

ANALYSIS 7
USING SCIENCE FOR
A SELF-RELIANT INDIA**MONEY 8**
HOUSING DEMAND TO RISE ON SBI'S
DECISION TO OFFER LOAN AT 6.7 PC**SPORTS 12**
NZ PUT OFF PAK
TOUR OVER SECURITY

HYDERABAD, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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SAMANTHA SAYS
YES TO A NEW
PROJECT?

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ETALA GETS AMIT SHAH'S PAT



Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah and BJP State unit leaders during the party's public meeting at Nirmal on Friday

Shah: BJP will come to power in Telangana

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah asserted here on Friday that the Bharatiya Janata Party would come to power in the state in the next Assembly elections. [He, however, got the year of the Assembly polls wrong and put it as "in 2024" (see inset).]

Shah was addressing the party's Telangana Liberation Day celebrations at a public meeting Veyri Urila Marri near Nirmal town on Friday as the Chief Guest.

The BJP, after attaining power, would officially celebrate September 17 as Telangana Liberation Day, he said. While extending Telangana Liberation Day greetings to the people of

Chronology *samjo*

Back in January 2020, during the peak of anti-CAA stir, Home Minister Amit Shah's famous line '*Aap chronology samajh lijiye*' became the favourite meme on the Internet. It implied that he makes it a point to always get things right. However, on Friday, during his much-publicized meeting at Gajwel, Shah took everyone by surprise by fumbling that "the BJP would come to power in TS in 2024", though Assembly polls are scheduled to be held in 2023.

Telangana State, Shah pointed out that Karnataka had been celebrating 'Hyderabad Liberation Day' on a grand note every year.

What happened to the assurances made by Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao that Telangana Liberation Day celebrations would be conducted officially upon formation of a separate Telangana

State, he sought to know. Shah asked rhetorically: "Doesn't KCR care about the sacrifices of Telangana Liberation Movement?"

Shah said that Telangana got freedom some 13 months after the nation got freedom. It was possible only because of the efforts of Sardar Vallabhai Patel.

Council decides not to bring petrol, diesel under GST ambit 'for now'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The all-powerful GST Council on Friday decided to charge food delivery platforms such as Swiggy and Zomato a tax even as it extended concessional tax rates on certain Covid-19 drugs by three months till December 31.

The Council, which comprises the Union finance minister and her state counterparts, decided to continue keeping petrol and diesel out of the GST purview as subsuming the current excise duty and VAT into one national rate would impact revenues.

Briefing reporters on the decisions taken by the Council at a meeting here, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said GST has been exempted on muscular atrophy drugs like Zolgensma and Viltepso, which cost crores of rupees.

It extended the period of concessional GST rates on certain Covid-related drugs by three months till December 31 but decided not to give the same benefit to medical equipment. The concessional regime for certain medical equipment will end on September 30.

2

TS LIBERATED IN 1948...

People in Telangana don't have freedom today, claims Revanth



TPCC chief and MP A Revanth Reddy and Congress senior leaders at the party's dandora in Gajwel on Friday.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee chief and Malkajgiri MP A Revanth Reddy has said that Telangana region got freedom on September 17, 1948; however, there is no freedom for people of the state today.

He was addressing the Dalit Girijan Athma Gourava Dandora public meeting at Gajwel on Friday, being observed by the party as 'Telangana Merger Day'.

Pointing out that the Congress

chose to organize its public meeting on Friday at Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's home constituency Gajwel in acceptance of the challenge thrown by TRS leaders, Revanth said he had special love for Gajwel as the people of Gajwel had chased away Razakars for self-rule. He said that Indira Gandhi won from Medak in 1980 and established 25 huge industries.

Revanth sought to know why KCR was silent on the ongoing ED investigations into the drugs-cum-

money laundering case and why the state government was not "extending its support" to the ED's probe. He called upon Congress leaders and cadre to wage "a final stage Telangana movement" in the coming 19 months to bring the Congress party to power. He said that the Congress leaders, comfortable with managing their own families and living a luxurious life, were concerned about the four crore TS people.

2

HC orders judicial probe into Raju's 'suicide'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana High Court on Friday ordered a judicial enquiry into the alleged suicide of Pallakonda Raju, who was wanted for the rape and murder of a six-year-old girl at Saidabad.

A public interest litigation (PIL) plea was filed in the High Court by the president of State Civil Liberties Committee, Prof Gaddam Laxman, expressing doubts over Raju's death by 'suicide'.

The matter came up before a division bench of the HC comprising acting Chief Justice MS Ramchandra Rao and Justice T Vinod Kumar.

The state's Advocate General B Prasad refuted the charges, saying the police have recorded the statement of seven witnesses in this regard and the post-mortem has been videographed.



The matter came up before a division bench of the HC comprising acting Chief Justice MS Ramchandra Rao and Justice T Vinod Kumar.

However, after hearing the arguments, the Bench ordered a judicial inquiry and directed the Third Metropolitan Magistrate of Warangal court to probe the issue. The court directed the magistrate to also submit a detailed report in a sealed cover within four weeks.

No devotees at this year's Brahmotsavams, says TTD

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

The Navaratri Brahmotsavams of Lord Venkateswara hill temple, scheduled to begin on October 7 at Tirumala, will be conducted without the participation of devotees, due to the anticipated third wave of Covid-19, said a top functionary of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) that governs the hill temple.

TTD chairman YV Subba Reddy on Friday said that the decision to conduct the Brahmotsavams without devotees has been taken in the wake of the Centre once again issuing guidelines in view of a possible Covid third wave. He said that darshan will continue with a limited number of slots every day and steps are being taken to issue online tokens in about a week's time.

2

AP, TS to get new Chief Justices after SC Collegium recommendation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana States are likely to get new Chief Justices.

The Supreme Court Collegium on Friday recommended eight names to the Centre for appointment as Chief Justices of different High Courts across the country, sources said.

They said besides Allahabad, the High Courts of Calcutta, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Meghalaya, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh will get new Chief Justices.

The Collegium has recommended transfer of Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh High Court Justice Arup Kumar Goswami to the Chhattisgarh High Court, Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court Justice Mohd Rafiq to the Himachal Pradesh High Court.

They said names of Justices Prakash Srivastava, Prashant Kumar

Mishra and Ritu Raj Awasthi have been recommended for appointment as Chief Justices of the High Courts of Calcutta, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

Names of Justices Satish Chandra Sharma, Ranjit V More, Aravind Kumar and RV Malimath have been recommended for appointment as Chief Justices of High Courts of Telangana, Meghalaya, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, the sources said.

They said the eight names include Acting Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court Justice Rajesh Bindal, who has been recommended to be transferred as the Chief Justice of

Allahabad High Court.

The sources said the three-member Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India NV Ramana, has also recommended that Chief Justice of Tripura High Court Justice Akil Qureshi be transferred to the Rajasthan High Court.

Besides the CJ, the three-member Collegium that deals with appointments in High Courts includes Justices UU Lalit and AM Khanwilkar.

They have decided to recommend transfer of five Chief Justices and 28 other High Court judges to other High Courts, sources said.

Kitex Group signs MoU with TS govt

PNS ■ KOCHI

Kitex group has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana government for two major investment projects there, the company said on Friday. The Kitex group in a release said it had signed an MoU for two mega projects at Warangal mega textile park and the industrial park at Hyderabad.

"Telangana Industries department Principal secretary Jayesh Ranjan and Kitex group MD Sabu M Jacob signed the MoU," the company said in a release. The release said the MoU was signed after a meeting with Industries Minister KT Rama Rao.

2

India administers over 2 crore vax doses on Modi's birthday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

India set a record on Friday by administering over two crore Covid-19 vaccine doses, in a major push to the inoculation drive on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday.

The cumulative doses administered in the country reached 2,03,68,343 at 5.27 pm, according to data on the Co-WIN portal.

The total number of doses administered in the country has

crossed 78.72 crore.

"A gift to the prime minister on behalf of health workers and people of the country. On the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi today, India has crossed the historic figure of administering 2 crore vaccine doses in a day, setting a new record. Well done India!" Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya tweeted in Hindi.

2

ED quizzes actor Tanish on money laundering

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Actor Tanish appeared before sleuths of the Enforcement Directorate here on Friday in connection with the inquiry into drugs-cum-money laundering case. He was questioned by the officials on his bank transactions. The officials enquired about his relations with Calvin and other drug peddlers.



2

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Bhadrapada & Shukla Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Dwadashi 06:53 Trayodashi 29:59

Nakshatram : Dhanishtha 27:21

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

Rahukalam : 9:09 am - 10:39 am

Yamagandam : 1:40 pm - 3:11 pm

Varjyam : 7:33 am - 9:08 am

Gulika : 6:07 am - 7:38 am

Good Time : (to start any important work)

Amritakalam : 6:03 pm - 6:38 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:45 am - 12:34 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 28/22

Humidity: 75%

Sunrise: 6:04 am

Sunset: 06:15 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated SEPTEMBER 17, 2021 5:00 PM

GRMB, KRMB sub panels get going on gazette implementation

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Setting in motion the process for implementation of the gazette issued by the Centre bringing all the projects of Krishna and Godavari basins under the jurisdiction of the respective boards, the Sub Committees of both the Boards held separate meetings with officials of the Telugu States at Jal Soudha here on Friday.

The Godavari River Management Board Sub Committee directed the Telugu States to submit details of the staff required for maintenance of projects within a week to 10 days. Further, the Sub Committee made it clear that the States should get approvals within six months for the projects taken up without required approvals in the Godavari Basin.

The GRMB Sub Committee held its meeting with Irrigation Department officials of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh here on Friday. The GRMB members too participated in the meeting.

Seek details of projects, staff within 10 days

Gives six months' time to get approvals for unapproved Godavari basin projects

KRMB sub-committee to make field visits if required

As the gazette notification will come into force from October 14, it requested both the States to extend their cooperation for its implementation.

The Krishna River Management Board Sub Committee, which also met later at Jal Soudha here on Friday with R K Pillai as convener, discussed the finalization of an action plan for the implementation of the gazette.

2

Padmanabhaswamy temple in great financial stress

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Kerala is in great financial stress and the offerings are not sufficient to meet the expenses, its Administrative Committee told the Supreme Court on Friday while seeking an audit of the temple-related Trust run by the Travancore royal family.

All temples in Kerala are closed and while this temple's monthly expenses are Rs 1.25 crore, "we are able to hardly get 60-70 lakh rupees. Therefore, we have sought certain directions", senior advocate R Basant, appearing for the Committee, told a bench headed by Justice U U Lalit.



The temple is in great financial stress and "we are not able to function", Basant said, alleging that the Trust is trying to avoid its obligation by not making their record available for audit.

The temple is in great financial stress and "we are not able to function", Basant said, alleging that the Trust is trying to avoid its

obligation by not making their record available for audit.

The Trust has 2.87 crore in cash and 1.95 crore in assets as per the

2013 auditors' report and that is why the entire thing has to be gone into to find out how much money it has, he said.

The trust is constituted as per court's order and it must contribute to the temple, Basant told the bench, also comprising Justices S Ravindra Bhat and Bela M Trivedi.

Senior advocate Arvind Datar, appearing for the Trust, argued that it is a public Trust made by the Royal family and has no role in administration.

The Trust was just mentioned by the Amicus Curiae in the case, not as part of the petition, he said.

2

India administers...

Continued from page 1

The daily vaccinations crossed the one-crore mark for the fourth time in less than a month. Mandaviya said this is the fastest pace at which one crore doses have been administered.

"On PM @Narendra Modi Ji's birthday, till 1:30 pm, the country has crossed the mark of 1 crore vaccines, the fastest so far, and we are continuously moving forward. I believe that today we will all make a new record of vaccination and give it as a gift to the prime minister," he said in a tweet in Hindi earlier along with the hashtags "VaccineSeva" and "HappyBdayModiji".

