Hyderabad as the city is all decked up to celebrate Eid Milad-un-Nabi, the birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammed.

The celebrations passed off peacefully in Hyderabad and elsewhere in the state on Tuesday amid elaborate security arrangements.

Processions and religious meetings marked the celebration of the birth anniversary of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Milad-un-Nabi) across the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad on Tuesday.

The faithful celebrated the day with religious zeal and fervour but spent less on the decorations.

The old city in Hyderabad is decorated with lights, banners and flags. The city is illuminated and devotional songs were played.

Eid Milad-un-Nabi is an annual celebration to commemorate the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad and is observed in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, the third month of the Islamic lunar calendar, which commences with the sighting of the moon.



endar, which commences with the sighting of the moon.

This year, as per the Gregorian calendar, the celebration began from the evening of October 18 and will last till the evening of October 19.

One of the most important parts of Eid Milad-un-Nabi is to celebrate the life of the Prophet, his teachings, sufferings, and his character, as he even forgave his enemies. Muslims celebrate the occasion by wearing new clothes, offering prayers, and exchanging gifts.

The Prophet's life and teachings, even today, continue to influence believers and instill them with the will to follow the path of righteousness.

Hundreds of youth took part in the processions across the city, holding green flags and raising slogans praising the Prophet. Few youth were seen carrying the National Flags as well. Stunt-riders demonstrated daredevil tricks on the roads during the procession.

Religious organizations held meetings to highlight the message of the Prophet and organised 'Mahfil-e-Milad' in praise of the Prophet to mark the occasion.

Hundreds of youth donated blood to patients of thalassemia. Mega blood camps were conducted in the city at various places.

Police had deployed additional forces in sensitive places.

Guvs, CMs of TS, AP greet citizens on Milad-un-Nabi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Governors and chief ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on Tuesday greeted Muslims on Eid Milad-un-Nabi, the birthday of Prophet Muhammad.

Telangana Governor Dr Tamilsai Soundararajan conveyed her warm greetings on the occasion. "The teachings of compassion, tolerance, unity, harmony and universal brotherhood may continue to inspire us all in working for the well-being of all. May there be peace and prosperity all around," she said in her message.

"The most venerable Prophet's mission is fulfilled when we serve our fellowmen with faith, trust, care, kindness and compassion," the Governor said.

"On this occasion, let us all resolve to promote unity, harmony, peace, universal brotherhood and prosperity in the society," she added and

called for celebrating Milad-un-Nabi in its true spirit, in a safe manner by adhering to the Covid-19 preventive norms.

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan conveyed his greetings to Muslim brethren on the occasion. "The life of the Prophet has been an inspiring saga of love, brotherhood and virtue to mankind," he said.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao also greeted Muslims. He called for following the teachings of the Prophet based on love, brotherhood and moral values.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy also conveyed his greetings to Muslims. He said in his message that the Prophet's message of compassion, charity, morality, equality and unity will always continue to guide humanity. He called for celebrating the festival with devotion.

Hyderabad sees record number of noise pollution violations this year

DAVE BENNETT SILVERY
■ HYDERABAD

Despite the partial lockdowns this year in the city, Hyderabad has seen a record number of noise pollution cases being booked till October 1. Comparatively, 2,163 cases were booked in the year 2020 and 4,866 cases in 2019. While most of these cases were booked against two wheeler riders who used modified silencers, cases were also booked against vehicle owners with loud horns.

In a bid to discourage the use of loud silencers and horns and curb the noise pollution levels in the city, the Hyderabad Police have reinforced an ongoing campaign against the use of such instruments. While the Pollution Control Board has identified that more than 60 percent of the noise in the city was originating from vehicles, the threshold limit, set by the board at 55 dB, was breached with crowded residential places like Jubilee Hills reporting levels in excess of 90 dB.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO),



noise above 65 decibels (dB) classifies as noise pollution. When above 75 dB, noise causes the same effect as 120 dB. Health officials thus recommended noise levels be kept below 65 dB during the day and indicates that restful sleep is impossible with night time ambient noise levels in excess of 30 dB.

In a study, it was revealed that traffic noise was associated with cardiovascular defects in all adults above 25 years. Long-term exposure to road traffic noise increases the risk of death and the risk of cardiovascular disease in the population. As well as damaging our hearing by causing tinnitus or deafness, constant loud noise can damage human health in

many ways, particularly in the very young and the very old.

According to section 190 (2) of the Motor Vehicle Act 1988, any person who drives or causes or allows to be driven, in any public place a motor vehicle, which violates the standards prescribed in relation to road safety, control of noise and air pollution, shall be punishable for the first offence with a fine of Rs 1,000 and for any second or subsequent offence with a fine of Rs 2,000.

The Police booked 4,866 noise pollution cases in 2019, 2,163 cases in 2020 and 12,938 cases until October 1, 2021. Officials also booked 18,430 air pollution cases in 2019, 6,022 cases in 2020 and 1,977 cases in 2021.

RTC to accept payments via UPI and QR code at MGBS, Rathifile

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) has taken up a pilot project to accept payments via UPI/QR code at ticket reservation counters, parcel cargo centres and bus pass counters from October 19, said managing director VC Sajjanar on Tuesday.

The Corporation has launched this pilot project at the Mahatma Gandhi Bus Station (MGBS) and Rathifile Bus Station (Secunderabad).

As part of this project, payments via UPI/QR code will be accepted at the ticket reservation counter and the parcel and cargo centre at MGBS and at the bus pass counter at Rathifile Bus Station.

Sajjanar tweeted regarding this on Tuesday saying that after observation, "TSRTC plans to implement the same across Telangana. He urged the



public to utilise this service and to provide feedback /suggestions if any.

In another tweet Sajjanar said that the TSRTC management thanks all the residents of Telangana and the neighboring states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu for utilising TSRTC services during the Bathukamma and Dasara festival.

During the last 10 days

TSRTC had a very memorable journey with the support of everyone. He said the TSRTC had earned record revenue of Rs 14.79 crore clocking 36.30 lakh kilometers on a single day on October 18.

He requested the public to continue their patronage to the TSRTC and that the TSRTC will assure the public the best of services. He said the RTC staff is committed to make every journey safe.



PROCESSIONS MARK EID

Milad-un-Nabi, the birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammed, was celebrated on Tuesday with religious zeal and fervour. Several Milad processions were taken out from various parts of Old City, amid tight security. At daybreak, Muslim clerics and people came out offering special prayers in mosques for upholding religious teachings, unity, solidarity and welfare of the people in the state. Apart from Milad committees, certain religious organizations undertook activities, including processions, conferences, naat, dua and other programmes to observe the annual auspicious occasion.

— SV Charity

Inter-state drug peddler nabbed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Sleuths of the Commissioner's Task Force, North Zone, Hyderabad and Afzalgunj Police apprehended a notorious inter-state ganja peddler near the Central Bus Station on Tuesday.

The arrested identified as V Naga Sai, belongs to Narsipatnam in Visakhapatnam. He was carrying ganja and was waiting to deliver it to traders in Hyderabad. The police also seized 40 kg of dry ganja worth about Rs 4 lakh and a cell phone from him.

Sai, who used to run a catering business established contact with ganja suppliers and started supplying it to agents. He used to purchase ganja for Rs 1,500 a kg from cultivators and local agents and was selling it to traders for Rs 5,000 to 10,000 depending on demand. It was noticed that he had contacts with ganja traders in and around TS, Maharashtra, Gujarat, UP and other states.

Envious of fame, group attacks viral youngster

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A youngster from Ramgopalpet was attacked by a group of persons, following a tiff between them on Monday.

The victim, identified as Sharath, had his moment in the limelight after he had recreated the tea advertisement 'Ayyayyo Vaddamma... Sukhibbhava'.

According to the police, a complaint was filed by Sharath, who claimed that a group of persons had beaten him up as they were envious of his newfound fame. The Police began an investigation, during which they learnt that in September, Sharath had beaten up two persons, identified as Naga Sai and Hari, brothers from Lothkunta over an issue for which a case was registered against him at the Alwal Police station.

During the recently concluded Durga puja celebrations, the two brothers had come down to Ramgopalpet and were discussing hiring of



a band in which Sharath's group was also interested. Soon the heated discussions escalated to a fist fight, in which Sharath received bleeding injuries. Police suspect that the fight was premeditated as retaliation to September's fight.

Sharath then approached the Ramgopalpet Police, who lodged a complaint against the group under section 324 (Voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means) of the IPC and are investigating the incident.

22-year-old man found murdered

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The body of a 22-year-old man who was earlier alleged to be missing was found bludgeoned to death by unidentified persons at Madhapur. Police recovered the body on Monday in the bushes near Thummidikunta.

The deceased was identified as Mokhtadir Muzumdar, a resident of Muslim basti and native of Assam. "Unidentified persons had smashed his head with boulder at Thummidikunta dumping yard. The injuries suggest that he was murdered on Monday," said the police and registered a case.

Gold worth Rs 2.97 cr seized at Hyd airport

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The officials of Customs Department at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Shamshabad seized smuggled gold worth around Rs 2.97 crore from two passengers on Tuesday.

According to the officials, the two passengers, who landed

from Dubai, were detained at the international terminal and gold weighing over 6 kilos was seized from them.

"The smuggled yellow metal was concealed in an electric chargeable light. We have detained them for questioning," said the Hyderabad customs officials. The case is under investigation.



Three nabbed for threatening SPP handling sensational murder case

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Three people, who threatened the special public prosecutor, were arrested on Tuesday in Hyderabad.

The public prosecutor is handling the murder case of Dr Chigurupati Jayaram, the founder of the Express News Channel.

The three suspects are associates of prime accused Rakesh Reddy. They are Akbar Ali, 35, a male nurse at the Chanchalguda Jail and a resident of Yakutpura, Mangaiah Guptha, 58, a resident of Madhapur and Srinivas, 38, a

civil contractor and a resident of Bhimavaram in East Godavari District, AP.

The three had threatened the SPP as per the direction of Rakesh.

Rakesh, who is involved in the sensational murder case of Dr Chigurupati Jayaram was remanded and sent to Chanchalguda prison on February 11, 2019.

At present the trial of the above case is going on at the Nampally court. Rakesh hatched a plan to threaten public prosecutors and witnesses to get out of the case.

Accordingly, Rakesh influ-

enced Akbar who is working as a male nurse at the Central Prison, Chanchalguda, and his friends Guptha and Srinivas by offering them huge amounts.

They agreed to cooperate with him and as per his plan, the accused persons sent some letters containing threats to the SPP and witnesses.

As per the complaint of the SPP, a case was registered at the Jubilee Hills police station.

On October 18, the Jubilee Hills police and the West Zone task force nabbed the three and seized five handwritten letters and six mobile phones from them.

Know more about Salar Jung Museum with an audio guide!

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad's Salar Jung Museum has launched an audio guide app through which visitors can gather information on artefacts displayed.

A museum official informed that advanced technology is being used to connect with the visitors of the museum. With the newly launched audio guide app, which provides a brief history of the museum, visitors will be able to access audio recordings for free.

Dr Nagender Reddy, Director of Museum said, "Visitors purchasing photography tickets will get audio a tour free of cost. They will get the

information of artefacts and art pieces displayed."

"We do not charge money on the usage of this application. So, when the visitors purchase a ticket for photography in the museum, they can use this app free of cost. We haven't paid money to the developers yet, but a part of the amount that we get through photography ticket will be paid to the developers. Each gallery is provided with a unique QR code. The visitor can scan the QR code and proceed ahead," Nagender Reddy said.

Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary of the Industries and Commerce of the Telangana government also attended the



event where the app was launched.

Jayesh Ranjan said, "This

new addition to the museum is extremely user friendly. There are people coming from differ-

ent socio-cultural backgrounds to the museum. They feel eager to know about the history and background of the artefacts here. For these people, the audio guide is very useful."

A visitor to the museum, Archana said, "I came from Karnataka am very happy visit this place.

The government has provided a virtual app that comes with the ticket. These days everyone has mobile phones and one just has to download the app and it will guide accordingly. I am thankful to the authorities for introducing this app."

The Salar Jung Museum houses a collection of 46,000

objects ranging from traditional attires, miniature paintings, sculptures, carpets, toys, furniture and clocks. With this audio guide app, which is powered by HopOn India, visitors who are curious to know about the stories behind the artefacts and its magnificent history behind the spectacular pieces can easily hear about it on their own mobile phones at the museum during the tour.

A statement from the museum said, "The visitors can avail the benefits of the app for free after availing the ticket. Once they download the app, they have to enter the QR code provided for the same to start the audio tour."

12 child labourers rescued by AHTU

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Anti Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Rachakonda Police rescued 12 minors, being exploited as labourers under dangerous conditions atmbrahimpattanam on Tuesday and arrested two persons who employed them.

The arrested persons have been identified as N Bhupesh Jain, 44, a native of Rajasthan residing at West Marredpally and Sunil Kumar Konoujiya, 27, a native of Bihar who works as a labour contractor from Ibrahimpatnam.

"Bhupesh Jain has been running a manufacturing unit of disposable glasses and thermocol plates at Mangalpally of Ibrahimpatnam. Sunil Kumar, a native of Bihar, brought the children from Chhattisgarh and Bihar. Some families who are in poverty and financial crisis send their children for labour work as there is no alternative to lead their families. Taking that as an advan-

tage, some owners of small scale companies, bring minor children to work as labour. The kids are detained within the premises, in temporary sheds and are paid a meagre Rs 270 per day for more than 16 hours of labour. Apart from inhuman work and living conditions, the children are not allowed to venture outside even in the little free time they get" said Mahesh Bhagwat, Rachakonda Commissioner of Police.

Based on a tip off, the Police officials conducted a raid on the unit, and rescued the children, all aged between 15 to 17 years. Officials of the DCPU Ranga Reddy District, Bachpan Bachao Andolan and Child line members were also present during the raid in which six boys and six girls were reduced. 10 of the children are from Chattisgarh 10 and two are from Bihar, said the police. Ibrahimpatnam Police are investigating the case.

21 from tribal hamlet bag seats in TS residential school, thanks to teachers

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

As many as 21 Government Primary School students from a tribal hamlet named Dorri Thanda with a population of just 751 have secured seats in government residential schools, thanks to the untiring efforts of their teachers.

There are just 102 families in Dorri Thanda. At the end of the agriculture season, the residents migrate to cities like Mumbai and Pune to work as masons and in other jobs in the construction sector. They return to their hamlet afterwards.

As per the Palle Pragathi scheme, sanitation, greenery and village parks have been developed and NREGS works are being executed in the hamlet.