ED quizzes actor...

Continued from page 1

Tanish was questioned by the Excise Department officials in 2017 in the Tollywood drugs case. The ED officials have summoned him now in the context of suspected money laundering in the procurement of drugs. The officials grilled him on the transactions with drug peddler Calvin and others. They questioned him about the parties at F Club, where drugs were distributed.

Apart from figuring in the Tollywood drugs case, recently the actor's name cropped up with regard to a party hosted in Karnataka, where drugs were distributed.

TS attracts Rs 887 crore investment in jute sector

Positive approach to addressing gunny bag shortage

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

A positive approach to addressing the problem of shortage of gunny bags for procurement during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in Telangana State attracting Rs 887-crore investment in its jute industry.

In the presence of Ministers KT Rama Rao, Singireddy Niranjan Reddy, and Gangula Kamalakara, the Government of Telangana entered into separate MoUs with Gloster Ltd, MBG Commodities Pvt Ltd, and Kaleshwaram Agro Pvt Ltd here on Friday.

During the first wave of the Covid-19-induced lockdown, procurement was difficult, though the Telangana government was ready financially, as it was difficult to find gunny bags with all jute mills located in Bengal and Bangladesh. Sharing details of how the state government handled it, Minister K T Rama Rao said:

"Even when we reached out to the Government of India and



the Jute Corporation, they said their hands were tied and could not help. "Then we decided to become self-reliant. Telangana is developing fast; especially in the agricultural sector, we are a role model. In order to be self-sustained and self-reliant, we decided to set up jute mills. Jayesh Ranjan and I were given the mandate".

The outcome of this strategy is that three companies have come forward to set up jute mills in Telangana with a

cumulative investment of Rs 887 crore. The proposed jute mills would provide direct employment to about 10,400 people. For the next 20 years, gunny bags will be bought by the state government through its Civil Supplies Department. For the first seven years, all the produce would be taken by the government; later, 50% will be taken. Apart from the buy back, the companies would be given transport subsidies.

Gloster Limited will invest about Rs 330 crore to set up a jute mill in Warangal District. The investment will create 3,400 direct employment opportunities in the region.

MBG Commodities will invest about Rs 254 crore. The firm will set up a modern integrated jute mill in Sircilla District. The investment will generate approximately 3,400 direct employment opportunities in the region.

Kaleshwaram Agro Pvt Ltd will invest about Rs 303 crore. The company will set up a modern integrated jute mill in Kamareddy District. The investment will generate approximately 3,600 direct employment opportunities in the region.

The State has been sourcing gunny bags from West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh, paying Rs 49 to 62 per bag. This apart, it spent about Rs 2.50 per unit on transport. With new jute mills coming up in Telangana, the State would be in a position to save on these costs.

Harish Rao requests early release of funds for 32 backward districts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a major relief to Telangana and other states, the 45th GST Council meeting chaired by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at Lucknow resolved to continue the status quo and not bring petrol and diesel under the ambit of Goods and Services Tax (GST).

The proposal to consider bringing petrol and diesel under the GST was added in the agenda following the direction of Kerala High Court to consider the request of a petitioner to bring petroleum products under the GST to give relief to consumers. However the states did not favour the proposal.

The states collect VAT on petrol and diesel in addition to the excise duty levied by the Centre imposing considerable burden on consumers every

time the prices of petrol and diesel are revised. However, all the States without exception said the situation was not right for even considering the proposal as VAT on petrol and diesel bring considerable revenue to the states at a time when the economies were hit adversely under the impact of Covid.

State Finance Minister Harish Rao addressed a letter and represented to the Council Chairman on various issues related to the state including settling the IGST amount which is transferred to consolidate fund of India in March 2019. While the state should have received Rs 352 crore, only Rs 142 crore was received by the state through tax devolution and Rs 210 crore has been due. He requested the Chairperson to resolve the issue at the ear-

liest.

Harish Rao personally requested the Union Finance Minister and requested her to release Rs 450 crore BRGF fund sanctioned under the State Reorganisation Act for the development of backward areas in the state.

He also said that after reorganization of districts of Telangana, the number of backward districts went up from 9 to 32 barring Hyderabad district and requested to extend the period of special assistance for another five years starting from 2021-22. The grants for the years 2019-20 along with the grant for the current year should be released at the earliest.

The State Finance Minister also raised the special grant of Rs.723 crore recommended by the 15th Finance Commission for the year 2020-21.

Council decides not to bring petrol, diesel under GST ambit...

Continued from page 1

Sitharaman said 5 percent GST will be levied at the point where the delivery is made by Swiggy and Zomato.

Also, the Council cut GST rate from 12 percent to 5 percent on cancer-related rugs and on fortified rice kernels to 5 percent from 18 percent.

GST rate on bio-diesel for blending in diesel was reduced to 5 percent from 12 percent, while the national permit fee for goods carriage has been exempt from GST. Import of leased aircraft has also been exempted from payment of 1-GST, the finance minister said.

"GST Council felt it was not the right time to include petroleum products in GST," she said.

The panel decided to levy 18 percent GST on all sorts of pens. Specified renewable sector devices will be charged 12 percent tax.

GST Council also recommended new footwear and textile rates from January 1.

People in Telangana...

Continued from page 1

The TPCC chief said the Chief Minister, who had claimed that he achieved Telangana by skipping meals during the statehood movement, should spell out how he had amassed assets. "KCR has to tell the secret of his business to the people of Telangana to become rich like him", Revanth observed.

Revanth Reddy said that KCR had brought Mallanna Sagar and Konda Pochamma reservoirs submerging 14 villages. He urged the people of Medak to extend their support to the Congress the way they supported Indira Gandhi in the past. He alleged that KCR, having assured the Congress leaders that he would merge TRS party with the Congress if statehood was accorded to Telangana, "deceived Sonia Gandhi after the creation of Telangana State".

Revanth said that he would conduct one more public meeting within six months, should TRS want it. He alleged that KCR had made higher education beyond the reach of SCs and STs. There was no social justice in the state. Mere 0.5 per cent of people belonging to KCR's community, particularly KCR family, got jobs. But SCs and STs did not get jobs. KCR failed to give jobs to

the SCs and STs, he said.

Rajya Sabha opposition leader Mallikarjuna Kharge stated that SCs and STs were ready to achieve their rights and the Congress would support them in their task. He said that September 17 was the day Telangana merged with the Indian Union, though all sections of people in Telangana were frustrated today.

Finding fault with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for asking the Congress to spell out what it had done for the nation in the last 70 years, Kharge said that Modi and KCR were giving an impression that they did everything forgetting the fact that the Congress brought freedom to the nation. Several Congress leaders had sacrificed their lives for the sake of the nation.

He said that AICC chief Sonia Gandhi had accorded Telangana State and Indira Gandhi had won elections from the Medak Lok Sabha constituency.

Telangana Affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore, CLP leader Mallu Bhathi Vikramarka, senior leaders---V Hanumantha Rao, Dr J Geetha Reddy, Damodara Rajanarsimha, T Jeevan Reddy, D Sridhar Babu, Seethakka and others were also present.

AP, TS to get new Chief Justices...

Continued from page 1

"The decision on major reshuffle and appointment of Chief Justices in High Courts have taken place following marathon meetings," a reliable source told PTI, adding that meetings in this regard took place on Thursday and Friday.

The Collegium decisions, containing the names and details of the judges, are yet to be uploaded on the apex court's website.

They said the Collegium has recommended transfer of Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court Justice Indrajit Mahanty to the Tripura High Court and Meghalaya High Court Chief Justice Justice Biswanath Somadder to the Sikkim High Court.

Besides Justice Binal, the Collegium has recommended names of Justices Prakash Srivastava, Prashant Kumar

Mishra, Ritu Raj Awasthi, Satish Chandra Sharma, Ranjit V More, Aravind Kumar and R V Malimath for appointing them as Chief Justices of different High Courts across the country, the sources said.

The latest recommendations have been made close on the heels of a historic decision to recommend 68 names in one go for judgeship in 12 High Courts across the country.

Recently, the Collegium recommended 10 names to the Centre for appointment as permanent judges in the Karnataka High Court.

These recommendations assume significance in view of the statement made by the CJI in a recent function of the Bar Council of India that it has been his endeavour to address the issue of vacancies in the higher judiciary on an "urgent basis".

Referring to nine appointments in one go in the apex

court bench, Justice Ramana had said, "Similarly, after I took over, the Collegium has recommended, if I am not wrong, 82 names to various High Courts. I hope the government will ensure that the names are cleared at the earliest just the way the nine names were cleared for the apex court. It is an ongoing process. We hope to live up to the Herculean challenge of filling nearly 41 percent vacancies existing in all the high courts," he had said, adding that in another month, he expected that 90 percent of vacancies will be filled.

The 25 High Courts of the country have a combined sanctioned strength of 1,080 judges.

Prior to this, in a historic decision on August 17, the five-member Collegium headed by the CJI had recommended nine names for elevation as judges of the Supreme Court, including three women.

Kitex Group signs MoU...

Continued from page 1

The company said an official declaration will be made on Saturday and the package offered by the Telangana government for the Kitex group will be announced tomorrow.

"The Telangana government has offered many subsidies for the Kitex group. All the details will be announced tomorrow," the company said in the release.

Jacob had on July 12 said the Telangana state government has offered a wide range of incentives and facilities for his venture and has also assured that it won't trouble any industry with "inspections" and raids will be held only "after informing the industries well in advance".

The Telangana government had also arranged a special flight to bring the Kitex delegation to the state in July. The Kitex team was taken to the textile park in Warangal in a

chopper to have a look at the facilities there.

Jacob had also said that the Telangana state government has offered land, water and electricity at cheaper rates for investors. "We pointed out the 11 raids that took place in 30 days. They (Telangana government) said no official will trouble any industry in the name of inspection. Inspections will be held only once every two or three years and that too with the knowledge of the Principal Secretary or the minister concerned. Even that will be informed well in advance, get our permission and as per our convenience only," Jacob had earlier said.

He had said that even if any lapses were found during the inspection, steps would be taken to rectify it at the governmental level and would not publish it to "defame and let the business run into losses".

SBI donates to set up mobile cancer screening unit in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chairman of State Bank of India, Dinesh Khara was on a short visit to Hyderabad Circle (Telangana State) in connection with official meeting on Friday.

In an event organised by the Bank at their Local Head Office, Hyderabad, Dinesh Khara, handed over a cheque of Rs 1.50 crore to Basavatarakam-

Indo American Cancer Hospital & Research Institute, for setting up of "Mobile Cancer Screening Unit" equipped with cancer diagnostic medical equipments.

State Bank of India, Hyderabad Circle has been undertaking CSR initiatives with a vision to improve the socio-economic well-being of the society, particularly of the less fortunate and under-privileged members of the society and enable them to live up to their potential.

Dinesh Khara emphasised that the CSR activity is a noble cause and as a responsible corporate citizen, we feel

that it is our moral duty to ensure that we do something meaningful for the society. The importance of health could not be appreciated more than in the current day & age, as during the last 18 months the entire society across the globe has faced the severe health & hygiene challenges. He added that a large part of the population has also experienced the importance of getting timely aid.

Khara highlighted that Cancer is growing like anything and for country like India; the spending on healthcare has been nearly one percent of the GDP. Last year when we faced huge challenges on account of health & hygiene, the allocation got increased to 2 percent and there has been a need for increasing the support to this kind of services.

On this occasion, Khara recollected that the Hospital has been the brain child of the visionary leader, Late NT Rama Rao, former Chief Minister of combined Andhra Pradesh.

Shah: BJP will come...

Continued from page 1

It was the day Telangana got liberation from the 'demoniac Nizam rule'.