The hamlet has 100 per cent individual sanitary toilets. The residents have also availed loans under the bank-linkage programme and have repaid the loans.

A government primary school was started here in 1998. A classroom was sanc-



tioned to it in 2001. Another classroom was sanctioned in 2017. At one time, the government wanted to close the school for want of students. Currently, the school has 67 students after 42 of its students secured seats in residential schools.

When Mallesh joined the school as a teacher in 2015, there were only four students. Students from the tribal hamlet used to attend private schools in Hanwada and Mahabubnagar, threatening the existence of the government school in the hamlet.

Mallesh introduced English medium in the school in 2016

to save the school somehow as parents were sending their wards to English medium schools. That year, the school got 16 new admissions.

The next year, the strength increased to 35. In 2017, the government launched residential schools on a large scale. At the same time, the government closed down the primary school in Palugu thanda and merged it with the school at Dorri Thanda. As a result, a teacher of the merged school, Pullaiah, joined the school. The duo tried to prevent students from the thanda joining private schools.

They started special classes,

focused on students lagging behind, imparted coaching to students for the admission test of residential schools and stole the hearts of the residents of the locality. The elders have now stopped sending children to private schools.

The following are details of the students of the primary school who got admissions in residential schools: six in 2018, three in 2019, 12 in 2020 and 21 in 2021.

This has led to private school students joining the government primary school. The school education committee is also responsible for this phenomenon.

The teachers teach mathematics practically, taking students to post-offices, government offices, banks and sensitise them on the working of these institutions. Moreover, the children have direct interaction with the officers there.

Mallesh said that educating them on news appearing in the press, teaching them how to write Telugu in a beautiful hand, the conduct of Bala Sabha and paying special

attention to GK helped the students secure seats in residential schools. "In fact, my children are also studying in this school," said the teacher.

Arjun, a student, who got a seat in a residential school, said he studied at the government school up to class 4 and later joined the residential school in class 5. He said the teachers of the primary school conducted classes on Sundays too. They prepared a model paper of the admission test for residential schools. That is why, 21 of the students got seats in residential school, he said.

The Mandal Parishad Development Officer at Hanwada, Dhanunjaya Goud, said that no student from the thanda are attending private schools because of the special interest shown by teachers. The teachers have overcome the Telugu language problem of tribal students and are teaching them in English medium.

He said that due to their special efforts private school students are now joining the government primary school.

‘Ruthless’ C’garh Maoist Madvi Hidma entering T’gana ruled out

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALAPALLY

People's Liberation Guerrilla Army First Battalion commander Hidma, who carries a reward of Rs 50 lakh on his head post Bijapur encounter that claimed many lives of the police, is unlikely step out of his safe zone of Bastar, where he enjoys five-tier security to enter Telangana.

Currently, he also holds the rank of central military commission chief in the Maoist organisation.

Hidma leads a force of at least 180-250.

Is it possible for Hidma to reach Telangana, moving out of his safe zone, hoodwinking the hawk-eyed special security forces? Moreover, in the contest of the Maoist organisation growing weak in Telangana, he is unlikely to enter Telangana, it is felt.

Moreover, the Maoists are not likely to depute Hidma to Telangana as the Maoists are plagued with Coronavirus, health issues and intense combing by the security personnel.

Many rule out news about



Hidma entering Telangana as mere rumours, it is felt.

Of late, there is huge speculation among media circles and police intelligence circles that Madvi Hidma had entered Telangana.

Hidma, who is an expert in strategies and launching attacks and leading counter attacks, entering Telangana under prevailing situation was largely ruled out, it is said.

It is impossible for him to cross borders of many states to enter Telangana without police

sniffing it out. The police are always ready to get information from Agency areas even sacrificing their food and sleep. If it is necessary, the police are capable of bringing him to book. The most wanted Maoist entering Telangana undetected is next to impossible.

But, the police remained on the highest state of alertness on a top off that Hidma had entered the Agency areas of Eturunagaram. The combing operations in Agency areas have been stepped up and intense checks are being carried out.

In the remote forest areas of Jayashankar-Bhupalapally district, the police have been leaving nothing to change have been questioning the strangers and suspects showering them with series of questions to get their information. On the other, the police have been combing the Agency area every inch.

The people of Agency areas have been living in grip of fear as rumours have spread about Hidma's entry to Agency areas. Intensive combing is forcing the people of Agency areas to apprehend danger.



Police launch special drive to clear footpaths

PNS ■ NALGONDA

The Nalgonda traffic police officials are taking measures to solve the increasing traffic problems in the town, as per the orders of their superiors.

In connection with this, the traffic police, led by Traffic circle inspector Cheerla Srinivas, initiated steps to remove various items placed by shopkeepers on footpaths and clear tea stalls and small shops set up on footpaths in the Prakasam Bazaar area.

Clearing encroachments on footpaths would make it easy for pedestrians to walk on the roads during traffic jams. The circle inspector urged the traders to clear the footpaths as soon as possible. He said that steps were being taken to eliminate traffic congestion in the town and urged the people and traders to cooperate with them.

He was accompanied by Traffic SI Jayanandam, ASI Narsireddy, constable Lingaiah and others.

Davis: All set for Police Flag Day from tomorrow

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

All arrangements have been made to conduct the Police Flag Day celebrations which will begin on October 21 and last for 10 days, according to City Police Commissioner Joel Davis.

As part of the celebrations, a parade would be taken out from the Government Degree College grounds and an open house would be conducted on October 22 online.

Addressing the mediapers-

sons here on Tuesday, he said that pictures of police martyrs would be displayed at all important junctions.

An essay-writing contest would be held for school and college students in Telugu, English and Urdu in all police station limits from October 21 to 25 and prizes would be given to the winners, he said. He asked those interested to send short films with duration of not more than three minutes in Telugu and English languages.



Cong MLA Seethakka visits Ramappa temple

PNS ■ MULUG

Congress MLA Seethakka performed special prayers on Tuesday at the Palampeta Ramappa Sri Ramalingeswara Swamy Temple in Venkatapur mandal and wanted the State and the Central Governments to take urgent steps to develop the surrounding areas of the temple within the stipulated time.

Expressing happiness over the UNESCO recognition to the Ramappa Temple, she specially thanked Panduranga Rao and Papa Rao who took special interest in the matter.

She also welcomed Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy's visit.

She suggested constitution of a committee for the development of the temple and sought the establishment of college of sculpture in the area. Seethakka interacted with local authorities to find out the progress in the temple's development works.

Several Congress functionaries, including District Congress President Nallella Kumaraswamy, Youth Congress leader Rajender, elected public representatives and others were present.

Faithful take out rally on Eid

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

Muslims in Godavarikhani took out a rally in the town on Tuesday in connection with Milad-un-Nabi, the birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammad.

The rally began from Noorani School in the town and passed via Ashok Nagar and Lakshmi Nagar before reaching Regal Cross Roads. They also offered prayers.

Leaders of Muslim organisations MD Sharif, Hazi Ali and others took part in the rally.



Minister greets Muslims on Eid

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Panchayat Raj Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao on Tuesday greeted Muslims on the occasion of Milad-un-Nabi and said that the teachings of Prophet Mohammad on charity, compassion, spir-

ituality, equality of all humans and unity are worth emulating.

He said that people of all faiths live in harmony in the state under the administration of Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao. The State government of

Telangana conducts many festivities for the people.

The government works for all-round development of people.

He wished Muslim brethren to celebrate the festival with devotion and dedication.

Citizens file petition to save Achari Kunta lake

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The residents of Nizampet have filed an online petition urging the Water Board to protect the Achari Kunta Lake and to stop FTL (Full Tank Level) violations.

The change.org petition created by Raghu Rama Rao, the founder of PraHari Trust said, "Recently the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) tried to lay a water supply pipeline inside the FTL boundaries of the lake to the nearby Vignan School. We had requested to stop the work several times as it is inside the FTL area and also requested to lay the water pipeline outside FTL boundaries. But even after repeated requests they are trying to lay the new water pipeline inside the FTL area."

He said, "I have given representation and till now there

is no reply from any department. The NHRC has accepted a case and had redirected it to the Principal Secretary, Telangana, hoping to see action. We want to bring this issue to the public and we need support in filing a PIL on this."

In his petition Raghu Rama Rao said, "We are developing the Achari Kunta lake as a local partner and in association with the iNaturewatch Foundation according to the irrigation permission letter. The entire lake is now undergoing rejuvenation using CSR funds, and we have been developing the lake with the help of the Municipal Corporation."

They also urged to remove the CC road and drainage constructed inside the FTL area of the lake towards Vignan School and also requested the government to hand over the encroached part of the lake.

Now, all villages in Nagarkurnool district house Vaikuntadhamams

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

The Nagarkurnool district administration has completed the construction of electric crematoria in all villages spending Rs 12.60 lakh for each crematorium. In all, construction has been completed in 461 villages as per the Palle Pragathi scheme.

Washrooms and toilets have been provided at crematoria besides provisions for performing the last rites after cremation. The State government of Telangana spent Rs 58.8 crore for the purpose. In towns, the government spends at least Rs 1 crore to set up an electric crematorium. The government has plans to buy vehicles to transport bodies to crematoria. In Kollapur town, three crematoria were built at a cost of Rs 3 crore, while crematoria have been set up at Nagarkurnool, Atchampet and



Kalwakurthy at a cost of Rs 1 crore for each. Two bodies can be cremated at a time.

Earlier, villagers used to cremate or bury the dead near streams and on river banks. There were instances of people having problems for want of burial grounds. The electric crematoria have solved the problems to a great extent. There were also instances of people settled elsewhere bringing bodies to cremate them.

Vaddeman village sarpanch Sudarsan Goud said bore wells

have been sunk to enable the relatives of the dead to bathe the bodies. So far, five bodies have been cremated at the crematorium in the Vaddeman village of Bijinepalli mandal.

Panchayat secretaries and sarpanches have been sensitising people to use crematoria. The government provided the crematoria as land would become scarce in future and would not be available for cremating the dead, according to district panchayat officer Rajeswari.

Stage set for reopening of post-matric hostels

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

The stage is set for the opening of post-matric hostels in the district ending the problems of students.

Although educational institutions have commenced operations, hostels did not start fearing the Covid pandemic.

As the Covid pandemic has showed signs of let-up, the State government of Telangana has ordered the authorities to ready hostels for students. Officials of the social welfare department have been making arrangements to reopen the hostels for students.

Out of 31 post-matric hostels in undivided Medak dis-



trict, four hostels each are for SC and ST students and two are for BC students providing accommodation to 431 students. There are 10 hostels in Siddipet district and 11 in

Sangareddy district. These facilities remained locked for around 18 months. At the time of examinations, accommodation was provided to under graduate, post graduate

students. The students pursuing other courses can also utilise the facility.

In fact, the hostels were sanitised and kept ready for reopening in the month of

August itself, but the court objected to their reopening expressing concern over the health of students in case of negligence. So, the reopening was put off for the time being.

Meanwhile, the top officials of government departments have ordered the reopening of hostels after the Dasara vacation seeking the permission from the court.

Students have been facing lots of difficulties in finding accommodation as the hostels were closed. Many students cannot afford private rooms. Some students have been shuttling between colleges and homes.

The problems of the stu-

dents were brought to the notice of the State government by students' unions. The leaders of the students impressed on the government that further delay would cause immense loss to students and appealed for orders to reopen the hostels.

Taking into consideration the increasing classroom attendance of students and the pandemic easing, the government has decided to reopen hostels in a day or two. The hostels were closed in the second week of March 2020. The government opened the hostels for some days in February. As Covid cases increased then, the hostels were closed.

CM losing ground, 30% of voters sore with him

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Around 30 per cent of respondents are 'angry' with Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao, according to an IANS-CVoter survey.

Yashwant Deshmukh, founder, CVoter, said that KCR's declining popularity may create an opportunity for the BJP to make inroads in TS. The tracker measures the performance of States as well as Union Territories on 115 parameters. However, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has been voted the best performing CM in the country by a survey.

According to survey, only six per cent of respondents in the state are unhappy with Baghel. Prakhar Singh Dhani of Uttarakhand is the second-best CM with a mere 10.1 per cent of the electorate expressing 'anger' against his administration.

The survey also stated that the YSRCP MLAs from Andhra Pradesh topped the list when it comes to public outrage with 28.5 per cent. In this regard, Goa is in the second place and Telangana stood in the third place. However, Kerala has the lowest public outrage vis-à-vis MLAs at just 6.8 per cent.

INDIA CORNER

Delhi government allows weekly off for ration shop owners

The Delhi government has withdrawn its order asking FPS to remain open all seven days of the week and in a new directive allowed a weekly off for such shops owners in the city, officials said on Tuesday. The move comes following the high court directions to allow such ration distribution shop owners to take an off once a week. The Delhi High Court on September 23 in its order said that owners of fair price shops in the city will be permitted by the government to have a weekly off to enable them to function efficiently. The Department of Food Supplies and Consumer Affairs of the Delhi government on Monday issued an order to implement the high court directives. "The HC in its order dated 23/9/2021 has modified its earlier order dated 27/04/2021 to the extent that Fair Price Shop owners will be permitted to have a weekly off, to enable them function efficiently." "Accordingly, in compliance of the latest directions of the High Court of Delhi, the instructions of the department issued wide order dated 05/05/2020 on distribution of food grains to beneficiaries on all seven days of the week are hereby withdrawn," the Food and Supply department said.



Global Hunger Index 2021 reflects India's reality where hunger is up

India's Global Hunger Index 2021 ranking at 101st position "unfortunately" reflects the reality of the country where hunger has accentuated since the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, Oxfam India said. India slipped to 101st position in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) of 116 countries, from its 2020 position of 94th, and is behind its neighbours Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Reacting sharply to the report, the Ministry of Women and Child Development had said it was "shocking" to find that the Global Hunger Report 2021 has lowered the rank of India on the basis of FAO estimate on proportion of undernourished population, which is found to be "devoid of ground reality and facts and suffers from serious methodological issues". Oxfam India said the GHI data which states that India dropped to the hunger-level ranks by seven spots to the 101st spot "unfortunately reflects the reality of the country where hunger accentuated since the COVID-19 pandemic". "This trend of undernutrition in India is unfortunately not new, and is actually based on the government's own National Family Health Survey (NFHS) data.