The BJP would not fear the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, he said. The BJP would continue its fight for the sake of Adivasis and SCs in Telangana. The BJP would win all MP seats in Telangana in the coming General Election. The Congress party had reached its 'last stage' across the nation. Telangana would get real freedom if MIM was defeated, he said. The BJP was against religious reservations.

"Our slogans should be heard in Hyderabad. We have to ensure the victory of Eatala Rajender in Huzurabad", he said, while asking Eatala to grace the dais. He said that BJP state unit chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar had taken up Praja Sangrama Yatra only to understand problems of people. Making it clear that BJP was an alternative to TRS, Shah claimed that only BJP had the capacity to take over the responsibilities of the Telangana State.

Questioning the Chief Minister as to why he was not conducting Telangana Liberation Day officially, Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy said that the Telangana people longed for change. People wanted their Chief Minister to come to the Secretariat.

Kishan Reddy said that, should the BJP come to power in TS, its government's first sign would be on the file relating to celebration of Telangana Liberation Day officially. He alleged that the TRS and Congress had been doing injustice to September 17 officially. TRS (now) and Congress (in the past) worked under the eye of MIM for the sake of votes. TRS had become a pawn in the hands of MIM. Both MIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi and KCR wanted people to stay as slaves forever, he alleged. The TRS and MIM were suppressing history, he alleged.

Bandi Sanjay Kumar said that KCR should tender apologies for not conducting Telangana Liberation Day celebrations. The Telangana Liberation martyrs "are seeing from above".

No devotees at this year's..

Continued from page 1

Subba Reddy said that like last year, this year's Navaratri Bhrahmostavams too would be observed inside the temple without the congregation of the devotees and celestial processions in view of the health safety of devotees and TTD staff.

The decision was taken in adherence to new Covid guidelines issued by the Central and State governments in view of the

possibility of Covid third-wave that is likely to hit in October, he added. However, the ceiling on the entry of devotees for darshan of Lord Venkateswara would continue as usual during Brahmotsavams too, Subba Reddy said. Between 15,000 to 20,000 would be allowed to the shrine until the pandemic situation comes to normalcy, Reddy added.

Meanwhile, a TTD devotee,

Poosala Viswanath working for Facebook has made an offering of Rs 1 crore to Lord Venkateswara temple with a request to TTD to utilise the fund for TTD-run charitable institutions.

On behalf of the devotee, his father P Anjaneyulu, a retired TTD official here, handed over the Demand Draft for the amount to TTD Executive Officer K S Jawahar Reddy today, the release added.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹231
Without Skin	₹251
Broiler at Farm	₹127
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	426
VIJAYAWADA	444
VISAKHAPATNAM	444
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.26

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Singareni Colony in the grip of criminals

G RAVI KIRAN
■ HYDERABAD

If there is one thing that an overwhelming majority of the residents of Singareni Colony in Saidabad in the city agree with is that policing in the colony needs to be stepped up. They have enough reason for this - as many as 15 rape cases were registered in the colony over the last six years. This is apart from violent attacks and murders.

Some residents say that a gang used to sell liquor at all times, without fear of arrest or even action. Ganja is also available on demand here, say some locals. The residents say that the police officers are aware of all these facts, but are simply not bothered to clamp down. "There is no police vigilance on this locality," they said.

Over the years, Saidabad has reported comparative more crime than other localities in the city. In the last six years, 15 rape cases were registered - ten of them under POCSO Act. A 7-year-old girl in 2017, a girl aged 14 in 2018, an 11-year-old girl in 2018, another 11-year-old in 2019 and a 15-year-old girl also in 2019 were raped in Saidabad, which covers Singareni Colony.

Locals say that a group of people sells all brands of liquor at all times in Singareni Colony,

15 rape cases registered in Singareni colony over the last 6 years.

10 of them under POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offence) Act.

63 FIRS were registered for selling liquor illegally in Singareni Colony in a cordon and search operation four years back

Over time, the criminal elements have formed gangs and use the area as their hub to do illegal activities like selling liquor and ganja.

and this group has the support of a few political leaders. "Four years back, a cordon and search operation was conducted and liquor bottles were seized from the gang. As many as 63 FIRS were registered for selling liquor illegally in Singareni Colony," a resident said, understandably on condition of anonymity. The residents of

Singareni Colony are mostly migrants to the city from all corners of the State, and some from other States. Most of them are economically backward and while an overwhelming majority is the working class - toiling all day to make ends meet - some have hijacked the circumstances of these people to make quick money or satis-

TS DGP dismisses doubts over death of rape-murder accused

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Director General of Police M Mahender Reddy on Friday dismissed doubts being expressed over the manner of death of Pallakonda Raju, the only accused in the rape and murder of a six-year-old girl. The police chief told reporters that there were no doubts that Raju committed suicide by coming under a train. The DGP pointed out that there were seven eyewitnesses who saw him walking on the track and coming under the train. "Two railway gangmen, 2-3 farmers and two engine drivers of the train are the eye-witnesses. We have recorded their statements," the DGP said adding that there

is no need for police to lie. He said baseless allegations were inappropriate. Raju, 30, was found dead on the railway tracks near Ghanpur station in Jangaon district on Thursday, a week after he sexually assaulted and killed the minor girl at his house in Singareni Colony in Saidabad area of Hyderabad. The victim's body was recovered from the house of Raju, who happened to be her neighbour, on the night of September 9. The incident had triggered massive public outrage with some people and politicians, including a state minister, calling for killing the culprit in an 'encounter'. A massive manhunt was launched for Raju across the state. The police had also announced

Rs 10 lakh reward for any information leading to his arrest. The DGP made the clarification amid doubts being expressed in various quarters over the veracity of police version about Raju's death. Raju's family members have alleged that police killed him after taking him into custody. Some people's organisations have also expressed the doubt over police version and alleged that he was killed to cover the government's failure in nabbing him after the incident. A section of netizens in social media have described his death as 'train encounter'. A civil liberties group has also filed a PIL in High Court expressing apprehensions that Raju was killed in police custody.



Samakka surrenders after hubby's death

‘Maoists weakened considerably in TS’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Losing faith in CPI (Maoist) ideology and health problems, Maoist leader Jajjeri Samakka alias Sharadakka surrendered before Director General of Police M Mahender Reddy here on Friday.

At the age of 18 years, Sharadakka, a native of Gangaram in Mahabubnagar district, was attracted to the People's War Group and joined the PWG in 1994, the DGP said at a press conference here. In 1995, she got married with Hari Bhushan, who succumbed to Covid in June this year, and worked as Dalam Member of Pandava Dalam till 1996.

During her 25 years journey in the party, Sharadakka worked in various cadres including as a dalam member in Kinnera Dalam from 1997 to 1998; First Platoon Member in NTSZC from 1999 to 2000 and worked in 6th Platoon (CC Protection Team) in DK from 2000 to 2004 and also promoted as ACM in 2001. She also worked as Cherla LOS Commander from 2005 to 2008, the DGP said.

Though surrendered before the Warangal police on July 28, 2008, Sharadakka again rejoined in the party in November, 2011 and moved with her husband Hari Bhushan team up to 2016, he said. In February 2016, she was elevated as Secretary of Cherla-Shabari AC and was also elevated as Division

Committee member in BK-EG DV and guiding Cherla-Shabari AC, the DGP said.

Sharadakka carried a bounty of Rs 5 lakh and she was involved in 25 cases indirectly and directly in six Exchange of Fires (EoFs) and in one of the firing incidents, she got bullet injuries to her eye, the DGP said.

The surrendered woman Maoist revealed that nearly 20 cadres had run away from the party in the last six months, the top police official added.

The DGP handed over a demand draft of Rs 5 lakh towards her rehabilitation and Rs 5000 for immediate expenses to Sharadakka, who appealed to the Maoist cadres to give up arms.

He appealed to the Maoist cadres to join the mainstream and take part in the advancement of Nation through constructive participation and benefit from the rehabilitation process of Telangana state which includes immediate relief with suitable amount and other support measures.

The DGP stressed that the CPI (Maoist) has weakened considerably in Telangana. Most of the new recruits are either tribals in Cherla area bordering Telangana or natives of Chhattisgarh. Although 11 members of the 25-member central committee of the party are natives of TS, only 14 of the total 115 members of the Telangana state committee are Telugu speakers.



Shutter-lifting gang from Bihar arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The sleuths of Commissioner's Task Force, North Zone team, Hyderabad along with Market Police busted an inter-state shutter lifting gang and apprehended five persons on Friday.

The accused identified as Shaik Masiruddin, 23, is the kingpin and his accomplices Mohd. Azad, 22, Parwez Alam, 26, Mohd Jawed, 26, and Mohd Akhtar Hussain, 23, all residents of Chandni Chowk market, Delhi and natives of Kishanganj in Bihar.

The police officials recovered Rs 3 lakh cash, five mobile phones and equipment used in commission of the offences.

Masiruddin, was arrested by the police in September 2019. After release from jail he went to his native village and later started selling electronic

items at Chandni Chowk. Recently, Masiruddin formed the gang and hatched a plan to commit theft of cash from business shops in metropolitan cities.

As per their plan on August 24, the gang came to Hyderabad and the next day, they broke open the shutter of Diamond House and fled with the cash.

The police officials formed three teams, verified CCTV footage in the shop and surrounding areas, and identified the images of accused persons who fled from Kacheguda Railway station. The gang was apprehended near Alpha Hotel near Secunderabad railway station, the police said.

The apprehended accused persons along with seized property were handed over to Market police station for further investigation.

Three held with 11 kg marijuana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Officials of the Special Operations Team (SOT) Madhapur Zone, along with the KPHB Police apprehended three persons found in possession of 11 kgs of the banned narcotic, marijuana, at KPHB colony on Friday.

The arrested persons have been identified as Shaik Saber, 22, Mohd Adil, 21 and Shaik Shareef Khan, 23. Five other persons, Praveen, Vivek, Lavan, Nagesh and Siddu are absconding, said the police officials.

According to the police, the trio were caught in possession of the drug near the association office of Sardar Patel Nagar, KPHB Colony on Friday afternoon.

The arrested persons said that they procured the dry ganja from the rest of the absconding accused from Vizag and were to sell it in Hyderabad.

A case was registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (NDPS) and they were produced before a court for judicial remand. A hunt is on to nab the absconding persons, said the police.

Major fire at chemical factory

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A major fire broke out at a chemical company in Peddamberpet of Hayathnagar on Friday.

Residents of the area were in for a shock when sounds by the chemical explosions and the thick black smoke engulfed the adjoining streets, triggering panic among the residents. Workers of the company, who noticed the smoke and flames, rushed out onto the road and alerted the police and the fire department.



Fire engines were rushed to the spot and the flames were doused in about an hour. Preliminary investigation by the fire officials said that a short

circuit to be the reason behind the fire. While the worth of the property damaged is yet to be estimated, the police officials are investigating the incident.

Call for foolproof implementation of FSA

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

The Telangana State Food Commission Chairman Kommula Tirumala Reddy said that the Centre has been spending crores of rupees to provide food security to the poor and to prevent them from starvation.

In a review meeting held at Collectorate here on Friday with ZP Chairman Malipeddy Sharat Chandra Reddy and other district officials, Tirumala Reddy said that the Commission would undertake

field visits to gain firsthand knowledge on the awareness programmes, mechanism adopted in village, mandal and district-level vigilance committees, to find solutions for the problems. He appealed to officials to implement the Food Security Act in a foolproof way.

The Commission would also find out if there are any lacunae in rendering service to people at various levels.

As a result of these measures, the government issued ration cards to over three lakh people, he said.

The Commission would focus on whether essential commodities are being disbursed on time through fair price shops, the mid-day meals being served in schools is in accordance with the menu, anganwadis serve nutritious food to children, lactating and expectant mothers, whether

KCR kits are being given to lactating mothers in hospitals, whether Rs 13,000 is being deposited in the name of the girl child and Rs 12,000 in the name of the male child or not.