School principals hail CBSE's reduced exam duration, objective questions

The Central Board of Secondary Education's new format for first term board exams for classes 10 and 12, including 90 minutes long objective type tests, has been hailed by several school principals who believe the decision will help enhance critical thinking of students. Bifurcating the academic session, holding two term-end exams and rationalising the syllabus were part of the special assessment scheme for class 10 and 12 CBSE board exams for 2021-22, which were announced in July in view of the Covid pandemic. The first term exams will begin from November 30 for major subjects, while the schedule for minor subjects will be sent to schools separately. "This will be exactly after two years that the CBSE would be conducting physical exams on such a large scale. The new objective format has a five-minute increased reading time, which is quite thoughtful and would help the students to read the questions and the options carefully before selecting the right answers. The idea of 90-minute tests in the first term board exams is excellent as during the times of lockdown, the mode of teaching, learning and grasping has undergone a massive change," Pallavi Upadhyaya said.



Video of Cong MLA, husband creating ruckus at PS goes viral

PNS ■ JODHPUR

A Congress MLA and her Husband have been caught on camera allegedly creating a ruckus at a police station here after her nephew was booked for drunken driving and his vehicle impounded. A video of the Shergarh MLA Meera Kanwar and her husband Ummad Singh, a PCC member, purportedly showing the duo sitting on the floor of the police station and arguing with policemen that all children drink and a bit of drinking does no harm, went viral on Monday night.

"Sabke bacche peete hain. Kya hua jo thodi bahut le li?" the MLA is heard telling officials at the Ratanada police station while demanding the immediate release of her nephew and his vehicle.

UP ASSEMBLY POLLS

Congress to give 40% of tickets to women

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Congress will give 40 per cents of its tickets to women candidates in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said on Tuesday.

Gandhi told a news conference here that the decision is aimed at making women, roughly constituting half the voters, a "full-fledged partner in power".

While announcing the party's decision, Gandhi, also the party's Uttar Pradesh affairs in-charge, however, remained non-committal on contesting the UP polls herself.

The Congress' decision to field 40 per cent of woman candidates in UP, however, did not



go down well with its opponents BJP and BSP both terming the move a pure election drama.

Tasked with regaining the party's lost ground in the politically crucial state, Priyanka Gandhi, said, It's the party promise to give 40 per cent tickets to women in the coming elections.

Had I had my way, I would

have given 50 per cent tickets to them, she said, adding the decision to field more and more candidates would be taken forward in the 2024 polls

"There is no hidden meaning to it. We want women in politics to become full-fledged partners in power, she said.

Gandhi's announcement was greeted with the bursting of fire-crackers and slogan-shouting by women workers who were watching the press conference on a large screen elsewhere in the party office.

Congress had won only seven seats, including two by women, in the 403-member UP house in 2017 polls.

Asked if she will also contest the assembly elections, Priyanka Gandhi said, It has not yet been decided.

Strike to protest BJP youth leader's killing disrupts normal life

PNS ■ RAIGANJ (WB)

Roads were a deserted look and shops remained closed since Tuesday morning in West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur, due to a general strike called by the BJP after a youth leader of the saffron party was shot dead at his home.

The BJP had given a call for an eight-hour bandh from 6 am in Uttar Dinajpur.

Mithun Ghosh, the 37-year-old Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) leader, was gunned down around 9.30 pm on Sunday in Itahar area. One person has been arrested in this connection, an official said.

No Covid death in Assam for first time since second wave

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

No COVID-19 death was reported in Assam on Tuesday, the first such instance since the second wave of the pandemic hit the state in April this year, while 354 new cases raised the tally to 6,07,119, a bulletin by the National Health Mission said.

The toll remained unchanged at 5,957, the bulletin stated. At least 1,347 COVID-19 patients in the state have died to other reasons. The state for the first time in ten days recorded over 300 single-day cases.

Of the 354 new cases, 152 were from Kamrup Metropolitan, 30 from Barpeta and 28 from Jorhat. Altogether 229 recovered patients were discharged from different hospitals during the day, taking the number of those cured of the disease to 5,97,577.

Assam currently has 2,238 active cases, the bulletin said. The positivity rate stood at 0.89 per cent and the recovery rate at 98.43 per cent.

As many as 39,654 sample tests were conducted during the day. According to the bulletin, 2,65,40,174 people have been administered COVID-19 vaccines thus far -- 67,64,725 of them having taken both the doses.

Owaisi slams Modi govt over Pakistan playing T-20 in J&K

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday slammed the Narendra Modi government for allowing the Indian cricket team to play a T20 match with Pakistan at a time when "our soldiers are being killed in Kashmir".

India is scheduled to play the first match of T20 World Cup against Pakistan in Dubai on October 24.

Addressing a public meeting on the eve of Eid Milad-un-Nabi at AIMIM headquarters Darussalam, he said: "Pakistan is playing T20 with Indian lives in Kashmir. How can we play a match against them amid regular terror attacks there?"

He recalled how Prime Minister Modi had criticised then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh "for sharing biryani with the Pakistan PM when Indian jawans were being killed on the borders".

Owaisi also alleged that the targeted killings in Kashmir were a result of lack of policy of terrorism by the Modi government, and questioned the government's claim that problems in Kashmir have ended with the repeal of Article 370.

Referring to the death of labourers from Bihar in Kashmir, he wondered what the intelligence agencies and Home Minister Amit Shah were doing.

The AIMIM leader also



lashed out at PM Modi for his silence on petrol and diesel prices.

"He is silent on skyrocketing fuel prices. The cost of petrol and diesel have hit the century mark, yet he has not commented on it."

Owaisi also questioned the Prime Minister on his silence over Chinese Army entering and occupying the Indian territory. "Why is he afraid of even taking the name of China," he asked.

The AIMIM also voiced concern over the situation faced by Muslims in the country.

Quoting a 27-year-old lawyer to describe the current situation, he said: "A Muslim is living under the threat of someone attacking his shop or a mob lynching him. He feels helpless. They (the government) have criminalised triple talaq, they have criminalised

religious conversions and they are trying to bring Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) through backdoor. If I protest, they book me under UAPA or NSA."

At the press meet, he also discussed how there are lack of opportunities and no inter-mobility among Muslims. According to him, because of Hindutva, his Hindu friends and business partners have distanced themselves from him.

Owaisi, however, advised Muslims not to lose hope. He said they should keep their spirits up and face the situation with courage.

He also urged the youth to self-introspect and keep themselves away from all societal evils by offering prayers, building character, desisting from taking down and helping the poor and needy, irrespective of their community.

PM VISIT TO KUSHINAGAR

Buddha relics from Lanka to be accorded state guest-like status

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Protocols reserved for state guests will be followed to welcome Buddha relics from Sri Lanka during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's October 20 visit to Kushinagar to inaugurate an international airport, Culture Ministry sources said on Tuesday.

A seat will be assigned for the relics on a SriLankan Airlines flight, an official said. A team of 123 Sri Lankan delegates, including a 12-member Holy Relic entourage led by the current mahayanaka of the Waskaduwa Temple, will accompany the relics.

The delegation will also comprise anunayakas (deputy heads) of all four Nikatas

(orders) -- Asgiriya, Amarapura, Ramanya, Malwatta -- of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, as well as five ministers of the country's government led by cabinet minister Namal Rajapakse.

"The relics will have a separate seat on a SriLankan Airlines flight. The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister (Yogi Adityanath) will receive the relics. All protocol associated with state guest will be followed. The relics will be welcomed by Mahayana monks at the venue," the official said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Wednesday inaugurate the Kushinagar International Airport, which is an endeavour to connect Buddhist pilgrimage sites around the world and launch various development projects

there during his visit to poll-bound Uttar Pradesh.

The PMO said he will also participate in an event marking Abhidhamma Day at the Mahaparinirvana Temple in Kushinagar before attending a public function to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of various development projects.

The inauguration of the Kushinagar International Airport will be marked by the landing of the inaugural flight at the airport from Colombo, Sri Lanka, carrying the Sri Lankan delegation.

"The highlight of the event is the Exposition of Holy Buddha Relic being brought from Waskaduwa Sri Subuddhi Rajivihara Temple, Sri Lanka, by the Mahanayake of the temple."



Maha: Naxal carrying Rs 2 lakh bounty held in Gadchiroli district

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A Naxal, carrying a reward of Rs 2 lakh on his head and involved in anti-police activities and killings, was arrested on Tuesday from a forest area in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, police said.

The ultra, identified Magaru

division of Gadchiroli, nearly 922 km from Mumbai, he said.

"Madavi, a resident of Bhamragad in the Gadchiroli district in east Maharashtra, was serving as a member of the action team of the Permili LOS group and as a senior cadre of the DAKMS," he said.

Guj: Portuguese bank refunds Rs 31 L lost by Vadodara businessman

PNS ■ VADODARA

A Portuguese bank has refunded around Rs 31 lakh belonging to a businessman in Gujarat's Vadodara city, who was allegedly duped by cyber fraudsters into depositing the sum, police said on Tuesday.

According to the police, the complainant Ramesh Shah had deposited Rs 31 lakh in an account of the bank Caixa Geral de Depósitos Braga's Lisbon branch, and the sum was returned after the city cyber crime officials approached the bank and Lisbon cyber police with a request.

"A team was formed to investigate the case. Working in coordination with the SBI, we approached Portuguese bank Caixa Geral de Depósitos at its

Lisbon and Mumbai branches, and the SBI's branch in Frankfurt, Germany. We also wrote to the cyber crime police in Lisbon and requested a refund," the cyber police said in a release.

Shah had purchased raw materials for borosilicate glass tubes from a German company and was about to deposit the payment into its official account, when he received an email from an address that closely resembled that of the German firm, it was stated.

In the email, cyber fraudsters misled Shah into believing that because of a change in global strategy, he could no longer deposit the money into the regular German bank account, and he was instead asked to make a deposit in a Portuguese bank, it said.

3 bank staffers among 12 arrested for bid to cheat NRI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Cyber Cell has arrested 12 people, including three HDFC Bank employees, for allegedly trying to withdraw money from the account of an NRI, officials said on Tuesday.

The bank had filed a complaint after noticing several unauthorised attempts to

access a Non-Resident Indian (NRI) account using internet banking services and to withdraw cash it using a fraudulent obtained cheque book, the police said.

The miscreants also tried to replace a US-based mobile phone number associated with the bank account with an identical Indian number, they said. HDFC Bank alleged that 66

attempts were made to access the internet banking services of the account, a senior police officer said.

During investigation, the police conducted raids on 20 locations across Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, and arrested 12 people, including three employees of the bank who were involved in issuing the cheque book,

updating the mobile phone number and removing the debt freeze of the account, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Cell) K P S Malhotra said. The miscreants had come to know somehow that the account was dormant and had huge funds, and they began gathering information about it, the police said.

Man sans limbs undergoes rare bilateral hand transplant

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A rare bilateral hand transplant surgery was conducted successfully at a hospital here on a 22-year-old man who had lost both his hands and feet in a tragic accident.

According to a statement issued by the hospital, the man from Rajasthan recently underwent a complex bilateral hand transplant surgery that lasted for nearly 13 hours.

"It is a very rare case in which a quadruple amputee (a

person without hands and feet) had been reabilitated with the bilateral hand transplant procedure. Another case complication was the disfunction of both the arms; one hand cut was in below elbow and another one was above elbow which made it much more challenging," said Dr Nilesh Satbhai, senior consultant, Plastic, Hand and Reconstructive surgery.

The patient had suffered electrical burns (after coming in contact with a high-tension wire) a year and a half ago.



"The case was very challenging and complicated. A bilater-

al transplant surgery was conducted wherein we had to

work on two hands of the recipient and the two hands of the donor to prepare the parts and join them successfully. Hence the surgery took 13 hours to complete," Dr Satbhai said.

He said it was the first-of-its-kind surgery performed in Mumbai at Global Hospitals here. The surgery was completed successfully and the patient is in a stable condition, he added.

Dr Satbhai said the recipient will have to take immuno-

separation medication and maintain good hygiene to guard against any infection post-discharge.

"The recovery of hand will take a time of three to four months with constant physiotherapy sessions for at least a year," said the doctor.

Dr Satbhai had performed the first such surgery on Monika More, a young girl from Mumbai who had lost both of her hands in a train accident in 2014. She underwent the transplant in 2020.



Sigh of relief

A majority of unvaccinated children developing COVID-19 antibodies comes as hope

The results of the third serosurvey conducted in Haryana are comforting. Antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 were found among 76.3 per cent of the State's population. This is a steep rise from a mere 14.8 per cent in October 2020 and eight per cent last August. A sero-positivity of 81.6 per cent was found in vaccinated people and 75.5 per cent in non-vaccinated. In urban Haryana, antibodies were found in 78.1 per cent of the people; in the rural areas the percentage is 75.1. The best news, however, relates to children. The survey found a sero-positivity rate of 69.8 per cent in children aged 6-9 years and 73.2 per cent in adolescents aged 10-17 years. This is the first time when children were included in the survey. It is also established for the first time that over 70 per cent of non-vaccinated children have COVID-19 antibodies. The news comes as a relief when children remain the only segment of the population who have not been vaccinated even though the country is close to giving nearly 100 crore jabs. The vaccines for children are still undergoing human trials. The decision to re-open schools after a gap of a year hinges on this very issue and some States have reluctantly agreed to re-open schools in stages. There still is a hesitancy among parents to send their wards to school. A few other States are planning to begin classes in November. School managements are ensuring that the teaching and non-teaching staff are fully vaccinated and



safety protocols are in place to minimise the risk of infection.

Recent surveys from abroad have justified the fears of infection among children. A study by teams from hospitals in MIT and Harvard has conclusively proved that infants, children and adolescents are equally capable of replicating the COVID-19 virus. Examining COVID-19 positive children, they found that the levels of infection are highest early in the illness in both symptomatic and asymptomatic patients. Overall, the viral load did not correlate with the severity of the disease in the kids even though they could infect other people. However, several studies have stated that very few children have symptoms and they are at low risk of contracting the illness. In this context, the Haryana serosurvey on children is a reassuring one. Based on the Haryana survey results, it can safely be assumed that one can go slow with the vaccination of healthy children and instead focus on fully covering the vulnerable population — the elderly, and adults and children with co-morbidities. Even though a couple of vaccines have received the emergency use authorisation (EUA), it is unclear when the vaccines for children below 18 will be available in the country. The chief of the national COVID-19 task force, VK Paul, has said that a final decision will depend on the scientific rationale for vaccinating kids and the availability of sufficient doses for them.

PICTALK



Snow-covered mountains after fresh snowfall, in Shimla

PTI

Blood sport?

The International Olympic Committee does not heed protests against the Beijing Olympics

The flame of the 2022 Winter Olympics reaches Beijing in a day or two but China has more cause for concern than celebration. A swarm of protests follows the flame, lit at the birthplace of the ancient Olympics in southern Greece on Monday, calling for a global boycott of the Games on account of alleged human rights violations by the Chinese Government. The ceremony of lighting the torch in Greece was



marred by protests, as three activists managed to sneak into the venue holding a Tibetan flag and a banner reading 'No genocide games'. The protests were growing in tenor all through the year. Human rights watch groups in the US and Europe launched a campaign to boycott the games because China allegedly continues to harass Tibetans, strip Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang of their religious and cultural identities, punish pro-democracy agitators in Hong Kong, and intimidate Taiwan. The possibility of the US boycotting the games is remote but efforts are on to at least have a diplomatic boycott by that country.

This is not the first time that China is facing flak in the run-up to an international sporting event. It lost the bid for the 2000 Olympic games in 1993 because of the bloody crackdown on student agitators in Tiananmen Square in 1989. China had hoped to resurrect its international image by hosting the games but that was not to be. It never faced a worse insult globally. It subsequently bid for the 2008 games. To show a democratic face to the world, China came up with several concessions to impress the Olympic committee. They included extending press freedom for foreign journalists in China, allowing them to travel across the country without having to apply for permission. However, the protests continued as China refused to acknowledge any wrong-doing. The Communist Party of China, which routinely ignores all human rights charges, would do well to realise turning a deaf ear would not make the problem go away. Evidence of Chinese high-handedness in Tibet and Xinjiang keeps leaking out of the two regions despite State censorship. Those who manage to escape from the mainland bring sordid tales with them. It comes as a small relief for China that the International Olympic Committee is not interested in taking up the boycott call only because it feels the games are neutral and should not be politicised.

More in our history than the 1971 war



ASHOK K MEHTA

The Indian military's habit of not fully recording war diaries has provided opportunity to individuals to fiddle with and fabricate events

Fifty years of the 1971 India-Pakistan war is being commemorated with great verve and gusto by recalling the geostrategy, tactics and heroics of the great Indian victory — one in 1000 years where the gains on the battlefield were frittered away across the negotiating table. The war corrected the geographical incongruity of Pakistan split into two entities separated by 1000 miles. The late politician and writer, Jaswant Singh, called the victory geography's revenge over history — when use of force resulted in the birth of a new country Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan. It was the 20th century's last decisive war though it could not settle the root cause of India-Pakistan enmity — not J&K but inimical behaviour of the Pakistan Army.

In the previous century, except for the World Wars, there is no clear example of a decisive inter-state war. But intra-state conflicts produced outcomes. The stamping out of Khalistan movement was a rare success for India. So was the Taliban's first take-over of Afghanistan. Peaceful separation of Czechoslovakia into Czech Republic and Slovakia was a unique event. In the 21st century also, a number of internal conflicts were resolved by use of force — defeat of LTTE in Sri Lanka and the recent re-conquest of Afghanistan by the Taliban. Another genre of military success without the use of military force was 'fait accompli operations' like the Russian occupation of Crimea, Chinese seizure of islands in the South China Sea and the Chinese intrusions into East Ladakh. In the space between war and no-peace is grey-zone operations, (HERE IS THE CHANGE) which is the defender's dilemma. And now, with the advent of cyber war and artificial intelligence, thinkers and practitioners of war and conflict have much to mull over. While the nature and character of war have changed, the principles of war are more or less the same, technology being the consistent key driver of shaping their outcomes.

Past wars and internal conflicts are not replicable. Take the war for Bangladesh. The ten months available for preparation,



obtaining air superiority and assistance of Mukti Bahini are some conditions that cannot be recreated. Neither can the political cover provided by USSR through its use of veto which brought India time to ensure the war did not end in cessation of hostilities as Pakistan wished but ended on Indian terms of a full and complete surrender. The talking point of the war was whether Dacca was nominated as the final objective of the war. It is clear from study of various historical accounts that Dacca was initially not the ultimate objective but a less ambitious mission was assigned to the Eastern Army. Improvisation and innovation by both sides played a big part in the war. Maj Gen Nazir Husain Shah, GOC 16 Pakistan Infantry Division and an alumni of Fort Leavenworth USA, used to split a single battalion into two even as portraying a broad front was also practised by Indian forces.

I would like to see during commemoration events greater emphasis on recalling Infantry-led epic battles of Pirgunj, Hilli, Sylhet and Akhaura to name a few. The roadblock at Pirgunj by 2/5 Gorkha Rifles (FF), for example, turned the flank of Pakistan 16 Infantry Division fighting fortress defence at Hilli by crossing the



INDIA MUST CHERISH THE 1971 VICTORY AGAINST PAKISTAN BUT FOCUS ON SMALL-UNIT ACTIONS THAT WILL BE RELEVANT TO FUTURE EXTERNAL WARS

Karatoya river. It was the first turning movement south towards Bogra and Dacca and divided Pakistan's 16 Infantry Division. Similarly, 4/5 Gorkha Rifles (FF) conducted India's first helicopter operations and while reduced to half a battalion in combat, took the surrender of two Pakistani Brigades on 15 December, one clear day in advance of the Dacca surrender. They had earlier carried out the first silent 'khukuri' attack at Atgram though the British Gurkhas claimed the honour earlier in Indonesia. These short and sharp battles hastened the termination of war confirming Infantry as the queen of battle. It would be more useful to invite officers who took part in these actions rather than have the post-1971 war generation of officers to pontificate on lessons and dialectics of deterrence.

India must cherish the 1971 victory against Pakistan but focus on small-unit actions that will be relevant to future external wars. The limited war in Kargil was another classic demonstration of Infantry-led small unit battles that evicted intruding Pakistani forces across the LoC. It is a pity that war histories on 1962 and IPKF Sri Lanka, though chronicled, have not been released for

political reasons. The Indian military's bad habit of not fully and faithfully recording war diaries has provided opportunity to individual participants in wars to fiddle with and fabricate events to enhance their personal heroics. The media in general and social media in particular, without verifying facts, have contributed to this.

Biographies and autobiographies are especially culpable as they embellish the record of units and individuals beyond what is recorded in regimental history. And where there is no official regimental history, some writers have gone to town enhancing their stature. All write-ups about past wars must be vetted by MoD historical section and a certification obtained from the authors that they have not used material which is not in official records. The Government has fudged events in East Ladakh, pretending the PLA intrusions have not altered the LAC. Even so, the 1971 success on the battlefield is India's big redeemer and greatest victory.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE MONSOON'S MOOD SWINGS

Sir — The Indian monsoon is nature's gift to us. It is what gives us sustenance; it is inseparable from Indian civilisation. Still over the last few years, it has become erratic to the extent of venting nature's fury and causing widespread devastation. Its onset, occurrence and withdrawal have come to acquire a frightening dimension. Visuals have shown how this year's southwest monsoon has taken the shape of a 'natural' disaster. The stunning collapse of a house in one unbroken piece into flood water has become the defining image of the destruction caused by the deluge in Kerala and other parts of the country.

The floods recurring year after year add a new urgency to the restoration of the monsoon to what it was before it assumed the proportions of a 'natural' disaster. The protection of mountains that serve as natural life givers in its wider sense will more than halve the problem. Deforestation, mining, construction and cultivation of cash crops that are ecologically unsustainable and explain much of the change in the monsoons must end; political parties and governments must free themselves from the hold of lobbies of various kinds towards this end. The governments should discontinue the practice of relaxing rules pertaining to environmental clearance in the name of ease of doing business. It is a basic fact that economic growth at the cost of ecology spells disaster.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

FINDING FENI IN GOA'S MUSEUM

Sir — India's first museum dedicated to alcohol has opened its doors to spirit enthusiasts in Goa. The museum, *All About Alcohol* is a place to rejoice in North Goa's Candolim village. The museum houses hundreds of artefacts linked to Feni — Goa's very own and a popular alcoholic drink — including large, traditional glass vats in which the local cashew-based alcohol used to be stored centuries ago. The idea behind the museum was to make the world aware of Goa's rich heritage, especially the story of Feni. The answer to whether there is another alcohol museum in the world is absolutely no.

Can Sasikala fill the gaps?



Once a 'girl Friday' of the former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, VK Sasikala Natrajan is back on the political scene after having spent four years behind bars following a disproportionate assets case against her in 2017. Implicit in her recent overtures is her cherished will of becoming an 'all in all' of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), she even unveiled a stone plaque naming her as the general secretary of the party at the memorial of MG Ramachandran, the founder of the AIADMK. But to the cha-

grin of Edappadi K Palaniswami and Utakarra Thevar Panneerselvam, whose eyebrows were raised while asserting that no one would be elevated to the numero uno post of general secretary once held by 'Amma', who still happens to be the incumbent despite being no more.

Moreover, it is the people of Tamil Nadu who are at the receiving end of the confusion obfuscating the answer as to who among the OPS-EPS-Sasikala trilogy, is the right choice. Simultaneously, the TN Chief Minister MK Stalin cannot afford to look forward to a new challenger more, with the grand old party keeping a low profile and the BJP thinking of siding with the ruling DMK in the State. At the end of the day, with the OPS-EPS together eyeing a much more significant aspect of the circumstances, whether or not VK Sasikala will succeed in putting herself in Jayalalitha's shoes remains a burning question.

Azhar A Khan | Rampu

If you go to Scotland, they are very happy about their water, about their drinks, etc. Similarly, in Russia, people feel happy to show the drinks they have. When we come to India, we project alcohol differently. For Goans, consumption of alcohol is a symbol of hospitality. It is a part and parcel of the system in Goa. The amount of information preserved here is amazing. Feni lovers are awestruck with the place. The amount of information they have kept here for visitors to see is super amazing. Sip on a glass of Feni as Goa displays the right trademark for its traditional drink. An indigenous alcoholic drink synonymous with Goa, Feni will now be on display in the museum.

CK Subramaniam | Mumbai

100 CRORE JABS, FINALLY

Sir — India has finally achieved the milestone of 100 crore vaccinations. Festive season will see yet another celebration soon with tricolour hoisted at Red Fort, flag raised at North and South Block in Delhi with announcements at railway stations,

airplanes, ships at the moment India breach the 100 crores mark in administering cumulative number of COVID-19 doses. Additionally, the efforts of frontline and healthcare workers in remote areas, have been chronicled in the newly-launched book 'Sentinels of the Soil', that encapsulates stories of hardship faced by healthcare workers from various states who travelled to help propel India's vaccination drive.

Thanks to the combined efforts of the Government, doctors, scientists and to all the people of the country who got vaccinated and helped the Government achieve this mark. There are plans of 80,000 vaccination centres to be activated to further speed up the vaccination drive and be prepared for any uncertainties. Congratulations to every single person who has contributed his effort in this achievement.

Somya Agrawal | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Tejashwi Yadav violated the coalition pact. He denied our demand of one seat of our stronghold Kusheshwar Asthan.

Congress Bihar in-charge — Bhakta Charan Das

The US values Georgia as a strategic partner and our support for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity is unwavering.

US Defence Secretary — Lloyd Austin

I believe *Dhaakad* is Bollywood's first woman-centred spy thriller. I am really happy about this.

Actor — Kangana Ranaut

Ravindra Jadeja's batting has come out in leaps and bounds. So you can treat him as one of the top-order batsmen.

Former India bowler — Ajit Agarkar

The friendship between India and Bangladesh is very old. Fundamentalist or any other forces should not be allowed to destroy these relations.

Tripura Chief Minister — Biplab Kumar Deb

FIRST COLUMN

THE NEXT BIG THING IN JOURNALISM

Journalism has seen a sea change because of technological adoptions over time



ANAND J KULKARNI SANTOSH K BISWAL

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the field of journalism, often dubbed as a race with the machine, is getting eventually apparent. Recently, certain international news media organizations have tapped the power of AI to cover and report on the recent blast at a mosque in Kandahar city of Afghanistan that killed 37 people. AI tools are used to measure and report that the nation is grappling with insecurity and unrest. These news media organizations have been actively engaged in automating tasks essential for journalistic production. AI has come in handy to detect, extract and verify data essential for news stories and graphics. Such tools are being used for sorting, selecting and prioritizing the filters in the journalistic process of news stories. The use of AI is comparatively new. Its efficacy in reporting and disseminating conflicting news stories is established. It has the ability to build and update data visualizations in real time. The tools can be beneficial for the reporters in conflict zones in which the machine makes easy to source through footage from war zones. Human rights activists have started resorting to source the footage required for documenting human rights violations. Hence, AI tools are intensifying the level of activism in real time. During the time of the pandemic, AI tools provided potential aids for journalists in disseminating useful information to the citizens. When thousands of jour-



nalists were infected with the virus, the importance of AI tools in gathering, sorting, verifying and disseminating information went up substantially. AI tools are systematically programmed to identify fake news, helping journalists file correct and unbiased news stories. It can also debunk fake news flooded in social media platforms. AI thus protects the spirit of news values and ethical responsibility of journalists. The field of journalism has witnessed sea changes because of technological adoptions from time to time. All these raise the pros and cons of using AI tools in journalism. Augmenting reporting has become a major area of journalism. AI in journalism has brought numerous benefits. These tools have comparatively made easy for investigative journalists to save time and money. This has further strengthened the process and format of storytelling. Automation has facilitated reporting from local to international stories. Data journalism is transforming to the next level. AI robots are turning into news reporters. All these are becoming viable because of algorithms, databases and machine learning. There are fair chances for errors and biases to creep into the newsrooms. A small or a hyper-local media organization which might not be equipped with minimum resources to adopt AI tools may see newsmen falling prey to the machines. Journalists need to be trained and transformed for the best utilization of technologies. The fear of machine replacing the human is still there. However, any technology including AI is not going to replace journalists; however, this new technology can be a friendly assistant or a buddy. With the advent of new technological tools, all from reporters to editors will be re-oriented to deliver more credible and value-added contents to their target audience. Moreover, the issue of digital divide in newsrooms is there across the globe. Newsrooms in western countries are better positioned than the rest of the world in exploiting the AI tools in storytelling. The emergence of innovation and adoption of newer technologies in any profession has become obligatory. The profession of journalism is no exception to it. The production, distribution and consumption of news will be considerably driven by AI tools in the days to come. Digital literacy is the need of the hour on the part of the journalists across the competitive globe.

(Kulkarni is an Associate Director of the Institute of Artificial Intelligence, MIT World Peace University, Pune. Biswal teaches at Symbiosis Institute of Media and Communication, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune. The views expressed are personal.)