District Collector Narsimha Reddy, Civil Supplies and District Medical and Health Officer Mallikarjuna Rao, DRO Lingya Naik, DEO Prasad, DWO Ravi, RDO Mallaih, FP dealers, MPPs, sarpanches and officials of various government departments and others took part in the meeting.

241 fresh Covid cases, 2 deaths

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana on Friday reported 241 new Covid cases, pushing the tally to 6,63,026, while the toll rose to 3,902 with two more fatalities.

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation accounted for the most number of cases with 68, followed by Karimnagar (23) and Nalgonda (16) districts, a bulletin said, providing details as of 5.30 PM today.

Human milk banks to come up in all the districts of Telangana

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

Three years after the announcement of setting up Breast Milk Bank, also known as Human Milk Bank, the distant dream is now set to become a reality in all the districts of Telangana.

As many as 10 milk banks are under construction, said Telangana State Health and Family Welfare Commissioner Vakati Karuna adding that the Milk Banks would be set up similar to Dhatri Mother's Milk Bank, which was set up in 2017 with the help of doctors at Niloufer Hospital.

A mobile human milk bank was launched in Hyderabad on Friday with the intention of providing breastfeeding to all children, not limiting the services only in the hospitals.

"Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao's was giving big boost to the medical



sector, like nowhere else in the country," said Karuna adding that there has been improvement in maternal mortality rate.

Dhatri Mother's Milk Bank, Sushena Health Foundation, Koti women's College's Food and Nutrition wing, jointly organised the 'Dhatri Mobile Mother Milk Fund Vehicle', the first-of-its-kind in South India.

NCC MD Alluri Venkata Rangaraju, Subbaraju, Director of the Institute, Prof M Vijulatha, principal of the col-

lege, Dr Srinivas Murki, president of the Sushena Health Foundation and Dr Santosh Kumar, secretary flagged off the vehicle.

Dr Srinivas Murki said, "We are launching these mobile vehicles in Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam and Kakinada in South India. We have initiated this programme starting from Hyderabad."

The event was attended by the College Vice-Principal Dr Kavitha, Dr M Durgaprasad, Dr Bhavani, NCC students and others.

Control room to monitor Ganesh idols immersion

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state government is making adequate arrangements for the smooth conduct of Ganesh idol immersion procession on Sunday at Hussain Sagar and other locations that fall under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

A special control room to coordinate the entire immersion activity will be established at Hussain Sagar while 27,955 personnel from various police wings were being deployed for bandobust. Overall, 300 special cranes will be installed at 25 water bodies and 25 baby ponds in areas under GHMC with 25 heavy capacity cranes stationed at Hussain Sagar alone to facilitate idol immersion.

To ensure safety of devotees taking part in the immersion ceremonies at the water bodies, services of 100 expert

swimmers will be utilised. Special arrangements are also underway to ensure Ganesh pandals have access to round-the-clock power supply. Additional generators have also been arranged for the purpose.

To provide emergency vehicle breakdown support during the immersion procession, the authorities will station at least 1,000 emergency vehicles at 10 different locations and will be manned by RTA inspectors. On sanitation, a total of 215 teams consisting of 8,160 sanitation staff and enough number of mobile toilets will be deployed across different locations.

For improved connectivity to different locations to devotees, MMTS railway services will be available from Nampally, Lakdikapul, Khairatabad, Sanjeevaiah Park, James Street and Begumpet railway stations.

TS Guv, KCR greet Modi on birthday

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao wished Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his birthday on Friday.

"Happy Birthday to visionary leader who made self reliant India: Reformative India: Resilient India: Resurgent India: Glorious India: Super strong leader who Made Mother India Proud Globally," the Governor tweeted on Thursday night.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister in a letter to Modi said, "On behalf of the government and people of Telangana, I wish you a very happy birthday. May god bless you with good health and long life for serving the nation for many more years."



2 city professionals win PRCI Excellence awards

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two persons from Hyderabad have won awards at national PRCI Excellence awards for 2021 presented to PR and media professionals for their significant contribution to the profession on Friday.

U Satyanarayana, CPRO of AIG hospitals was bestowed with the prestigious Chanakya National Award as an acknowledgment to his immense contributions over the years in Public Health Communications

by Chief Minister of Goa Pramod Sawant.

Likewise, Governor of Goa Sreedharan Pillai presented Dr KR Singh Memorial Award for Lifetime Achievement in Communications to Elbert C, Deputy General Manager (Corporate Communications), NTPC, Hyderabad.

The coveted national PRCI Excellence awards for 2021 were presented to PR and media professionals for their significant contribution to the profession.

Y chromosome regulates genes on other chromosomes, reveal CCMB studies

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Y chromosome regulates genes on other chromosomes involved in male reproduction, reveal studies done at CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, a statement said on Friday.

These studies by a team

headed by Prof Rachel Jesudasan and recently published in BMC Biology have shown striking novel regulatory functions of Y chromosome DNA, the CCMB statement said.

They have shown a bunch of DNA repeats on mice Y chromosome, which regulate genes expressed from other chromo-

somes in the testes, specifically those required in reproduction. The new studies also showed that these repeats are species-specific, i.e., they are not present in other species. These repeats give rise to a class of small RNAs called piRNAs. This is the first report of piRNAs from Y chromosomes, the statement said.

Y chromosome is known to be the male determining chromosome. A smaller chromosome in comparison to the X, its partner, it was not known to have any function except sex determination.

The DNA sequences on Y chromosomes are by and large present in multiple copies and very few of them code for pro-

teins. They were earlier thought to function as packing material for the few protein coding genes on Y chromosome. Given no obvious function, most part of DNA of Y chromosome was considered junk.

"Our earlier studies on human Y chromosome had shown sex and species-specif-

ic repeats on the Y chromosome regulate a reproductively important protein-coding RNA transcribed from chromosome number 1. Along with this study, these are the first reports of interaction between the Y chromosome and other chromosomes. Thus, consolidating the two studies, we see a more pervasive regu-

lation of genes associated with reproduction by Y chromosome," says Prof Jesudasan. "As the species evolve, these repeats also co-evolve and gradually are no longer be able to regulate reproduction of the species."

Thus, it appears that these repeats are at the fulcrum of species identity and evolu-

tion," she added.

Jesudasan currently holds positions as Advisor (Research) at the Department of Genetics, Osmania University, Hyderabad and as an Emeritus Scientist (KSCSTE) at the Inter University Centre for Genomics & Gene Technology, Karyavattom Campus, University of Kerala.

Growing farm mechanisation, seasonal diseases become detrimental to cattle

A. CHANDRASHEKHAR RAO
■ SANGAREDDY

The growing mechanisation of agriculture and the out-break of seasonal diseases are proving to be the bane of the livestock in the undivided Medak district. Currently, there is no fodder shortage. Yet, farmers are bringing their livestock to weekly shandies to dispose them of as they find it difficult to support these animals since agriculture has become a huge burden. On the pretext of saving the livestock from seasonal diseases that occur in the rainy season, farmers are disposing them of at weekly shandies.

Farmers, who buy oxen at the time of sowing the seeds are washing off their hands by disposing the disease-afflicted cattle in the slaughter houses.

The middlemen from the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka are visiting villages and buying cattle to send them to slaughter houses. However, the farmers say that they do love the cattle,



but under unavoidable circumstances they are forced to send their cattle to slaughter houses. As the kharif season is almost over, the farmers have been disposing of their cattle to realise the investment costs.

The continued rains have been making the cattle ill. There were several instances of death of cattle in the district due to various diseases. The farmers said that the cattle were afflicted with diseases as proper precautionary measures were not taken.

The officials are supposed to arrange awareness programmes in villages on protecting the cattle from seasonal diseases. But, these awareness programmes were limited to sensitising farmers on deworming of sheep, goats and so on. The farmers are not able to focus on other diseases like diarrhoea.

Therefore, the cattle that were not receiving timely medical care are dying.

The poor farmer, who cannot afford feeding and treating the sick cattle, has no

other option but to send them to the abattoirs.

Unprofitable agriculture, poverty, financial problems, shortage of fodder are some of the causes for the farmers sending cattle to the shandies.

Some of the aged cattle, unfit for cultivation, are being sent to the slaughter houses through middlemen, it is learnt.

Brokers, whose main vocation is illegal transportation of cattle, are visiting villages during the rainy season and assessing the financial position of the farmers and luring them to dispose of their cattle to them for sending them to slaughter houses.

Barring minor instances of Bajrang Dal and the Hindu Vahini foiling the attempts of illegal transportation of cattle to slaughter houses and tip off the police on cattle smuggling. But, the government officials are not bothering in preventing smuggling.

Earlier, there were instances of police stopping smuggling of cattle in

Sangareddy and Medak districts.

However, the officials at the field level have stopped making inspections. But at check posts, inspection is being done as a matter of routine leading to cattle from the district finding their way to the slaughter houses in other states.

When questioned about it, Animal Husbandry Department official Venkaiah said that the department was taking all precautions to prevent cattle from falling prey to seasonal diseases. Mobile veterinary clinics are being pressed into service to extend treatment on time. Deworming programme has been conducted successfully in the district a month ago. The department is taking all precautionary measures to prevent the cattle from falling sick in rainy season by checking the spread of various diseases. In case of any problems, the farmers should bring them to the notice of the mandal level veterinary officer to provide timely treatment.

Telangana Congress lodges plaint with ED against KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Congress has lodged a complaint with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday urging the ED to conduct an inquiry into the involvement of the Minister of Municipal Administration and Information Technology K T Rama Rao in the drugs case. Telangana Congress leader and AICC member Bakka Judson lodged this complaint alleging that KTR had a role in the drugs case and hence he influenced the case in 2017 to prevent the ED from carrying out interrogation at that time. He alleged in his complaint that the Disha and Saidabad child rape and murders cases took place under the influence of alcohol and cannabis. He said that all crimes on women and children have been committed after consuming drugs, ganja and alcohol in Telangana State. Later, speaking to the media after submitting his complaint with the Enforcement Directorate's Joint Director Abhishek Goyal at Hyderabad Zonal Office on Friday, Judson said that the ED officials have



Telangana Congress leader and AICC member Bakka Judson appealed to the Enforcement Directorate to investigate KTR's secret trip to Goa

accepted his complaint stating that they would take up the probe into the involvement of KTR and gave acknowledgement in this regard.

He said that he lodged the complaint after coming to know that the political leaders were involved in the drugs case. He said that he attached some proofs that reveal the links of KTR with cine actors. He said that the Congress Party came to know that the political leaders were trying to influence the ED to close the drugs case.

Urging the ED to conduct an inquiry into the involvement of KTR in the drugs case

similar to cine actors, Judson also appealed to the ED to investigate as to why KTR went to Goa in the recent past so secretly? He alleged that KTR has a good rapport with the Bollywood stars who were involved in drugs and money laundering cases. He requested the ED to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter because there was a huge nexus behind the drug smuggling and on the role of KT Rama Rao in the drugs case and hence, drugs gained entry into the slums. Besides, crimes against women and children on the rise in Telangana, he added.

Clear pending applications to set up industries, says DC

PNS ■ MEDAK

Additional District Collector Ramesh directed the officials concerned to scrutinize the applications and issue permissions to set up industries in the district according to government policies and guidelines of I-Pass. Addressing the officials at a conference of the District Industries Promotion Committee (DIPC) here on Friday, he said that 1,514 applications were received till now and among these, 24 applications were still pending at various levels. They have to get clearance from Pollution Control Board, TSII, Electricity, Fire Services, Factories, Ground Water, Revenue department and HMDA.

Collector Rajesh said that officials of those departments should take the initiative to clear the pending applications



speedily after scrutinizing them thoroughly. Under the T-PyD programme, the committee has given clearance for sanctioning 35% subsidies to 9 SCs, 37 STs, for purchasing commercial vehicles.

Additional District Industries Officer Krishnamurthy, DPO Tarun Kumar, TO Srinivas Goud, IICEO K T Naik, HMDA Planning Officer Neelima, Pollution Control Board AE Sirisha, and others were present on the occasion.

Enhance greenery and beautify Mahabubnagar: Srinivas Goud

‘Make Mahabubnagar on par with Hyderabad’

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

State Minister for Excise, Sports and Culture Dr V Srinivas Goud directed the officials to take appropriate steps and beautify all the main highways that lead to Mahabubnagar.

Inaugurating a plantation drive at the Jadcherla-Mahabubnagar Four-Lane Highway, where a road widening programme was being taken up near Apannapalli on Friday, Srinivas Goud asked the officials to plant huge saplings on either side of the roads to look beautiful and cool the climate. The greenery in the region should be enhanced and for this, huge saplings were brought from Kadiam, he added.



The Minister said that when compared to the earlier period, the four-lane region in Mahabubnagar highway looks more beautiful and attractive. It is more expansive, he added. He instructed the municipal officials to plant more trees and saplings to beautify the Mahabubnagar town and near

the Bhutpur-Mahabubnagar Highway to adjust to the changing climatic conditions. If the plants wither away, new saplings should be planted immediately, he added.

Minister Goud said that his aim was to make Mahabubnagar on a par with Hyderabad in all respects.

DC inspects vax centres

PNS ■ WARANGAL

District Collector Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanthu said that the vaccination drive should be continued in every village of the district.

For this purpose, 87 sub-centres were setup and those who crossed 18 years of age should get vaccination without fail, he added. He was inspecting the vaccination programme that was undertaken at the primary health centre in the Mulakanoor village of Bheemadevarapalli mandal in the district.

Later, the Collector also inspected the Covid-19 special vaccination drive in Kottakonda, Mallaram and Gattanarsingapur. He appealed to the anganwadi workers, sarpanches and other elected representatives at the district levels to popularise the vaccination programme.

District Collector, MLA urge people to get jobs

PNS ■ GADWAL

District Collector Valluri Kranti said that a Covid-19 vaccination drive would be conducted by the State government for 15 days on the advice of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao and appealed to all those who completed 18 years of age to get vaccinated without fail. He was participating in the special vaccination drive along with the local MLA Bandla Krishnamohan Reddy here on Friday.

The Collector told the elected representatives, MPPs, chairmen, ZPTCs, sarpanches and counselors to take active interest and create awareness among the people about the benefits of vaccination. They should try to eradicate fear among the people about the vaccination, he



added. He said that the senior citizens and pregnant women should take the vaccination to remain healthy.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Krishnamohan Reddy said that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao wanted the people to be happy and healthy. He was very much concerned about their health and that was why this special vaccination drive was being conducted, he added. He said that he would sanction special funds from his personal account for the development.

MLA thanks KCR for medical college

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

Ramagundam MLA Chandar profusely thanked Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao and Industries K T Rama Rao for sanctioning a medical college for the district, thus fulfilling the dream of the people of Ramagundam and the workers of the Singareni Collieries. On Thursday, the MLA met the Chief Minister, IT Minister KT Rama Rao and the Minister for Social Welfare Koppula Eshwar at Pragati Bhavan after the Cabinet meeting and thanked them.

MLA Chander said that he was very happy that the medical college would start holding the classes from the next academic year and the Chief Minister as instructed the officials of the Health Department and the Roads and Buildings Department in this regard. He said that KCR provided a lifeline to the people of Ramagundam and they would always remain grateful to him.



KITS-W holds special Covid vaccination drive

PNS ■ WARANGAL

The Kakatiya Institute of Technology and Science (KITS-W) conducted a special Covid-19 vaccination drive successfully at its auditorium here on Friday along with RBSK Hasanparti of Hanamkonda district.

Speaking on the occasion, Team B Medical Officer of RBSK Hasanparti Dr M Sunita said that the objective of the vaccination drive was to improve the health and benefit of the teaching and non-teaching staff and the students of KITS-W. She said that a

total of 560 persons were vaccinated on the occasion.

KITS-W Management secretary and correspondent and Rajya Sabha MP V Lakshmi Kantha Rao and Treasurer P Narayana Reddy lauded the efforts of the programme conductors in holding the vaccination drive.

KITS Principal Prof K Ashok Reddy said that those who were 18 years of age and above were eligible for vaccination to overcome the pandemic crisis. He asked all the students of the college to make use of the facilities provided by the Ministry of Health.

Nutritious food improves health: Sunitha Laxma

PNS ■ MEDAK

State Woman Commission Chairperson Sunita Laxma Reddy urged women and pregnant women to take nutritious food like pulses, leafy vegetables, fruits and nuts to improve their health. By taking such food, they would not suffer anemia, she added. Addressing an awareness camp for the anganwadi teachers at Kaudipalli mandal here on Friday, she said that there was a large outbreak of several diseases though Covid-19 was showing a downward slide. She said that teachers of anganwadi had a responsibility to provide nutritious food to the children. Later, she planted saplings at the anangwadi centres.

MPP Raju Naik, ZPTC Kavitha, MPTC Praveen Kumar and others were present on the occasion.

‘Fishermen to enjoy the fruits of aqua-culture’

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

Speaker of Telangana State Assembly Pocharam Srinivas Reddy said that the State government was committed to the welfare and development of the fishermen's community and they would be enjoying the development of aquaculture in future. Speaking on the occasion of dropping fish seed in Banswada Kalki Local Tank here on Friday, he reiterated that all the fishermen families would be benefited with large quantities of fish to the needy free of cost.

Furthermore, the Speaker said that the government has given them freedom to sell out the fish variants across the State by providing them vehicles. He said that earlier, there used to be some middlemen and officials in the marketing department where the fishermen suffered a lot in getting a minimum market price and suffered a lot for their sales. This led to a heavy loss to the fishermen, he added. Also,



the State government will soon eradicate the bureaucracy and middlemen so as to uplift the poor families, he said.

Srinivas Reddy said that the state government was also providing facilities to fishermen by establishing an integrated fishing market scheme with cent per cent subsidy on fish supply. With the program taken up by the government,

nearly 27 lakh of fish seed were being dropped in all the tanks in the Banswada region. He also said the fishermen families migrated from one place to another due to lack of employment opportunities.

Pocharam said that the present government has taken up the economic development of the fishermen on a priority basis, thus giving a big boost to the families of the fishermen.

The speaker reiterated that all the fishermen families would be benefited with large quantities of fish to the needy free of cost.

District Collector Jithesh V Patil, municipal chairman Gangadhar, district president of agriculturists/ farmers' co-ordination committee Anji Reddy, Fisheries Development Officer Venkateshwarlu, District Fisheries Representative Namala Shanker, Banswada Fisheries Industries President Gangaram and others were present on the occasion.

BJP Kisan Morcha fetes ex-servicemen, farmers

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

In connection with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, District BJP Kisan Morcha president Chava Kiran felicitated model farmers and ex-servicemen as part of the programme in celebrating the Prime Minister's birthday as 'Kisan-Jawan Samman Diwas' by presenting them with shawls and mementoes held at the district BJP office here on Friday.

Later, addressing the gathering, Chava Kiran said that the people of the country were safe



because the soldiers were guarding the country's borders while farmers were cultivating crops, thus ensuring the supply of food without any interruption. He said that he was feeling very happy and proud for felicitating the jawans and the

kisans. The Prime Minister has lent every support to the defence personnel and to farmers during the past seven years, he added.

Several BJP Kisan Morcha activists and leaders were present on the occasion.

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP has been facing criticism from the Congress Party that it has been behaving like 'Galli may fight... Delhi may Dosti' with TRS party as the Central Ministers, whenever they come to the state, start praising the state government.

This tendency had reached its peak when the Union Minister of Civil Aviation Jyothiradithya Scindia came to the state a few days ago. He had a luncheon meeting with Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao after launching the 'Medicine from the Sky' using drones.

The BJP leaders had faced embarrassing moments in the press conference addressed by Scindia at the Telangana BJP headquarters.

Not only the state leaders, even Scindia faced an embarrassing situation when the local scribes grilled him asking him as to how the BJP would come to power in the State when the central ministers were lauding on the Telangana government though the state leaders were striving hard to bring the BJP to power in the next elections.

Scindia told them not to see his luncheon meeting with the Chief Minister from a narrow perspective as there were no politics involved. Scindia replied that he has been implementing the vision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a responsible

Union Minister.

With this embarrassment, the BJP state leaders alerted the other Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje, who came to the state, a week after Scindia's visit, and made her criticize the Chief Minister left and right.

Telangana Agriculture Department sent a note stating that Union Agriculture Minister Shobha Karandlaje praised the efforts of the Telangana government in the agricultural sector.

However, she countered in a press meet in Medak along with Telangana BJP Chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar, who is on his Praja Sangrama Yatra. She alleged that the Chief Minister didn't give an appointment to ask him as to

what development he had done in the state. It is learnt that the Telangana BJP decided to give suggestions to the Union Ministers whenever they visit the state to make them not to shower praises on the state government, which embarrasses the local leadership.

Interestingly, the Telangana Congress too is facing the same embarrassing situation 'Galli may fight... Delhi may Dosti' with the party's national leaders attitude when they visited the state though the Congress was not in power at the centre. With the visit of chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on IT Sector Shashi Tharoor to

Telangana and his praises on the state government's IT policies, the Telangana

Congress Chief Revanth Reddy fell in the 'donkey' soup for terming his colleague Shashi Tharoor as a 'donkey' and opining that Shashi Tharoor be expelled from the party. Revanth

Reddy's criticism against Shashi Tharoor had given a chance to the Telangana IT Minister KTR to launch a 'tweeting attack' on Revanth Reddy on September 16 which led to a severe criticism from Shashi Tharoor and AICC spokesperson Manish Tewari to Revanth Reddy. Revanth Reddy put an end to the episode by apologising to Shashi Tharoor.

INDIA CORNER AIMIM MP attends Marathwada liberation day event, ducks queries

AIMIM leader and local MP Imtiaz Jaleel on Friday attended a flag-hoisting here on the occasion of Marathwada Liberation Day but evaded a question about why he did not attend such events in the past. Large parts of the Marathwada region in central Maharashtra were under the Nizam rule prior to 1948. The day commemorates local people's struggle for merger with independent India. Jaleel attended a ceremony at Siddharth Garden here where the national flag was hoisted. Asked by reporters why he attended an event to mark liberation day six years after he became MP, Jaleel said, "I can justify why I didn't come for the ceremony in the past. But my question is what great feats those who attended this ceremony in the past achieved," he said, without adding anything more.

PM'S 71ST BIRTHDAY Shah: Modi was 1st to recognise seriousness of climate change

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that Narendra Modi was the first chief minister in the country to understand the seriousness of the climate change phenomenon and he had set up a separate ministry for it in Gujarat.

Shah also said that the internal security of the country cannot be imagined without the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), whose more than 2,000 jawans have sacrificed their lives for the country so far. He was speaking after planting a sapling at the CRPF training ground at Mudkhed in Nanded district of Maharashtra, which helped the security agency achieve the target of one crore sapling plantations in the country.

"When Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat, he was the first to understand the seriousness of climate change and ensure its institution-alised management. Many chief ministers focus on building roads, ensuring education facilities and drinking water schemes. But Modi also worked on climate change



On Modi's birthday, Union Minister Pashupati Paras likens him to 'God'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union minister and Lok Janshakti Party leader Pashupati Kumar Paras called Prime Minister Narendra Modi "another form of God" on the latter's birthday, and said he was the most successful head of government in India since independence. "He is another form of God. Nobody has seen God but Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in our midst who is seen as God and also decides the country's fate," Paras said, noting that the day coincided with Vishwakarma Puja. "It is such an auspicious day. Our prime minister was also born on the same day. I think he is present among us as another form of God," he said.

and for planting saplings," he said.