Setting up ‘bad banks’ for the good

In India, Government-sponsored bad bank has never been tried, though there are several asset reconstruction companies functioning sub-optimally



GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE

India's first-ever government-sponsored "Bad Bank" is now closer to reality. Following the Finance Minister's announcement in the Union Budget earlier this year, a National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL) has been set up to acquire fully provisioned stressed assets worth about ₹2 lakh crore from various commercial banks in different phases, about a quarter of the total.

Another entity called India Debt Resolution Company Ltd (IDRCL) will then sell these stressed assets in the market to pay back to the banks. Public Sector Banks (PSBs) will have almost half the total shares of both (51 and 49 percent respectively), in which the private sector will also be stakeholders. The initial investment would be around ₹6,000 crore.

NARCL will buy the distressed assets at a discount from the banks by paying 15 percent cash; for the balance 85 percent, they will issue security receipts like debentures, bonds, etc., to the banks. Last month the government had cleared the proposal to provide ₹30,600 crore to the NARCL as a guarantee for the security receipts to be invoked in case the sale results in a loss to cover the same, but the guarantee will not be valid beyond five years to build in some incentive to accelerate the process of resolution; the guarantee fee to be paid by NARCL will also increase gradually. Since guarantees constitute contingent liability for the government, there would be no immediate fiscal impact or cash outflow for the Centre.

Inherited as a legacy from the past, partly as a fallout of the economic meltdown of 2008 and partly because of crony capitalism which forced many PSBs to give loans without proper assessment of profitability of the relevant project proposals due to which many of these projects either could not materialise or were unable to generate enough income to pay back the loans, the NPAs started mounting. Since 2016, when the RBI tightened the controls on banks and forced them to clean their balance sheets, the NPAs had to be written off or recognised in their balance sheets. This eroded their capital base making them unable to lend afresh, and their profitability was seriously affected.

To keep such banks — mostly PSBs — in business, the government had to recapitalise them from time to time with public funds. Things took a turn for the worse when since 2017 when the economy had started slowing, and the pandemic then delivered the death blow. As per S&P Global Ratings estimate, stressed assets of Indian banks including restructured loans will reach 11-12 percent in 2021-22, up from 8.7 percent at the end of the last fiscal, one of the highest in the world, comparable to Russia or Greece. By taking over the stressed assets and paying the banks which will provide them fresh capital, the bad bank will help the



IN 2018, JUST TWO OUT OF 21 PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS WERE PROFITABLE. BUT IN 2021, ONLY TWO BANKS (PUNJAB & SIND BANK AND CENTRAL BANK) REPORTED LOSSES. AS PART OF THE REFORMS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS MERGED MANY SMALLER PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS WITH LARGER ONES AND NOW THEIR TOTAL NUMBER STANDS AT 12

(The author is former Director General, Comptroller & Auditor General of India and currently a professor at Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management. The views expressed are personal.)



commercial banks to recover a part of their bad loans.

This is a most welcome and a long overdue proposal to resolve the stressed asset problem of banks, private as well as public. The existing acts, viz., the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016 and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Securitisation and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act 2002, have proved inadequate for insolvency resolution and to address the problem of NPAs of banks. The SARFAESI Act which enables registration and regulation of Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) by the RBI allows the banks to auction the residential and commercial properties of borrowers to recover outstanding dues. It applies where the borrowing entity is left with neither any revenue source nor an opportunity to resurrect the business, and where no substantial assets are also lying with the guarantors, while a resolution plan under the IBC is intended to put the debtor back on its feet, not simply for recovering the dues of its creditors. As the Supreme Court had said in a case, "the primary focus of the legislation (IBC) is to ensure revival and continuance of the corporate debtor by protecting the corporate debtor from its own management and from a corporate death by liquidation."

About 4,541 corporates have so far been admitted into the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP), only 1,745 CIRPs

have completed the process, either yielding resolution plans or ending up with liquidation. IBC, now five years old and which was suspended during the Covid crisis, is due for an overhaul, including pre-pack for the MSMEs which could later be extended to other companies, allowing a debt resolution mechanism outside the IBC. The existing processes need additional support from other mechanisms, and this is where the bad bank fits in.

Bad bank is not a new idea — they have been in existence since the 1980s, but the East Asian currency crisis and the 2008 subprime crisis made many countries to set up bad banks, including the US, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Malaysia, South Korea, China or Indonesia, but in India the idea of government sponsored bad bank has never been tried earlier, though there are several private Asset Reconstruction Companies which are functioning sub-optimally.

This is another major institutional reform and the Government must be given the credit for it. Whether it will work or not, only time can tell. While it has met with success in many countries, in China they have been struggling, and the collapse of Evergrande is likely to worsen the situation further. In any case, ARCs cannot be a permanent mechanism, indeed it has a sunset clause allowing it to be wound up within five to eight years.

Banking reform has been one major focus area of the govern-

ment which came up with a 4-R strategy - recognition, resolution, recapitalisation and reforms. After recognition, quantification of NPAs started in a planned manner and banks slowly started recovering their dues. In 2018, just two out of 21 public sector banks were profitable. But in 2021, only two banks (Punjab & Sind Bank and Central Bank) reported losses. As part of the reforms, the government has merged many smaller PSBs with larger ones, and now their total number is stands at 12.

There are several problems, apart from finding potential buyers from the stressed assets of banks. Valuation of the assets is one, which will determine the loss. In fact, there has been some criticism that the government is actually guaranteeing the losses of private enterprises and that the PSBs, being shareholders of both NARCL and IDRCL, will in effect be buying their own stressed assets. So far, the Indian experience has preferred resolution via IBC over the private ARCs, which have a low capital requirement of only ₹100 crore.

The regulatory environment for the ARCs which has remained practically static ever since they had emerged in the 2000s also needs an overhaul. Stressed assets will not disappear anytime soon, and we need to enable such institutions to help absorb the stressed assets. Economy cannot grow without an adequate supply of credit and creating a level playing field for all.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

BY MAKING THE GIRLS WEAR TURBANS RESEMBLING COLOURS OF THE BJP SYMBOL, THE CM HAS POLITICISED KANYA PUJAN.
—CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON
NARENDRA SALUJA



CONGRESS LEADERS ARE OPPOSING KANYA PUJAN DONE BY ME. THEN WHAT SHALL I DO, PERFORM CONGRESS PUJAN?
—MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER
SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

Party stuck with Gandhis; Gandhis with the party

As expected, not even a whimper was heard from the G23 that made much noise in media for months on the need for full-time leadership

The Gandhi family has established its claim over the Congress party this week as seen by Sonia Gandhi's assertive speech at Saturday's Working Committee meeting. Her message to the Party in simple words is that "we are the Gandhis, and we rule as long as we want; challenge us now." As expected, not even a whimper was heard from the Group of 23 rebels that made much noise in the media for months on the need for full-time leadership and organisational elections. As expected, the CWC unanimously expressed confidence in the Gandhi family. The CWC meeting went off as per Gandhi's script.

Indeed, she shut them by giving a road map for elections, but it will take place only



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

next after the crucial elections to some States taken place.

The loyalists who numbered many also raised a chorus for Rahul Gandhi to take over the party. He has condescended to consider the issue keeping his options open. Meanwhile, he will continue to make decisions with his sister Priyanka Gandhi and impose their favorites on the Party in powerful positions as they have done with Punjab leader Navjot Sidhu and elsewhere. They will also have a free hand in distributing tickets in the upcoming elections.

Sonia has announced that she is a 'full-time and hands-on' president, but this will be tougher than it was for her in 1998 or 2004. Then, she was much younger and had reasonably good political



advisers. There was a mystique around her. Those leaders, like Arjun Singh, ML Fotedar, Ahmed Patel, and AK Antony, were experienced and shrewd politicians. Today, she has to run the Party through her children while taking flak for their immature decisions.

Sonia Gandhi fights well when there are challenges, as she has had shown since 1998. She took over the reins of the Party when it was sinking

under Sitaram Kesri's leadership and a surging BJP. No one expected the UPA to win in 2004. The real coup was when she chose to do back-seat driving rather than become the Prime Minister and she 'appointed' Dr Manmohan Singh to the post. She ran the Party and the Government for the next ten years from remote. A Gandhi family member at the helm is certainly a comforting feeling for Congress persons, not with standing the opinion of voters.

When Rahul resigned owning moral responsibility for the Party's poor show in 2019, the Party could not look beyond the Gandhis. Rahul got what he wanted — an unassailable decision-making power without responsibility. By now, his sister Priyanka

Gandhi has joined her brother in taking decisions from afar.

Sonia's first challenge now is to check the continuous erosion in the Party. Leaders like Jyotiraditya Scindia, Jitin Prasad, now Amarendra Singh and former Goa Chief Minister Luizinho Faleiro have quit the Party for greener pastures. More are likely to follow.

The second challenge is to win some States in the upcoming Assembly polls. Uttar Pradesh is crucial though the Party has not tasted power there since 1989. It was in a position to win Punjab, but the Gandhi siblings spoil it by choosing an undeserving Sidhu as PCC chief.

The third is reviving the organisations' machinery. The

general secretaries in charge of poll-bound States should spend more time on the ground. The selection of candidates is vital. Sonia needs to enthuse the organisation. She should set up booth committees that play a crucial role at the time of elections.

The fourth is to choose vital issues for exposing the Modi Government. There are many such issues like petrol price hike, inflation, farmer's agitation, COVID handling and many more. Sonia needs foot soldiers to do the propaganda.

The fifth is uniting the Opposition. Many of them like Mamata Banerjee and Sharad Pawar are making efforts to join the resistance. Otherwise, Modi has the advantage even in 2024. Fortunately, Sonia has

got adequate respect and command from the opposition leaders.

But before everything, she must address the grievances of the Group of 23 rebels and bring them back to her side. They cannot be suppressed as leaders like Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma, Shashi Tharoor, Kapil Sibal, and Manish Tiwari are articulate. As Sonia herself said in the meeting, unity and discipline in the Party are very important.

Saturday's CWC proved that the Party is stuck with the Gandhis and the Gandhis are stuck with the Party. Both have to change their attitudes and walk in step with the voters; the electorate has changed and has become more aspirational and impatient.

Market snaps 7-day winning run on profit-booking; ITC tanks over 6 pc

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Snapping their seven-session rising streak, equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty ended with marginal losses on Tuesday as investors booked profits at record levels.

After touching its lifetime high of 62,245.43 during the session, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 49.54 points or 0.08 per cent lower at 61,716.05.

Similarly, the Nifty shed 58.30 points or 0.32 per cent to close at 18,418.75. It touched a new intra-day record of 18,604.45 in early deals.

ITC was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, tanking over 6 per cent, followed by HUL, Titan, Tata Steel, UltraTech Cement and PowerGrid.

On the other hand, Tech Mahindra, L&T, Infosys, Bajaj Finserv, Kotak Bank and HDFC Bank were among the gainers.

"Indices met with profit taking even as the IT Index

stood tall through the day which indeed had several bouts of volatility," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Market breadth too was weak with declines outpacing advances led by the big names of the FMCG sector as the street awaits a

slew of primary market offerings in the near term, he noted, adding that the broader markets clearly witnessed profit booking in several top performing midcap names.

Elsewhere in Asia,

bourses in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Seoul and Tokyo ended with gains.

Stock exchanges in Europe were largely trading on a positive note in the afternoon session.

International oil benchmark Brent crude rose 0.66 per cent to USD 84.89 per barrel.

The domestic currency market was closed on account of 'Id-E-Milad' holiday.

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Money Matters

P&G India launches Rs 500 cr fund to accelerate growth

FMCG major Procter and Gamble (P&G) India on Tuesday announced a fund worth Rs 500 crore through which it aims to

accelerate growth in rural areas by collaborating with external partners on innovations tailored for consumers and retailers for such markets. The 'P&G Rural Growth Fund' will provide external partners an opportunity to collaborate with P&G on business solutions customised for meeting the needs of rural consumers, the company said. This new

fund is a part of P&G India's 'vGROW' program that focuses on identifying and collaborating with start-ups and small businesses.

HUL Quarter 2 net rises 10.7% to Rs 2,185 crore

FMCG major Hindustan Unilever on Tuesday reported a 10.69 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 2,185 crore for the second quarter ended September 30. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 1,974 crore in the July-September quarter of the previous fiscal. Its revenue from sales during the quarter under review stood at Rs 12,812 crore, up 11.31 per cent, against Rs 11,510 crore a year ago.

Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) said in a regulatory filing. HUL's total expenses were at Rs 10,129 crore in Q2 FY2021-22 compared to Rs 9,054 crore in the year-ago period.

PB Fintech gets Sebi's nod to raise over Rs 6K-cr via IPO

PB Fintech Ltd, which operates online insurance platform Policybazaar and credit comparison portal Paisabazaar, has received capital markets regulator Sebi's

approval to raise Rs 6,017.50 crore through an initial share-sale. The initial public offer (IPO) comprises a fresh issue of Rs 3,750 crore worth of equity shares and an offer for sale of Rs 2,267.50 crore by existing shareholders, according to draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). As part of the OFS, SVF Python II will sell shares worth Rs 1,875 crore, Yashish Dahiya will sell shares worth Rs 250 crore and some other selling shareholders will also offer shares.

Gold rallies Rs 256; silver jumps Rs 188

Gold in the national capital on Tuesday rallied by Rs 256 to Rs 46,580 per 10 gram in line with a jump in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 46,324 per 10 gram. Silver also jumped Rs 188 to Rs 62,328 per kilogram from Rs 62,140 per kilogram in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,782 per ounce and silver was flat at USD 23.72 per ounce. "Gold prices traded higher where spot gold prices at COMEX rose by more than 1 per cent to USD 1,782 per ounce on Tuesday.

MarketWolf raises \$5.5 million in funding

MarketWolf, an intra-day options only trading app, on Tuesday said it has raised USD 5.5 million (about Rs 41.2 crore) in seed funding from a clutch of high profile individual investors. Some of these investors include Anil Thadani, Ashutosh Sinha, Roy van Leeuwen (Head of Benelux region at Auto1), Tomas Urbanec (former CEO of Prudential Assurance Singapore), Anuj Srivastava and Ramakant Sharma (Livspace co-founders), a statement said.

MarketWolf had raised USD 1.7 million during its angel round, and has mopped up a total of USD 7.2 million to date, it added.



Apple lines up new MacBook pro, music voice plan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Apple will soon bring its latest lineup of MacBook Pro models along with HomePod mini, AirPods and a new music experience under Apple Music Voice Plan for Indian consumers.

Apple's new M1 Pro and M1 Max, available in 14 and 16-inch models, delivers groundbreaking processing, graphics and machine learning (ML) performance.