"If we want to maintain the balance between nature and carbon emission, tree planta-

tion is the only way out. When Modi was Gujarat's CM, he introduced a portfolio of climate change for the first time," Shah added.

Ahmedabad civic body plants saplings for a 'Modi forest'

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation on Friday undertook a drive to plant 71,000 saplings to mark the 71st birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with participants including Gujarat Chief

Minister Bhupendra Patel. The tree plantation, based on Japanese techniques to ensure they grow close to each other so that the plot resembles a forest, was carried out near Lal Bahadur Shastri Lake, officials said. The plot is being called the Narendra Modi for-

est, they said, adding that the drive was part of the civic body's aim to plant one million trees this year.

"The trees will help increase the green cover in the city. We should plant as many trees as possible to reduce pollution," CM Patel said.

Noted theoretical physicist Padmanabhan dies of cardiac arrest in Pune aged 64

Noted theoretical physicist and recipient of Padma Shri award, Professor Thanu Padmanabhan died due to cardiac arrest in Pune on Friday, a former colleague said. He was 64. Padmanabhan suffered a cardiac arrest and was rushed to a hospital, where he died during treatment, sources said. The renowned physicist is survived by his wife and daughter. A distinguished professor at the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Padmanabhan had conducted research on gravitation, structure formation in the universe and quantum gravity. He wrote over 300 papers in international journals and also authored several books. "Today is one of the saddest days in the history of the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy & Astrophysics and the Indian scientific community. Professor Thanu Padmanabhan, a distinguished professor at IUCAA, passed away this morning as a result of a cardiac arrest," Somak Raychaudhury, director of IUCAA, said in a social media post. The Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment had recently awarded Padmanabhan the 'Kerala Sasra Puraskaram', a lifetime achievement award.



Supreme Court allows Kerala govt to hold physical exam for Class 11

The Supreme Court Friday allowed the Kerala government to hold physical exams for Class 11 amid the COVID-19 pandemic and expressed satisfaction over the steps being taken by it to ensure that no untoward situation is faced by students. The top court said holistic approach has to be taken in the matter and the authorities concerned are conscious of their duties. A bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and C T Ravikumar dismissed an appeal filed by advocate Rasoolshan A, challenging the Kerala High Court order refusing to interfere with the state government's decision to hold offline exams. The apex court said a detailed affidavit has been filed by the state and it is taking all measures related to the coronavirus protocol. "We are convinced by the explanation offered by the state and trust authorities will take all precautions and necessary steps so that no untoward situation is faced by students who are of tender age and appearing for the proposed examination. Dismissed," it said. The apex court said it had intervened on the earlier occasion as there was a possibility of a third wave of corona by September. "Third wave is not in offing immediately," it added.



Vijay Rupani-led govt in Gujarat voted out by BJP high command, says Chidambaram

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader P Chidambaram on Friday took a swipe at the BJP, saying the Vijay Rupani-led government in Gujarat was voted out of office by a no-confidence motion passed by the "BJP High Command of One".

Claiming that the Rupani government would have been

voted out of power by the people of Gujarat in 2022, he said the new dispensation led by Bhupendra Patel too will meet the same fate when it seeks people's vote of confidence.

"The Rupani-led BJP government in Gujarat was voted out of office by a no-confidence motion passed by the BJP High Command of One. Thank god it was done before

the people of Gujarat voted it out in December 2022," he said on Twitter.

"When the new Bhupendra Patel-led government seeks a vote of confidence from the people, it will be voted out too," he also said.

The BJP on Thursday inducted 24 members, including 21 who debuted as ministers, into the four-day-old

Bhupendra Patel-led ministry, discarding all ministers in the previous Vijay Rupani-led regime in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat.

The new ministry, which came a year ahead of the Assembly polls, does not have the post of deputy chief minister, held by Nitin Patel in the Rupani-led ministry.

Afghanistan development will impact India too: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the recent developments in Afghanistan will have the greatest impact on neighbouring countries like India and continuing instability in that country will encourage terrorist and extremist ideologies all over the world.

In a virtual address at an SCO meeting on Afghanistan, Modi said there was a need for regional focus and cooperation on the situation in the country.

"The recent developments in Afghanistan will have the greatest impact on neighbouring countries like us. And therefore, there is a need for regional focus and cooperation on this issue," he said.

Modi warned that if "instability and fundamentalism" persist in Afghanistan, it will encourage terrorist and extremist ideologies all over the world. "Other extremist groups can also be encouraged to gain power through violence," he said, adding the change of power in Afghanistan is not inclusive and has happened without negotiation.

SP, BSP, Congress have no mass base in Uttar Pradesh: Naqvi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The SP, BSP and the Congress are competing for power in Uttar Pradesh without any base among the masses, Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said on Friday, asserting that the opposition parties were fighting to become a "landlord without land".

He said the mafias that were flourishing under the previous governments in Uttar Pradesh have been put behind bars during the Yogi Adityanath dispensation, and asserted that there was a sense of security in the state.

While participating in various programmes on 'Seva Diwas' in Uttar Pradesh's Rampur, Naqvi told reporters that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was taking "stringent action against goons and mafias" due to which "their political protectors are being hurt the most".

For the people of the state it is a choice between "apradhiyon ki hirasat (detention for criminals)" versus "apradhiyon ki hifazat (protection for criminals)".

The people of Uttar Pradesh are living with a sense of security under the Adityanath



government, but this has made those people restless who had been 'reaching the throne of power by sitting on the shoulders of these goons and mafias', Naqvi was quoted as saying by a statement from his office.

The Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Congress are in a competition for power without any base among the masses, he said, adding that they are fighting to become a "landlord without land".

Indian politics has taken a positive turn due to the "politics of commitment to performance, good governance and integrity" being practiced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Naqvi said.

Priyanka contesting won't matter: Giriraj Singh

PNS ■ AMETHI (UP)

Union minister Giriraj Singh here on Friday claimed that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra won't make a difference even if she contests the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls as he and cabinet colleague Smriti Irani took potshots at the Gandhi family. In an apparent reference to the Gandhis, Giriraj Singh told reporters that "one family" exploited people of Amethi for years and did nothing for its development. Before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls when Irani defeated former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi from here, members of the Gandhi family held the seat for several parliamentary elections. It is said that even after so many years of Independence, there is not a proper hospital in Amethi, the Union rural development and panchayati raj minister said on the sidelines of a wrestling championship inaugurated by Irani.

Anticipatory bail plea of fake lawyer denied

PNS ■ KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Friday dismissed the anticipatory bail plea of a woman accused of misrepresenting herself as a qualified lawyer and practicing in a district court here without a license for nearly two years.

Justice Shircy V dismissed the plea and asked her to surrender before the investigating officers.

The court, which had earlier rejected her plea against arrest, asked police to arrest her in case she refuses to surrender.

The state had opposed the anticipatory bail plea on the ground that the woman appeared as a lawyer in various

criminal cases, contested in bar elections and was elected as the association's librarian and also accepted a few briefs of the state government, all on the basis of her fake and forged documents which portrayed her as a qualified lawyer.

The state told the court that the woman has been booked for offences which are non-bailable and therefore, no interim protection from arrest should be granted to her.

The woman had earlier attempted to surrender before a magisterial court in Alappuzha under the belief that she would be released on bail, but when the likelihood of getting any relief appeared bleak, she fled from the courtroom.

SC miffed over 78 adjournments by lower court, orders trial in 6 months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Miffed over 78 adjournments granted by a lower court in Dehradun, the Supreme Court has directed it to complete the trial within six months in a 2014 case of cheating and forgery against three persons.

Noting that the trial court has not moved an inch despite having taken cognizance of case almost seven years back, a bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar directed the Investigating Officer to ensure that the witnesses are made available on the scheduled dates for being examined by the trial court.

"We direct the trial court to ensure that the trial is concluded not later than six months from the date of receipt

of the copy of this order.

"We are required to issue this direction as we have noticed that the trial court, despite having taken cognizance almost seven years back, has not moved in the matter even an inch thereafter, including to frame charges, as may be necessary, despite 78 adjournments in the case," the bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and CT Ravikumar, said.

The bench also enlarged the accused -- Manish Verma, Sanjeev Verma and Neetu Verma -- on bail on terms and conditions



which were imposed by the trial court and directed them to extend full cooperation in the case for early disposal of the matter.

"In case, the trial court is of the opinion that the private respondents are not cooperating in the progress of the trial or are taking unnecessary adjournments, it must record that opinion in the roznamcha (diary) and if that is a persistent approach of the private respondents, it will be open to the trial court to consider cancellation of bail in accordance with law," the bench said.

Needless to observe that the order of cancellation of bail of the

private respondents will not come in their way and the trial must proceed on its own merits and in accordance with law, it said. The apex court's order, dated September 15, came on an appeal filed by Dr Atul Krishna against the Uttarakhand High Court order dismissing his plea seeking early disposal of the case.

As per the appeal, an FIR was registered in 2012 by the petitioner at police station Jaani in Meerut district against the respondents for commission of offence under section 420 (cheating), 406 (Penishment for criminal breach of trust), 467 (Forgery of valuable security, will), 468 and 470 (Forged document or electronic record) of the Indian Penal Code at Meerut with regard to a land deal.

Big storm over short pants: Girl forced to 'cover up'

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

A 19-year-old girl appearing for an examination in Assam was made to wrap a curtain around her legs by an invigilator who chafed at her wearing shorts, provoking outrage and allegations of gender bias, and prompting university authorities to order an inquiry. The girl's family has, however, decided against taking the matter further in the interest of her mental well-being and academic future.

The incident occurred on Wednesday when the girl had gone from her hometown Biswanath Chariali to Tezpur to

appear for the entrance examination of the Assam Agricultural University (AAU). She had unhindered access to the venue but an invigilator inside the examination hall objected to her wearing short pants. Her father Babul Tamuli told PTI on Friday that after the invigilator at Girijananda Chowdhury Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (GIPS) told her that she will not be allowed to appear for the exam wearing shorts, she took up the matter with the authorities there and insisted no dress code was mentioned on the admit card. She also told them she had appeared in the NEET exams recently



in shorts.

However, as they were unrelenting, the girl rushed to her father waiting out-

side the venue. Tamuli made a dash for the nearest market to buy a pair of trousers. But before he could return with trousers the authorities had provided the girl a curtain to wrap around her legs which she did and wrote her paper.

"My daughter was traumatised and spoke to a few local journalists about the humiliating incident and the issue became viral on social media. There are many who have condemned the incident but many have attacked my daughter for not following a dress code in an educational institution which has left her more mentally disturbed," Tamuli said.

Unholy matrimony?

The issue of interfaith marriages in certain States, especially in UP, is a simmering cauldron

As Uttar Pradesh slowly gears up for next year's Assembly elections, there is a concern that any communal polarisation adopted by political parties can draw undue attention to interfaith marriages, instilling a sense of fear and apprehension in young couples in love. "Love jihad" is the pejorative term the right-wing groups use to describe such marriages. The phrase has a negative resonance all over the State and interfaith couples either wanting to marry, or immediately after marriage, seek the protection of the courts to escape the anger of the parents and the fury of the vigilante groups. The Allahabad High Court on Thursday for the umpteenth time reiterated that two adults have the right to choose whom they wish to marry, irrespective of their religion. A Division Bench of Justices Manoj Kumar Gupta and Deepak Verma passed the order while granting protection to an interfaith couple worried about the anger of their parents over their relationship. The court also clarified that since the two individuals are major, "nobody, not even their parents, could object to their relationship". It is significant to note that the said court receives numerous petitions from young couples every week. A survey of orders the court passed showed that it had granted relief to over 100 couples of interfaith and inter-caste marriages in the month of November 2020. Many of these cases related to interfaith marriages, involving the conversion of one of the partners.

These included some cases where the court quashed criminal cases filed against the male partner alleging the girl had been kidnapped. As "love jihad" theories abounded in UP around that time, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated his Government's decision to bring a law against it. The statement came in the wake of a single Bench of the Allahabad High Court saying in a case that religious conversion for the sake of marriage was invalid. However, a higher Bench of the same court overruled the verdict a few days later, stating that "the right to live with a person of his/her choice, irrespective of religion professed by them, is intrinsic to right to life and personal liberty". This order quoted a 2006 Supreme Court ruling that upheld the couple's right to marry partners of choice and that the couple is "not harassed by anyone nor subjected to threats or acts of violence". The UP Government promulgated the UP Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Ordinance, 2020, criminalising religious conversion by marriage, around the same time. With a few other States also bringing in such a law, the Supreme Court was moved to review it. With the election fever gripping UP, interfaith marriages have the potential to draw the attention of vigilante groups on the question of conversion. In the case related to Thursday's verdict, the woman had also applied for conversion from Islam to Hinduism. However, it is cases where the girl applies for conversion to Islam from Hinduism that become controversial.

PICTALK



Dense clouds form over the fields after a heavy rain spell, in New Delhi

Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

Love and hate

The influential Church is taking up cudgels against elements that seek to 'divide' people in Kerala

The virus of communal hatred has come out in the open in Kerala following the startling disclosure made by Mar Joseph Kallarangatt, the Bishop of Pala Diocese. Addressing thousands of Catholic devotees who had gathered for a religious congregation at the ancient Marth Mariam Church in Kuravilangadu, the Bishop warned the laity about the dangers of "love jihad" and "narcotics jihad" that have done irreparable damage to the community. Thousands of Christian girls, many of them conservative Catholics, have fallen prey to these jihads over the last few years, said the Bishop. Elaborating on the *modus operandi* of the aggressors, the spiritual leader said that some elements of a particular religion were out in the open to liquidate the non-believers as part of their mission to establish a Caliphate in India. This is not the first time a statement like this is being made. The Christian community has been on a warpath against the State administration because of the alleged callousness of the police and other law-enforcing agencies towards their complaints that girls belonging to their sect were being

targeted through the two "jihads" and are trafficked to west Asian nations.

There were many instances of Christians staging demonstrations across Kerala to highlight their plight which were ignored by the mainstream media and liberals, labelling these as part of the "Sangh Parivar agenda" to divide Christians and Muslims. While Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan feigned ignorance about "narcotics jihad", Opposition leader VD Satheesan warned the Bishop from issuing irresponsible statements. But Bishop Kallarangatt was joined by Bishops of the Changanassery and Irinjalakuda dioceses, who too expressed their fear over the phenomenon haunting the laity. The Bishops' statements come immediately after the Kerala Catholic Bishops Council announced anxiety over the depleting Christian population in the State due to factors like family planning and migration. The Church even announced incentives, including financial as well as educational allowances, to couples who raise more children. Kerala is known for communal amity and this should not be overturned as part of appeasement and vote bank politics. Most of the de-addiction centres in Kerala are under the Church's management and they keep track of the number of persons getting addicted. Hence, the Bishops are speaking from a position of strength and the administration should listen seriously to what they say.

In the end, the game is the winner

The controversy over the cancelled fifth Test in England notwithstanding, gentle nudges by well-meaning seniors mean that cricket is in happy hands



VIJAY LOKAPALLY

Cricket is a wonderful, Indian game and the point was driven home well by Virat Kohli and his ambitious team in an exciting summer season. The English came to admire the stuff that India produced during a phase that began with the World Test Championship in June and culminated at Old Trafford with the fifth and final Test being cancelled on account of COVID fears. India led the series 2-1.

When the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president Sourav Ganguly revealed that the Indian team was reluctant to play, he was only confirming the backing the players had. Health and safety of the players is paramount but the decision did not go down with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) which insisted that the match be treated as forfeited by India and the result should go in their favour to tie the series. It hangs in balance as the matter rests with the International Cricket Council (ICC) following a claim by the ECB to grant them the match.

Overflowing audiences at the venues marked the fare. Test cricket was at its glorious best and it was just the advertisement to keep the administrators and the broadcasters happy. Cricket was entertaining. The royal battle between England's legendary James Anderson and the cream of Indian batting should rank as classic in the folklore of the game. It was breathtaking and evoked memories of some fascinating contests that India and England have been locked in, notably the 1971 thriller at The Oval in 1971 when India won on the strength of leg-spinner BS Chandrasekhar's striking blows to register their first ever win on English soil.

The 2021 series was projected as the most-awaited in a long time since it featured some of the modern greats of the game —Anderson and Virat Kohli— with charmers like Joe Root and Jasprit Bumrah bringing a touch of exciting personal rivalry. Root was exemplary and Bumrah unplayable at times, setting benchmarks to last ages. It was



hard to estimate the degree of excellence between Root and Bumrah.

Anderson won his personal battles with Kohli but the latter came out tops as he marshalled India to win two Tests in a remarkable show of temperament. Nothing was beyond India as the team once again established itself as an enviable combination. For India, the takeaways were rich.

There was much to celebrate in the rise of KL Rahul as an opener, who promises to make huge strides and the return to form of Rohit Sharma. The two hit a century each and importantly assured the selectors of their investment. With Cheteshwar Pujara coming to grips with his capabilities, India benefited at the opportune time to enjoy more dominating sessions than the home team.

True, England swept India off their feet at Headingley in an embarrassing innings defeat for the touring team but the match that stood out saw India win a regal contest at The Lord's. The home of cricket saw Rahul crack a majestic century and Mohammed Siraj produce

unforgettable spells of four wickets each in the two innings. India made a remarkable fightback through a last-wicket stand of 89 runs between Mohammed Shami and Bumrah. This pair highlighted the tenacity of the team on the final day of the match as England succumbed after having begun the day in a commanding position.

Two half centuries by Shardul Thakur at critical stages of the fourth Test at The Oval propelled the team into a position of strength to call the shots, courtesy the fast bowlers. Criticised for not playing off-spinner Ravinchandran Ashwin even once in a Test against England, Kohli stood tall for his decision to play four fast bowlers. They did not let him down and it was down to the final Test. Sadly, the circumstances played havoc and the match had to be called off.

It was an unprecedented development and reports emerged of the two Boards drifting away from their acclaimed healthy association to honour each other's commitments. A reminder from Sunil Gavaskar rekindled memories of the cricket fans

of the gesture by England when they returned to complete the tour halted by the Mumbai terrorist attack in 2008. The former India captain wants India to return the favour by travelling to England next year to play the cancelled Test.

In these difficult times, it is important to spare a thought for players' mental health, who were driven to take the decision of "refusing" to play the final Test. Their fears of getting infected were genuine and the Indians were not the only one to be compelled into taking such a stand. Australia postponing their tour to South Africa was among the prominent fixtures that failed to take off.

Spending long periods in quarantine has taken its toll on all sportspersons. The Indian Premier League 2021 has seen quite a few players withdrawing from the competition in Dubai. And Kohli deciding to quit T20 captaincy after the World Cup this year sums up the cricket in the pandemic — it is too exacting.

(The writer has been a sports journalist for 35 years with The Hindu and Sportstar. He has authored five books on cricket.)

“A REMINDER FROM FORMER CAPTAIN SUNIL GAVASKAR REKINDLED THE MEMORIES OF CRICKET FANS OF THE GESTURE BY ENGLAND WHEN THEY RETURNED TO COMPLETE THE TOUR HALTED BY THE MUMBAI TERRORIST ATTACK IN 2008

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TAPPING THE RIGHT POTENTIAL

Sir — A bird sitting on a tree is never afraid of the branch breaking because her trust is not on the branch but on its wings. Likewise, every business today is at the mercy of its IT infrastructure. A rigid infrastructure can render some organisations incapable of tapping into new opportunities. Server Message Blocks (SMBs) today are challenged by the increasingly complex and demanding modern requirements put on their IT infrastructure. To overcome these hurdles, SMBs are implementing next-generation Hyper Converged Infrastructure (HCI) solutions that bring increased agility, flexibility and growth to meet demands such as sustainable IT costs, better application performance and better data storage scalability and efficiency.

This enables SMEs to combine agility and flexibility with the control, visibility, and performance of an agile environment. Thus, you can streamline IT operations with fast, efficient, resilient and intelligent hyper-converged platforms when you choose consistency and simplicity. Having faced lockdown and other hurdles, it is time to look for a win-win situation. We should be able to win over a tight situation.

MR Jayanthi | Coimbatore

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Sir — It is no doubt that Virat Kohli is India's most celebrated player in cricket. He, as a Captain, performs best in every format of the game, whether it be World Cup, ODI or T-20 series. But it is appreciative that he himself came forward to name Rohit Sharma, and decided to quit T-20 captaincy for the best of the team. Kohli made a good decision for the team by himself creating space for his comrade Rohit, who is also exceptionally successful in the T-20 format.

The trend of change in captaincy is the ultimate law of change. What earlier MS Dhoni and other captains did, needs to be done by Virat also. As a player, it is more important to ensure the victory of the team rather than personal records.

Humanity proves costly



The raids, euphemistically called 'search operations' and 'surveys' at the houses and offices of Sonu Sood and Harsh Mander by the Income Tax Department and the Enforcement Directorate respectively were politically motivated and typical of the Modi Government. These were just the latest in a series of raids conducted by central agencies as part of intimidatory tactics. Sonu Sood and Harsh Mander are patriotic men who serve their country well; they are much loved and highly respected for their service to the

society. Sonu Sood has been extolled as a 'real life hero' for arranging food and transportation to migrant workers during lockdowns and oxygen supply to hospitals treating Covid-19 patients amid the oxygen crisis.

It is unfortunate that the Government unleashes central agencies on those who do not side with it or toe its line as a matter of routine. It has not spared even a well-known public intellectual and a tireless campaigner for human rights as Harsh Mander. The Government seems to think that anyone who is not with it is against it and deserves to be proceeded against and painted in a bad light. The irony is that real economic offenders enjoy political patronage and get off scot-free. The raids of this kind smack of witch-hunt and do our democracy no proud. Sonu Sood and Harsh Mander deserve recognition for their good work; the Government can make amends to them for the raids by conferring them on them.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

After all, a player cannot place himself superior to his team. Placing Rohit Sharma as captain is a good decision. Rohit and Virat are almost equivalent in terms of talent and quality. Rohit Sharma is a calm and talent loaded player, no doubt that he will definitely lead the men in blue in a prominent way.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

AN ALARMING PHENOMENON

Sir — Since time, immemorial man and environment are intrinsically linked as the progress and development of the former hinges on the latter. However, human activities over the last few decades like rapid urbanisation, excessive mining, vehicular pollution, indiscriminate cutting of forests etc have altered the balance beyond recognition. In recent years, the increasing trend of forest fires engulfing many parts of the world, floods, droughts and frequency of cyclones becoming a routine affair can be attributed to climate change. This has a tendency to alter our

biodiversity, which is an alarming signal.

Climate change is a universal phenomenon which can be gauged from the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). According to the report, global temperatures might rise by 1.5 per cent by 2030 due to excessive harnessing of nature. The global climate architecture is now governed by the Paris Agreement of 2015. The World Ozone Day is celebrated on September 16 every year to commemorate The Montreal Protocol signed in 1987 to limit and phase out man-made ozone-depleting chemicals like CFCs in a time-bound manner. The ozone layer lies in the stratosphere which prevents harmful ultraviolet rays from entering the earth's surface. The climate crisis can only be overcome by global cooperation and shifting to green and low carbon energy.

Vijay Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

The Indian Constitution has been amended as many as 127 times, so why can it not be amended once again to scrap the farm laws?



Punjab Chief Minister

—Amarinder Singh

If a comprehensive Government is not formed in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran will suffer more than any other country.