The new MacBook Pro range with M1 Pro and M1 Max are available to order via Apple's online store and will begin arriving to customers and its authorised resellers from October 26. "We set out to create the world's best pro notebook, and today we're excited to introduce the all-new MacBook Pro with M1 Pro and M1 Max -- a game-changing combination of phenomenal performance, unrivalled battery life, and groundbreaking features," Apple senior vice president of Worldwide Marketing Greg Joswiak said.

Volvo launches S90, XC60 with petrol mild-hybrid powertrains

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Volvo Car India on Tuesday launched two models -- S90 and XC60 -- with petrol-mild hybrid powertrains as part of its plans to shift to the petrol-only portfolio by this year-end.

The new S90 B5 Inscription sedan and XC60 B5 Inscription SUV now feature a 1,969 cc petrol engine paired with a 48-volt battery.

Both the models are priced at Rs 61.9 lakh (ex-showroom).

"We have had a good three quarters this year, which are a reflection of customer confidence. This has given us a good footing as we commence into 2022 with new cars.

"These models come power-packed with new feature offerings, which I am confident will

increase the luxury mobility of our customers," Volvo Car India MD Jyoti Malhotra said.

With the introduction of these new models and the upcoming XC90, the automaker would complete its transition to the petrol portfolio, he added.

"After shifting to petrol, we plan to start the shift towards electric. The first battery-electric car would be launched in 2022 as per our plans to be a fully electric car company by 2030," Malhotra said while unveiling the new models.

Features like digital services giving access to Google apps, other apps and services, which offer hands-free help with Google Assistant, navigation through Google Maps are available in both the models.



Dr Reddy's lab receives USFDA approval to market Lenalidomide capsule

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Dr Reddy's Laboratories on Tuesday said it has received approval from the US health regulator to market Lenalidomide capsules, used to treat multiple myeloma and myelodysplastic syndromes.

The company has received final approval of its abbreviated new drug application (ANDA) for Lenalidomide capsules in 2.5 mg and 20 mg strengths, and tentative approval for 5 mg, 10 mg, 15 mg, and 25 mg strengths from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA), the

Hyderabad-based drug major said in a regulatory filing.

The company's product is the generic version of Revlimid (lenalidomide) capsules. With the approval, Dr Reddy's is eligible for 180 days of generic drug exclusivity for Lenalidomide capsules, 2.5 mg and 20 mg, the drug-

maker said.

In September 2020, the company had announced a settlement agreement of their litigation with Celgene, the maker of Revlimid capsules and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bristol Myers Squibb, relating to patents for the

branded drug.



Jeep India recalls 39 Jeep Wrangler units to fix fuel supply part

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Automaker Jeep India on Tuesday said it is recalling 39 fully imported units of Jeep Wrangler in order to inspect and replace fuel supply line connector.

The company said it is recalling the SUV units manufactured between January 24, 2020 and March 17, 2020.

As part of the regular vehicle audit process, quality con-

trol identified the potential to replace the fuel supply line connector, which may have a propensity to crack, resulting in a leak from the fuel lines, which may cause a fire hazard, Jeep India said in a statement.

As a safety precaution, the 39 Jeep Wrangler units will be voluntarily recalled in order to eliminate any risk to the vehicle occupants, the vehicle itself and the people who might be

in close range of the vehicle at any given time, it added. The locally-assembled Jeep Wrangler is unaffected by this recall, the automaker stated. "Customer safety and the quality of our vehicles are the topmost priorities for us. Thanks to our continuous and stringent quality control processes this issue was identified early."

Digital transformation to aid India become US\$ 5-trillion economy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Digital transformation will help India become a USD 5-trillion economy and achieve the Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) target, said Schneider Electric India CEO Anil Chaudhry on Tuesday. Schneider Electric, a leader in the digital transformation of energy management

and automation, kicked off the Innovation Summit India 2021 on Tuesday.

On the first day of the virtual summit, the company brought together key policy-makers, industry leaders, customers and partners who shared critical insights on the role of disruptive technology to accelerate the digital transformation towards 'building a sus-

tainable and resilient future, with an Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

In a session of the summit, Anil Chaudhry said, "India is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and digital transformation would help India become a USD 5-trillion economy and achieve Aatmanirbhar (self-reliance)."

He is of the view that digitisation is crucial in making India a manufacturing hub in order to realise the i4i and i4w dream.



Economy on brink, Taliban chase former technocrats

PNS ■ KABUL

When the Taliban swept into power, they found Afghanistan's economy fast approaching the brink and were faced with harrowing predictions of growing poverty and hunger. So they ordered the financial managers of the collapsed former government back to work, with an urgent directive: Do your jobs, because we can't.

In the 20 years since the Taliban last ruled, Afghanistan evolved from an economy dealing mostly in illicit enterprise to a sophisticated, multi-billion-dollar system fueled by donor aid and international

trade. The Taliban, a movement borne out of the rural clergy, struggled to grasp the extent of the transformation.

Four employees from financial institutions told The Associated Press how the Taliban commanded bureaucrats from the previous government's Finance Ministry, central bank and other state-owned banks to return to work. Their accounts were confirmed by three Taliban officials.

"They told us, We are not experts, you know what is better for the country, how we can survive under these challenges," recalled one state bank official, who like others spoke on condition of anonymity



because he was not authorised to speak on record.

They told him, "Do what you must," but warned, "God is

watching you, and you will be accountable for what you do on Judgment Day."

Quietly, these technocrats

are advising the Taliban leadership in the running of the crippled financial sector. They tell them what to do and how to do it. But, as seasoned experts, they see no way out of Afghanistan's economic quagmire: With billions in international funds frozen, the best they can muster in domestic revenues is \$500 million to \$700 million, not enough to pay public salaries or provide basic goods and services.

The Taliban are buttressing relations with local businessmen to keep them operating, while the leadership makes its case for international recognition in meetings with foreign officials.

ConveGenius raises \$5 mn to launch conversational AI platform

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT startup ConveGenius has raised USD 5 million (about Rs 37 crore) in venture capital funding to launch its conversational AI platform ConveGenius AI in India and global markets, the company said on Tuesday.

The pre-seed round was led by new investors, BACE Capital, Heritas Capital and 3Lines Venture Capital. Existing investors Michael and Susan Dell Foundation also participated in the funding round. The company at present operates in India and aims to expand its products on the Whatsapp ecosystem and other Conversational AI-based channels horizontally to service more customers across different verticals and allow developers to launch their solutions on the platform.

"We are excited to launch ConveGenius AI for democratising digital access to billions of users globally and make knowledge and content accessible with one-click experiences," CEO Jairaj Bhattacharya said.

HOW DHRUV DEFINED TOGETHERNESS THROUGH *LITTLE THINGS*

SHIKHA DUGGAL

It's going to physically hurt to say good-bye as finally, the much-loved romantic series *Little Things Season 4* on Netflix, comes to an end. The show has indeed ended however, it may not end for the couples who have found love and fame through it, they learnt how to battle hardships in a relationship from the very realistic web series based. 'Dhruv' and 'Kavya' will always live rent-free in our hearts!

Dhruv Sehgal is all emotional, given that he created the show — it's like his own baby. It feels as if he's graduating from college. Teaching us simplicity in a relationship, the friendship it comes with, how to build the levels of comfort, and how one is better when together — Dhruv's *Little Things Season 4* taught us so much. Did he ever think that it would eventually become this big a hit? "No, we never thought it would grow to be this big. If we had started out saying, 'Yeh karengi, woh karengi', it would have felt very artificial. Thankfully, we didn't think about all of that," he shares. Perfection is not everything, acceptance and

companionship are beyond this sham of perfection is another lesson Dhruv's character taught us. He continues, "It's about overcoming the hiccups, how they're now one unit. They have stopped questioning the idea of love. It shouldn't get to be a point where everyone is bored of it. Right now, it is all wholesome. So we're ending it on a high note." Dhruv is currently working on two shows. Writing is where he connects with the characters, with the world, and with himself. It puts him in a good space, he tells us. "The genre was not new and path-breaking, but the idea of it being life-like

and real, was. We wanted to see love through the lens of slice-of-life and not through dramatic events. To us, that was exciting and challenging. And it resonated with the audience," the 31-year-old actor adds. Making the audiences experience love, warmth and tears, all at the same time — the actor and writer always wants to write his characters with empathy and honesty. The grammar of screenwriting has changed, but the basic essence is the same for him! We ask him how he coped with the pandemic, and he has an answer: "Both, the show and everyday little things like

making dal chawal are how I was dealing with pandemic anxiety. I was focused on the small wins, and that helped. Oh, also my cat. She was my favourite therapist. She took care of me!" *Little Things* undoubtedly showed how one can be perfect even with the many flaws, how one can grow individually in a relationship, and that every problem can be solved with a cup of 'chai'. It was a show that was conversational, mature and, one that openly talked about relationships of the urban youth — 'Momo' & 'Biryani Monster' will always stay in our hearts.



Skincare tips for new mothers and their babies

When you become a mother, you tend to forget about your own needs because you are so focused on your child. With the baby keeping you busy all day and night, your skincare takes a back-seat. It's not always changes in skin texture and looks post-pregnancy are a bad thing, but not taking care of your skin may lead to acne, melasma, stretch marks, puffy eyes, and even dark circles. Syed Nazim, Dermatologist, Aesthetic and Hair Transplant Surgeon, Royal Lush Skin Clinic Saket, New Delhi, shares simple and easy tips for you to follow, to get a glowing post-pregnancy. **Cleansing:** As you sleep, your skin goes through a renewal cycle, by dispensing toxins and debris. So you only need a light-textured cleanser to wash your face with a face wash that is suitable for your skin type. **Steam:** Take steam for 2-3 days a week, it will help you to open up your clogged pores. **Scrub & face pack:** Use a face scrub, to remove the dead skin cells, scrub your face for like 5 minutes and wash it with normal tap water. It will help you to make your skin softer and radiant, leave the mask until it dries off. **Toner & moisturiser:** Apply toner to your face, look for clarifying toners that rebalance your pH to maintain the

pH value of your skin. In the end, you only have to moisturize your face, to give hydration. **Steal baby products:** Baby products are always mild in nature so that the baby's sensitive skin doesn't have to compromise. They are created to lock moisture in babies skin. So, you can also use them. Whether it's a body oil, lotion or cream, apply some on your skin every time you're applying them on your baby. If you do this, you can flaunt your skin, this way, you don't have to dedicate a specific time every day for your skincare. **Keep all skincare needs in one place:** Organise all your skincare products in one place, this organization will help you way much better than anything. Make use of your "me time" and devote it properly to pamper yourself. **Streaming your routine:** Make a proper timetable, for your week how many days you are going to deep cleanse your skin in a week. If we talk about the baby skincare routine this is important too. As the baby's skin is too sensitive and they are interacting with such a harsh environment — pollution, high temperature etc. Don't worry there are some simple and easy enough tips. Here, what you should know, with regards to bath, diapering, selecting items and that's just the beginning. **Bath time:** Babies need two to three baths a week in warm, not hot water to stay clean. The initial step to an

extraordinary child shower is to track down the ideal temperature. **Tip:** Fill the bath without any more than 2 to 3 creeps of water. To keep your child from getting cold while you wash them, routinely pour cupfuls of water over their shoulders. **Diaper basics:** There are a lot of things you'll have to do for your little one when they're an infant, like changing your baby's diaper regularly, cleaning tenderly however completely each time with child wipes. Make the surface saturated yet dry simultaneously as well. There are countless myths around diaper rashes that it is caused because of the usage of diapers. But no, it is due to a lack of attention and knowledge about the correct time to change the diaper. Else it will get worse for your child. **Awareness of products:** Always read the product label before purchasing products for your infant. It's ideal to avoid chemical and alcohol-based products. Use products that are made explicitly for infants. Newborn babies are so delicate, requiring a lot of care and attention. A single mistake or slip of mind can make things worse. Keep your infant's skin saturated, as well, so consistently have a stockpile of moisturisers around. But excessive oil can cause cradle caps, and dryness can create painful scenarios. If your child is facing such issues you need to consult a certified dermatologist.



Chandan Sanyal soars with *Sanak*



After making a mark in India's most popular series, actor Chandan Roy Sanyal hits the digital scene as a maniacal villain in Vipul Amrutlal Shah & Zee Studios' *Sanak* — *Hope Under Siege*. The versatile powerhouse garners an outpour of positive reviews for his terror-evoking performance in the film directed by Kanishk Varma, starring Vidut Jammwal, Rukmini Maitra, and Neha Dhupia also. Establishing his command on his craft, the

Aashram actor has positioned himself as a credible performer with his portrayal as Saju, a merciless and diabolical hostage-taker who masterminds a siege over a hospital. The common thread in the unanimous appreciation rained on Chandan was the way he dug into the villain's mental space. The actor sat in the makeup chair for over an hour as his look required elaborate makeup and prosthetics. He also trained for a month under the guidance of an American action director and learned rifle handling for the hostage drama. If the

reviews are anything to go by, the actor's hard work has paid off. Trade expert Amul Mohan says, "Chandan's terror-evoking performance in *Sanak* speaks to his versatility. As an actor, he's as natural as they come. The film captures his finesse as an antagonist that had been unexplored until now." Another trade expert, Ramesh Bala said, "Chandan Roy Sanyal plays his ace as a bankable actor in *Sanak*. He holds his own and appears a merciless villain who makes the audience anxious about the next ghastly thing he's going to do. His presence and mannerisms are effortlessly convincing." Grateful to have been appreciated for the role, he says, "I'm honoured that so much appreciation has come by for *Sanak*. It feels great and rewarding to be reviewed positively by the best in the business. Raju Solanki's role allowed me to go to the dark side and I thank the producers for giving me the opportunity to explore my craft with such a large-hearted film." Chandan's upcoming projects include *Ashram Season 2* and a few unannounced ventures.

The senior living industry is on the brink of a technological revolution, says Kanishka Acharya

In 2021, technology and adaptation have become intrinsic to having a higher quality of life. Senior citizens can now upload prescriptions, speak to doctors, and stay in touch with family and friends at the touch of a button. However, these small adaptations are only beginning to scratch the surface of what technology can do for senior living. This may sound dramatic, but it's not an overstatement — senior citizens as a whole community have been among the slowest to adopt new technology, and unlike other branches of the industry, senior living or eldercare as it is referred to in India has not historically been pushed by its customer base to adopt a better tech, largely due to the small user base and a largely fragmented service offered by players, most of them with simple band-aid solutions to existing pain

points. That's a problem. Senior-care providers can only deliver on wellness to the extent that they're able to get a complete view of their clients to make decisions based on the whole person. But the tides are turning. As tech companies recognise the huge potential to transform the \$740 billion senior-care market and tech-savvy boomers enter retirement in growing numbers, the stage is set for a total industry revamp. The big hurdle most technologies that can make a difference to senior living face now is unifying their many siloed systems. While we are capturing data from multiple devices, these technologies aren't talking to each other — EHRs, for example, that don't take to a calendar system or medical records systems. More importantly where is all this data going? The need for a robust data analytics platform that is training an AI/ML engine to create patterns and detect

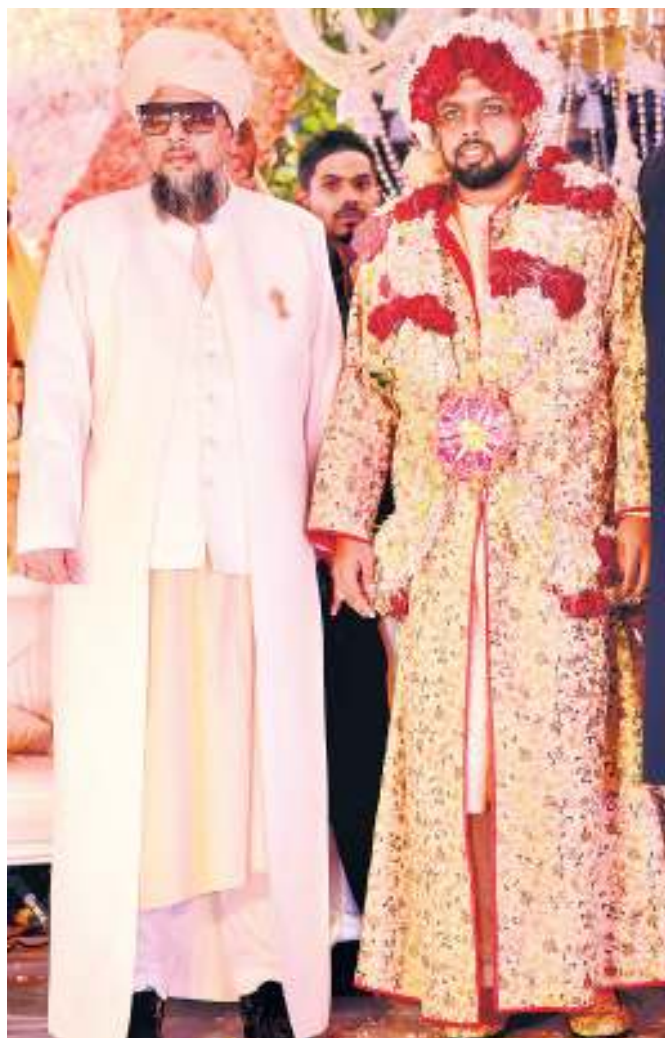
anomalies is critical. IOT will play a big role in creating meaningful solutions to later life living — devices that can detect sleep patterns, resting and variable heart rates through embedded chips in mattresses to co-relate it with day-time data, that is being non-sively being captured, can help clinicians and care companies make better decisions and improve overall health. Devices that help with navigation for

those affected with diabetes related partial or complete blindness, equipped with embedded triple layer chip designs with gyros and sensors, can change the quality of life dramatically. Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a 20 per cent increase in falls for seniors living in unsupervised conditions. With social distancing guidelines in effect and a limit on visitors, seniors are spending more time alone and unsupervised in their homes. This is especially problematic for seniors with neurodegenerative conditions, who were already falling twice as often as seniors without dementia. As we look ahead to 2022, fall prevention will continue to be a top concern in senior living. More often than not, this is a sentinel event that changes the course of life. To help solve this challenge, an AI-enabled sensor and beacon system to detect falls of individuals with dementia is set up. It will result in up to 40 per cent fewer falls and up to a 80

per cent reduction in fall-related ER visits. What is often lost in the in this maze of technology innovation is the need to develop and implement tech that makes an actual difference in daily living, whether it's improving the quality in performing activities of daily living (ADLs) or restoring the dignity to seniors in the entire caregiver-receiver interaction. This is something that not much attention has been given to so far. A big issue with the pre-baby boomer generation is the reluctance or inability to tech adoption. Trying to force adoption through wearable health devices, trackers, and so on, seldom achieve the desired outcomes. Technology will have to be seamlessly woven into their lives to make a credible difference; another important case can be seen in the instance of adult incontinence. This affects nearly 51 per cent of seniors aged 65 and older, and the only existing solution has been invasive surgeries or adult diapers to navigate daily living. If we could create a sensor-based patch that can record and communicate, in advance, that an individual's bladder or bowels are full, it would restore agency to both the individual and their caregiver. Hence, it is vital to develop non-intrusive tech that can dramatically improve the quality of life and restore dignity in later life living, monitor client health, and deliver better care. (The author is the founder and CEO of Welldecare, lifestyle as service retirement model for senior living.)



DEVICES THAT HELP WITH NAVIGATION FOR THOSE AFFECTED WITH DIABETES RELATED PARTIAL OR COMPLETE BLINDNESS, EQUIPPED WITH EMBEDDED CHIP DESIGNS WITH GYROS AND SENSORS, CAN CHANGE THE QUALITY OF LIFE DRAMATICALLY.



● Syed Mohammed Ali Moinuddin Khaja Pasha with Syed Ahmed ul Hussaini Sayeed ul Qadri



● Ahmed Alam Khan



● A K Khan



● Akbaruddin Owaisi

WEDDING BELLS

Many a familiar face was seen at the wedding ceremony of Syeda Barkatul Anam Fatima with Syed Mohammed Ali Moinuddin Khaja Pasha. From Asaduddin Owaisi to Mohammed Mahmood Ali, influential people from across the state partook in the wedding festivities.



● Adil Mohd and Sohail Mohd



● Asaduddin Owaisi



● Jaber Patel



● Janaki Lagadapati



● Mohammad Mahmood Ali



● Nilofar



● Meena



● Monika



● Ritesh Agarwal and Amit



● Yogesh Mudras

PARTY

Photos by SV Chary

SHINY AND SPARKLY

Several businesspersons and socialites were spotted at Hyderabad Jewellery, Pearl and Gem Fair (HJF 2021), South India's premium B2B jewellery trade show. The event at HICC Novotel was inaugurated by Abhilasha Bisht, IPS, Additional General of Telangana State Police.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



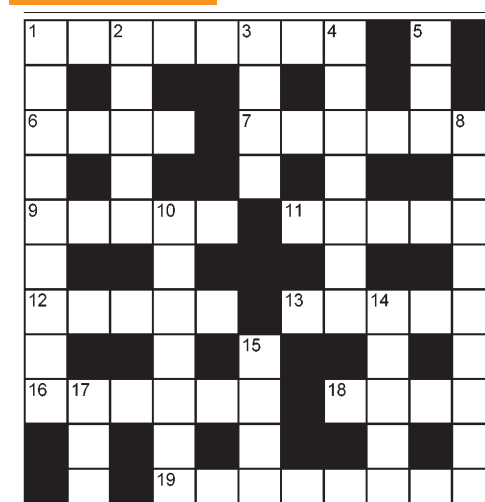
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- A fight using words
- Rip
- A root vegetable
- Group of eight
- Not ever
- A fruit with pips
- A hot drink
- Extreme fear
- Grow weary
- A large animal
- Glide over snow
- Not temporary
- Make bigger
- A large country in Asia
- Costing nothing
- A large bird

DOWN

- Someone in a spaceship
- A huge person
- Chews up and swallows
- An underwater missile for attacking a ship

SOLUTION

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

Prithviraj to play villain in *Salaar*?



Rumours were rife that a popular Malayalam actor will join Prabhas' *Salaar*. We now hear that Prithviraj Sukumara, one of the busiest actors in the Malayalam film industry, will be cast in *Salaar* opposite Prabhas.

If the ongoing reports are to be believed, Prithviraj Sukumaran will play the villain in Prashanth Neel's directorial venture *Salaar*. An official confirmation regarding the same is awaited.

Prithviraj reportedly shares a good rapport with the *KGF* director Prashanth Neel, who also reportedly purchased the Malayalam theatrical rights of Prashanth Neel's *KGF: Chapter 2*.

Salaar, which is being shot in both Telugu and Kannada, is being funded by Hombale films with Shruti Haasan as the female lead.

The film will have its theatrical release in 2022.

On the other side, Prabhas is waiting for the release of his upcoming romantic film *Radhe Shyam* which has Pooja Hegde as the leading lady.



Aha plans big for Samantha

Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who was last seen in *The Family Man 2*, is at her highest on the professional front. She was recently enlisted among the Forbes Most Influential Women of south Indian Cinema — 2021.

The latest we hear is that the actress, who already has signed two films, is in talks with a popular OTT platform Aha for a new project.

Earlier, Aha had Samantha host a celebrity talk show titled *Sam Jam*, where the actress engaged with celebrity guests in conversations that became instant hits. Reports now suggest

that the OTT platform is planning a bigger association with Samantha. The plan is to roll out a web series with the actress playing a central role in it.

Samantha's upcoming movies include a love story under Shanharuban's direction. She has also signed another movie to be made by director duo Hari and Harish. And now, if the makers of *Aha's* untitled web series get a nod from Samantha, they propose to start shooting as early as possible.

The actress, meanwhile, has wrapped up shooting for the talkie part of Gunasekhar's mythological magnum opus, *Shaakuntalam*. The dubbing of the film has been wrapped up and the makers are now busy with the post-production formalities.

Anasuya lashes out at Kota Srinivasa Rao

Veteran actor Kota Srinivasa Rao's comments on actor-anchor Anasuya has netizens divided on the controversy. While some have been supporting Anasuya, few others have been attacking her on social media. Recently, during an interview, the veteran actor, while praising her performance alleged that he doesn't like the way Anasuya dresses up in a popular comedy show. Angered with such comments coming from a senior artist, Anasuya Bharadwaj, on Tuesday, took to her Twitter to speak her heart out.

In a series of tweets, Anasuya said, "So let me just clear the mist for you guys. All those who have been talking about what women should wear in the past or now are only so weak and polluted in their heads that rather than teaching themselves to guide/control their s*xual feelings or not fuelling their male chauvinism. They imposed/impose these mindless dress codes on women. They slut shame women to cover their himbo thoughts. I want to believe today's men are much more logical and brave and sensible and righteous. Please prove me right."

Terming Kota Srinivasa Rao's comments as very low and unnecessary, the actress said that she respects Kota as an actor, but his comments have stooped too low.



WILL MAKE MORE FILMS ON TELUGUNESS AND INDIAN CULTURE: REVANTH

K RAMYA SREE

Natyam, a self-produced film starring popular dancer Sandhya Raju, has been creating all the hype for the past week. Thanks to the Mega family coming all out in support of the actress-dancer and the film. The film, directed by Revanth Korukonda and produced under the banner of Nishrinkala Film, will hit the big screens on October 22.

The director, ahead of the film's release, chats about the film, the making of *Natyam*, and more.

Revanth, who belongs to Anakapalle of Vishakapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, studied in America.

His love for movies and writing brought him back to his motherland, and focus on what he loves the most — writing. He shares, "I like writing stories. I like movies like *Vithalacharya* very much. There are many stories with a mythological background. I wanted to talk about such things in my own way, and so I made *Natyam*. Dance is a form of art that can tell beautiful stories and I wanted to make a good Telugu movie based on this art form."

The director-writer said he read a lot of books before writing the story for this film that is based completely on classical dance. "When I wanted to make a film on dance, one person that came to my mind was K Vishwanath *garu* (director, screenwriter, and actor known for his works films like *Aadavari Matalaku Arthale Verule*) I read a book called *Natyasastram*. In it, the Brahma thinks a man will listen to things only if conveyed in the form of stories. So he chooses dance as his medium to tell stories. That is why dance is called acting. So I wrote this story about dance, a village, riots in a village, and more," says Revanth.

The story of the film goes like... A teacher wants to change the superstitions in the village through dance. He tells that story to a young girl who is learning dance, but he stops sharing the story midway. Since the girl connected strongly to the story, she wanted to know the entire story. Will she ever fully learn the entire story? Will the people in the town change? *Natyam* unfolds all of these events in its story.

Revanth has also been a cameraman, editor, and director for this film. When asked how he managed to don three roles at once, he shares, "I come from a short films' background. We have to do everything ourselves there. That's where I learned to multitask. I also learned how to use light and gained some technical and creative knowledge. I believe the film came out well with these combined efforts."

But how did Sandhya Raju come on board this film? He answers, "Sandhya is the main pillar of the film. I narrated this story to many people. Everyone loved it, but everyone felt that only a professional dancer could do justice to my story. I have worked with Sandhya Raju for a short film earlier. I told Sandhya that I was keen on doing my first film on classical dance. When I narrated the story to her, she liked my confidence in the story, that's how she joined us. She is also one of the reasons why this film came out so well. She was very supportive, not only as a producer but also as a technician."

Natyam is also filled with some commercial drama elements and contains all emotions, cinematic elements, he says.

Revanth is elated that people like Ram Charan and Chiranjeevi have been supporting this film. "My dream is to make films that evoke Teluguness and express Indian culture. I will make a similar film soon," Revanth signs off.

Natyam earns Chiru's praise



After Ram Charan graced the pre-release event of the film and spoke well about the film *Natyam*, on Tuesday, Megastar Chiranjeevi was all praises about the film. He said, "*Natyam* made me feel good. Dance is telling a story in a beautiful and visually appealing manner. Revanth and Sandhya Raju have done exactly that. It is a pleasure to see such a film being made in times when most have been forgetting their customs, traditions, and art. I wholeheartedly appreciate this effort. Sandhya Raju too deserves a pat for making such a film. Coming from a well-established family, Sandhya's dedication to conveying a good message, instead of chasing money, is laudable. I'm sure this film will reach millions of people. I sincerely want this film to be a hit. The movie industry is always divided as 'before *Shankarabharanam*' and 'after *Shankarabharanam*'. There is nothing new to be told today about how popular *Shankarabharanam* was. That's a classic movie. I hope *Natyam* will be that popular."



VASTUNNA VACHESTUNNA COMING SOON

Filmmaker Sekhar Kammula, who is basking in the success of his most recent film *Love Story*, launched the first look of the title of the film *Vastunna Vachestunna*. The film that is being directed by Devi Prasad C, has actors Karthik Raju and Mishti Chakraborty playing the lead roles.



Srikanth, Sameer too advance at Denmark Open

PTI ■ ODENSE

Returning to action after a break, double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu saw off Turkey's Neslihan Yigit in straight games to join compatriots Kidambi Srikanth and Sameer Verma in the second round of the Denmark Open here on Tuesday.

Sindhu, the reigning world champion, took 30 minutes to get across Yigit, ranked 29th, 21-12 21-10 in her women's singles opener of the BWF World Tour Super 1000 tournament.

The fourth seeded Indian, who had skipped the Sudirman Cup and Uber Cup Final after the Tokyo Olympics, will next face Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan.

Former champion Srikanth and Sameer also made winning starts to their men's singles campaigns at the USD 850,000 event.

While Srikanth, who had claimed the title in 2017, outsmarted compatriot B Sai Praneeth 21-14 21-11 in 30 minutes, Sameer, ranked 28th, prevailed over Thailand's world no 21 Kunlavut Vitidsarn 21-17 21-14 in a 42-minute clash.

World no 14 Srikanth will meet world no 1 and top seeded Japanese Kento Momota in the second round, while Sameer is likely to face Denmark's third seed Anders Antonsen in the next round.

Indian men's doubles players, however, had a mixed day in office. While Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty defeated English pair of

Sindhu should prioritise winning All England title, says Padukone

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India ace PV Sindhu is currently the best badminton player in the world but she should prioritise winning the All England Championship, which is the only trophy missing from her illustrious cabinet, said the legendary Prakash Padukone on Tuesday.

Sindhu, a double Olympic medallist and the reigning world champion, has won medals in almost all big-ticket events but the All England trophy has eluded her so far.

Padukone, India's first All England champion, said Sindhu should plan her schedule in such a way that she is in the best possible shape for winning the prestigious title.

"If I was in her (Sindhu's) place, I would do that (prioritise the tournament). That is one title, which is missing from her ... otherwise I think she has done a fantastic job," Padukone said after launching the PSM Badminton Coaching Programme at the National Sports Club of India.

"...probably she is the best badminton player, she has won everything: Olympics, World Championship, five medals. All England is one which is not in her (winners list trophies)," he told reporters here on Tuesday.

Sindhu had become the first Indian woman to claim two Olympic medals when she won the bronze at Tokyo Games to go with her silver at Rio five years ago.

Callum Hemming and Steven Stallwood 23-21 21-15 in their opener, MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila stunned England's world no 17 pair of Ben Lane and Sean Vandy 21-19 21-15 to make a positive start to their campaign.

But Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy lost 18-21 11-21 to Malaysia's Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin in the opening round to bow out of the competition.

World no 7 Sindhu, who had claimed a bronze at Tokyo Games to go with her Rio sil-

ver medal, hardly broke any sweat during her opening contest against Yigit.

The Indian was up 5-4 and then kept moving ahead to comfortably pocket the opening game.

The second game was no different as Sindhu erased a 1-3 deficit to grab a 10-4 lead. Yigit made it 9-10 before the Indian held a two-point advantage at the break.

After the interval, it was a one-way traffic as Sindhu sealed the contest without much ado.

Scotland beat PNG for second win in a row

Inch closer to Super 12s

PTI ■ AL AMERAT (OMAN),

Richie Berrington slammed a stroke-filled 70 while Josh Davey snapped four wickets as Scotland inched closer to the Super 12s with a comfortable 17-run win over Papua New Guinea in their Group B match of the ICC T20 World Cup on Tuesday.

Scotland grabbed the top position in Group B with two wins having shocked Bangladesh in their opening game. Berrington put on 92 runs off 65 balls with Matthew Cross (45) before adding

another 33 with Calum MacLeod (10) as Scotland posted a challenging 165 for 9 after opting to bat.

Kyle Coetzer's men then produced a splendid bowling effort to skittle out PNG for 148 in 19.3 overs with Davey (4/18) emerging as the stand-out bowler.

PNG thus made an early exit to their maiden campaign at the T20 World Cup following the second successive loss. They had lost to Oman by 10 wickets in their tournament opener.

Chasing 166 to win, PNG needed their batters to fire but they couldn't get any momentum and were soon reduced to 35 for 5 in 6 overs.

Norman Vanua (47) and Kiplin Doriga (18) then fought back adding 53 off 29 balls to raise hopes but Watt broke the partnership dismissing the latter in the 17th over.

Davey then returned to remove Vanua to dash PNG's slim hopes of a maiden victory

in its first global appearance.

Earlier, Berrington slammed three sixes along with six hits to the fence during his 49-ball stay to set the foundation for a big score but PNG put brakes in the last three overs, conceding only 19 runs and taking six wickets in the process.

Kabua Morea (4/31) and Chad Soper (3/24) were the most successful bowlers for PNG.

George Munsey smashed three fours to give Scotland a flying start but Morea castled skipper Coetzer at the other end in the third over to deal the first blow.

Munsey too perished soon while trying to muscle a delivery from Soper as Scotland slipped to 26 for 2 in 3.4 overs.



T20 World Cup: Bangladesh win toss, opt to bat against Oman

IANs ■ AL AMERAT

Bangladesh captain Mahmudullah won the toss and opted to bat against Oman in the 6th match of ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 at the Al Amerat Cricket Ground, here on Tuesday.

Bangladesh, who suffered a shocking six-run defeat to Scotland in the last game, made one change in their team as Mohammad Naim came in place of Soumya Sarkar.

"Going to have a bat, put some runs on the board and try to defend it. Dew is a factor and it's been in our consideration. But we'd like to have



a good total on the board. Batting wise we didn't build enough partnerships. Today's another opportunity," said Mahmudullah at the toss.

On the other hand, Oman, who won their last match against PNG, also made one

change, replacing Khawar Ali with Fayyaz Butt for this game.

"Happy to bowl. Just one thing — have to keep them to a low total. We have pressure from the first game, not this game," said Oman skipper Zeeshan Maqsood at the toss.

Harbhajan Singh, Javagal Srinath awarded MCC life membership



PTI ■ LONDON

India's Harbhajan Singh and Javagal Srinath were on Tuesday awarded life membership of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), joining 16 other cricketers who were given the honour this year. The MCC, based at Lord's, is the custodian of cricket laws. Harbhajan and Srinath both enjoyed fine international careers. Harbhajan is India's

third-highest wicket-taker in Tests, with 417 dismissals in 103 Tests and more than 700 plus international wickets across formats. Srinath, currently an ICC Elite Panel Match Referee, is one of the greatest fast bowlers with 315 ODI wickets and 236 Test victims. "Eight of the 12 Test-playing nations are represented within this year's list, which includes some of the most recognisable names in the modern game," said the MCC in a statement.

England's leading Test run-scorer Alastair Cook, is joined by fellow countrymen Ian Bell and Marcus Trescothick, totalling more than 39,000 international runs between them.

A fourth England star, Sarah Taylor, returned to the field this year, appearing in the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy, Charlotte Edwards Cup and The Hundred, and is recognised as one of the finest wicket-keepers of her generation.

World Snooker Qualifiers: Pankaj Advani shines with 121-point effort

IANs ■ MUMBAI

India's most celebrated cueist, Pankaj Advani (PSPB) neatly constructed a brilliant 121 points effort as he rallied splendidly from the loss of the opening two frames to prevail over Dhvaj Haria (PSPB) 4-2 and record his fourth successive win in the Men's 'Y' Camp (1st leg) round-robin league matches of the World Snooker Qualifiers, a BSFI National Selection Tournament on Tuesday.

The 36-year-old India No. 2 Advani, started hesitantly and the left-handed Dhvaj cashed on



the opportunities to take a 2-0 lead. But, the cool and calculated Advani, winner of multiple

World titles, showed his class as he turned on the magic in compiling a stupendous run

which drew loud cheers and applause from the goody crowds as he went on to win the third frame and get back into the match.

That three-figure break, the highest break so far in the competition, seemed to have knocked the fight out of Haria as the Bengaluru-based Advani went on to comfortable win the next three frames to complete a satisfying 29-74, 31-79, 121(121)-00, 69-14, 69-03 and 72-17 win.

On Monday night, Advani had defeated Pushpendar Singh (RSPB) 4-1 (68(51)-34, 86-01, 00-86(86), 120(84)-11, 61-25

win, the organisers informed in a release on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, National champions Aditya Mehta (Men) and Vidya Pillai (Women) both suffered setbacks. The 35-year-old Mehta (PSPB) came lost to Dhvaj Haria (PSPB) who played steadily to clinch a 4-2 (13-87, 79-39, 44-55, 82-00, 67-01, 71-36) victory late on Monday. However, Mehta regained his winning form and with breaks of 83 (2nd frame), 72 (4th), and 56 (5th) defeated Pushpendar Singh (RSPB) 4-1 (55-19, 98(83)-00, 56-65(46), 129(72)-00 and 69(56)-33) to keep his qualifying hopes alive.

Hardik, not bowling will not impact India's chances, feels Kapil Dev

IANs ■ NEW DELHI

Legendary cricketer Kapil Dev has opined that all-rounder Hardik Pandya not bowling will not impact Team India's chances at the ICC T20 World Cup. However, he added that it will affect the 'combination and the options' for Virat Kohli.

Kapil's comments came after Hardik refrained from bowling in India's warm-up match against England, which the Men-in-Blue won on Monday. Kohli used five full-time bowling options and they conceded 188 runs. Hardik (12* off 10

balls) played as a specialist batsman.

"An all-rounder always makes a massive difference to a team. Hardik not bowling will not impact India's chances, but it will make a difference in terms of Kohli's options. If an all-rounder is available for both, it enhances the captain's ability to rotate bowlers and gives him the extra option to fall back on," Kapil Dev told Sportskeeda.

"In Hardik's case, India should be okay given the talent in the team, but him bowling even two overs will obviously lend more flexibility," he added.

Indian women's football team faces Swedish top tier side in friendly match today

PTI ■ STOCKHOLM

With three recent international wins under its belt, a confident Indian women's football team will take on Swedish top tier league side Hammarby IF in a friendly match here on Wednesday.

This is the first of the two friendlies the Indian team will play in the Scandinavian country.

The team played four matches against UAE (4-1), Tunisia (0-1), Bahrain (5-0) and Chinese Taipei (1-0) as part of preparations for next year's women's AFC Asian Cup.

"It's a big challenge for us in Sweden, but the girls are motivated to give their best in every game," said goalkeeper Aditi Chauhan on the eve of the match.

"It's often about who wants more on the pitch, and our girls are certainly pumped up after the results that we have had recently," she added.

The Indian team under Swedish coach Thomas Dennerby scored 10 goals in the four international friendly games while conceding only one to register three wins and one loss.

"These games have been very helpful for the team. They helped us reflect on the team and individual performances. These matches helped us look at our strengths and weaknesses," another player Dalima Chhibber said.

"As a team, we are focused on building up to the AFC Women's Asian Cup next year, and competitive matches like these help us plan for the areas where we need to improve," Chhibber said that the team is working hard to adapt to the philosophy that coach Dennerby is trying to inculcate in the team.

"We are working with a new coaching philosophy both on and off the field. The preparations for the flagship tournament is going on in full swing," she said.

Once having cycled across 17 nations 67-YR-OLD MAYURE ON MISSION KASHMIR TO KANYAKUMARI



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Having once paddled across 17 nations and 15,000 kilometres to reach Athens back in 2004, veteran Maharashtra cyclist Sanjay Mayure has embarked on 'Bharat Darshan' as he has undertaken a challenge to cycle from Kashmir to Kanyakumari in two months.

A renowned cyclist from Maharashtra's Vidarbha region 67-year-old Mayure reached New Delhi on Tuesday after having started his mission from Srinagar's Lal Chowk on October 8.

From Delhi, Mayure will be heading to Gwalior followed by

Nagpur and then off to Hyderabad. From Hyderabad, he will be reaching Bengaluru before the final stretch which consists of three cities — Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Rameswaram covering around 4,100 kms.

Mayure is expected to cover this distance in the next two months. "I think age is just a number. It is very easy to give excuses to avoid difficult tasks. Cycling has been my passion right from childhood. It kept me healthy and busy at this age too," said Mayure, who had some years back retired as Nayab Tahsildar of revenue department at DM's office.

Asked how he manages his accommodation as there is a fair amount of expense associated with this kind of a journey across India. "I have never taken money and mostly managed on my own. I have spent lot of nights at Gurdwaras and ate the langar food and at times stayed in Mandirs where I have survived on prasad. Some places where I have no option, I stay at budget hotels to cut costs. But this is my passion and I can't ask for money from anyone," said Mayure, who hails from a small town Buldana, which is 50 kms from Ajanta, Ellora Caves.

Mayure, who won several cycling races in his younger days and earned the reward of 'Ghatacha Raja' (King of Ghats), was 50 years old when he had cycled across 17 countries to encourage Indian Olympians during the Athens edition.

So how does he manage costs and Mayure revealed a story of passion. "My wife is a retired SBI officer, my son is also working in a bank and my daughter-in-law is a teacher. I can't tell how much my wife encourages me. I save my pension money and then use it for these trips.

SAFF Championships title not a 'special success'

Aim is to qualify for 2023 Asian Cup: Coach

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India winning the SAFF Championships for an eighth time is not a 'special success' as the country is dominant in the South Asian region and the bigger aim is to do well in the 2023 Asian Cup qualification, national football team head coach Igor Stimac said on Wednesday. India won the regional tournament after beating Nepal 3-0 in the final in Male on Saturday to hand Stimac his first trophy as in-charge of the team. "I don't consider it (the SAFF title) as a special success because it is normal that India wins when it goes to SAFF but it demonstrates that we are very dominant in this competition and we can progress in our game a lot more," Stimac said at a virtual interaction. He, however, admitted that his team was under a lot of "result pressure" after drawing Bangladesh (1-1) and Sri Lanka (0-0) in the first two round-robin league matches.

The results had put India in danger of going out of reckoning for the final. India then beat Nepal 1-0 and hosts Maldives 3-1 in must-win matches before out-

playing the Himalayan country 3-0 in the summit clash to stamp their authority.

"It was obviously a difficult situation we found after the first two matches but they looked bad only because of the results. There was no big difference in approach, the numbers and statistics, we had enough shoots, scoring chances, movement and energy by players.

"We scored sometimes and didn't score sometimes and that made the difference. So, we had a lot of results pressure on our shoulders but we dealt with it the way it should be and in the end we won the trophy which was really important." Stimac was speaking from Bengaluru after his return from Maldives and he is leaving for Dubai Tuesday night with the U-23 national team, which he has taken charge of for the 2022 Asian U-23 Championships qualifiers in the UAE from October 25 to 31.

The Croatian gaffer said that the side's aim is to make it to the 2023 Asian Cup for which the qualification third round is set to begin early February next year.