Iranian President

—Ebrahim Raisi

Success for me is offering listeners a song that transports them to the zone of the song. I think 'Kanta Laga' did just that.

Singer

—Honey Singh

Virat has been a true asset for Indian cricket. He is one of the most successful captains in all the formats.

BCCI president

—Sourav Ganguly

We can bring our start-ups and entrepreneurs together to create the innovative spirit towards making India a stakeholder in emerging technology.

Prime Minister

—Narendra Modi

FIRST COLUMN

AUTO-EUGENICS IN AMERICA

Most Americans dying of COVID are not vaccinated, and most of them are Republicans



GWYNNE DYER

Eugenics was a 20th-century pseudo-science that purported to improve the human breed by weeding out the 'least fit', often by measures like compulsory sterilisation or, in the case of the Nazis, death camps. But this is the 21st century, and now people can do it for themselves. 'Auto-eugenics' is the just-named phenomenon in which the excessively gullible and the intellectually challenged are weeding themselves out. It's most prominent in the United States, where 28 per cent of Americans say they do not plan to get vaccinated against coronavirus or are unsure whether they will do so. The only country in the developed world where vaccine refuseniks are more numerous is Russia, where they at least have the excuse that the state lies to them about everything all the time. Covid deaths in the United States last week were running around two thousand a day, whereas in Canada, right next-door, they were around thirty. President Joe Biden was on national television a few days ago urging unvaccinated Americans to



get the jabs, and declaring 'vaccine mandates' that oblige federal employees and companies that employ more than one hundred people to do so. He even allowed himself a little anger towards the more than 80 million Americans who are still refusing vaccination. But there's a puzzle here. Deep down, Biden must realise that the unvaccinated are doing him a favour by dying in large numbers. More than 97 per cent of those two thousand dead a day are not vaccinated, and it's a safe bet that at least 90 per cent of them are Republicans. The vast majority of anti-vaxers who are still alive by next year's mid-term elections will vote Republican, and if they all make it that far then the present ultra-thin Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress could easily evaporate. In the circumstances, therefore, Biden's attempt to keep Republican voters alive borders on the quixotic. Or does it? A more cynical analysis suggests that he may be making a two-way bet. He is getting credit for doing his duty as president and trying to protect all Americans' lives, but at the same time the added pressure that his new measures put on anti-vaxers is likely to drive them even deeper into their rejection of science and logic.

Republican governors from Georgia to Arizona are already planning to make legal challenges to his new vaccine mandates, and at the least they will probably manage to tie them up in the courts long enough to ensure that lots more Republican voters die. So in the end it comes down a kind of race. On the one hand, almost all Republican-controlled states are passing new voter-suppression measures to make voting harder for Democratic supporters, and especially for those who are poor and/or non-white. On the other hand, a significant proportion of Republican voters are striving to remove themselves from the gene pool by refusing to be vaccinated, and they can't vote Republican if they are dead. Losing an extra 50,000 guaranteed Republican voters to Covid-19 each month is bound to have an impact in at least some marginal elections next year. Which trend will shift the needle more strongly remains to be seen, but it is bound to a topic of furious in-house debate among Republican electoral strategists. You can safely assume that they have the relevant numbers at their fingertips, but that they are finding it almost impossible to shift the ideology. It's generally seen as insensitive to talk about this sort of thing in public, but admit it: wouldn't you like to be a fly on the wall when they debate this matter among themselves?

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)

India and Australia: Emerging global leaders

In the post-COVID order, the US alone may be unable to guarantee international peace and security, and India and Australia have to step in

The inaugural Australia India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between the Australian Defence Minister Peter Dutton, Foreign Minister Marise Payne and their Indian counterparts Rajnath Singh and S Jaishankar was held when the constellation of bilateral and strategic determinants could not have been more favourably placed. Bilateral ties, elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in June 2020, have reached a historical high, emerged as an important cog in the rapidly evolving world hierarchy, as Jaishankar once argued. New Delhi and Canberra have hitched on to the tide that propels bilateral, trilateral and quadrilateral engagements.



ASHUTOSH MISRA

(The writer is the CEO, Institute for Australia India Engagement and Editor-in-Chief, India News Australia. The views expressed are personal.)

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has initiated a timely and well-advised review of the Peter Varghese's report, 2018, An India Economic Strategy to 2035, in the context of altered international diplomatic and economic settings. There was a need to recalibrate bilateral trade strategies and diplomatic engagements. On the other hand, India's Australia Economic Strategy authored by Anil Wadhwa has been launched at the right time. The two reports together are critical for realigning business and trade strategies amid rising bilateral tensions with China and in sync with Australian Senator Simon Birmingham who said, "Australia must look into



alternative markets in the European Union and India". There is no denying that bilateral bonhomie has been driven by COVID-19's impact and Australia's growing tensions with China over the treatment of Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang, Hong Kong crackdown, alleged foreign interference in Australia's internal political functioning, tariff wars and impact of the pandemic on the one hand, and India's

troubled ties with China, especially military conflict in Doklam and Ladakh, on the other. Senator Marise Payne has been a vociferous critic of China, and Member of Parliament Peter Dutton unsparing in accusing China for cyber-attacks on Australia. Jaishankar has reiterated that ties are independent of their respective relationships with China, and both sides have dismissed Quad as a future "Asian NATO". Both the US-India and India-Australia ties are seen as 'natural' partnerships, for upholding democracy, respect for territorial sovereignty and unrestrained access to global common goods. Quad's evolution as a rising "concert of democracies", which Australia has described

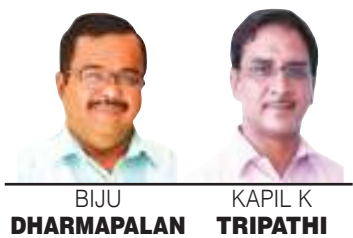
as an "anchor of peace and stability in the region" has bolstered bilateral understanding. The 2+2 joint press statement reaffirms this realization, while anchoring the defence ties on three Cs - comfort (of the bilateral relationship in strategic and security spheres), convergence (over security matters) and commitment (to free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific). The re-entry of Australia in the Malabar exercise and the Mutual Logistical Support Agreement are two key developments denoting fresh thinking in not only New Delhi and Canberra, but also in Washington and Tokyo on the Indo-Pacific. At a trilateral front, India's 'Act East' policy, Australia's 'Pacific Step-up'

and Indonesia's 'Global Maritime Fulcrum' (GMF) complement one another. India employs to elevate its Act East policy based on commerce, culture and connectivity, in sync with the seven-point Indo-Pacific Vision that PM Modi articulated at the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018, and vision SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the Region). Act East policy complements Australia's 2018 Pacific-Step Up too in addressing challenges related to states' sovereignty and regional stability, security and prosperity. Similarly, Indonesia's 2014 GMF affirms Indonesia's vital interests as an archipelagic state at the crossroads of contending major power interests. The GMF prioritized the strength-

ening of the regional architecture to prevent the hegemony of major powers and promote comprehensive maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association. Similarly, the Australia-Japan-India and the India-France-Australia trilaterals also adhere to the Quad-based commitments. In sum, while Australia and India ties turned a new leaf in the early 2000s, what has changed in 20 years is a growing convergence of bilateral and strategic interests and a realisation that in the evolving post-Covid-19 order, the US alone may not be able to guarantee international peace and security, for which they will have to step-up their desired roles.

Using science for a self-reliant India

From agriculture to artificial intelligence, Indian science has seen a resurgence over the last one year and made notable contributions to several domains



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

KAPIL K TRIPATHI

The clarion call for Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan (self-reliant India campaign) by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought about a tremendous transformation in the nation's scientific landscape. The scientists from our public sector research institutions took up the call and initiated many projects in mission mode to nurture an ecosystem that promotes research and innovation.

From agriculture to artificial intelligence, Indian science has seen a resurgence during the past one year. The scientists have come out with great innovations that can compete with any in the western world. The quantum of research output produced during the Covid-19 pandemic is commendable. India became the first country to come out with a DNA-based coronavirus vaccine.

Science will gather acceptance only if it reaches the masses. In order to disseminate these research outputs to public, the India Science Channel, the national Science channel of our country, is producing a series of short movies under the category 'Science for a Self-Reliant India' since January 2021, through OTT platform.

The programmes are telecast both in Hindi and English so that they reach the maximum viewers. During the pandemic, the channel has produced several programmes to disseminate information regarding the covid research coming out from our research laboratories. Programmes like Tackling Covid-19: Masks, Diagnostic kits, Ventilator, An indigenous Covid-19 vaccine, India's Battle for Oxygen Supply, Vaccine: India Fights Back, The Mystery of SARS-CoV-2 Mutations, Battling Covid-19: Dynamic Interventions, Covid-19 Vaccines and Road Ahead, highlighted the our efforts in tackling the deadly disease.

India has also developed an impressive track record in genomic research and biotechnology. The Department of Bio-Technology has been working on mission mode to provide a roadmap and an added impetus towards the growing field of genomics research in areas like cancer, hereditary diseases like diabetes to the sequencing of viruses like Covid-19.

The episode "India's Genomics Mission" highlights the contributions of National Centre for Microbial Resource (NCMR), which is a part of the National Centre for Cell Science, Pune, Centre for Brain Research at the Indian Institute of Science and Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, Hyderabad.

The episode highlights some of the flagship programmes towards making India a leader in genomic research programmes like the Genome India Project, the Human Microbiome Initiative and the National Genomic Core.

Tremendous developments have



AS INDIA'S URBAN POPULATION RAPIDLY GROWS — THE COUNTRY FACES MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE QUANTUM AND KIND OF WASTE GENERATED EACH DAY. THE WASTE NOT ONLY HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON OUR HEALTH AND THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY, BUT ON THE ENTIRE ECOSYSTEM

(Biju Dharmapalan is a popular science writer. Kapil K Tripathi is a scientist at Vigyan Prasar, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)



made in the field of alternative energy sources like Solar Energy.

The episode on 'Solar Energy' tracks the science that propelled the indigenous photovoltaic cell and solar panel. In order to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels government has initiated e-mobility project. The 'Going Electric' focus on the movement to transition to electric vehicles in India, a critical move that will help both the environment and the economy.

The Government of India has a multipronged strategy to reduce imports by increasing indigenous production of biofuels in the Indian energy basket-like blending ethanol to petroleum by 20 per cent and biodiesel to diesel by five per cent. Multiple initiatives to increase indigenous production of biofuels have been taken up. The movie 'India's Push for Greener and Cleaner Fuel' highlights the contributions made by CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum in the field of biodiesel production.

Agriculture, including the animal husbandry sector, which is the back bone of our rural economy, also made tremendous developments to improve productivity. The programmes like 'Improving oilseed production', 'Transforming Lives Through Temperate Horticulture', 'The Fragrance Economy', 'The Cattle factor', 'High Altitude Animal Husbandry', 'Cold Water Fishery in Kashmir', 'India's Milk Story', etc., telecast on the channel highlighted how science is transforming rural economy.

The country has been at the fore front of developing assistive

devices for the disabled. The episode 'Assistive Devices for the Disabled' explores how technology can power assistive devices that help people with disability overcome some of the barriers they face in life.

As India's urban population rapidly grows - the country faces major environmental challenges associated with the quantum and kind of waste generated each day. The waste not only has a direct impact on our health and the country's economy, but on the entire ecosystem. The movie, 'India's Solid Waste Management Strategy', showcases few innovative techniques and technologies for Solid Waste Management (SWM) implemented by various municipal corporations as part of Swachh Bharat Mission.

Mobile usage in India is on the rise. By 2023, over 55 per cent of our population will be using not just any phone, but a smart-phone.

The problem is that people are buying imported phones and accessories, not Indian ones, to meet our smartphone needs. The episode 'The Indian Mobile Phone Sector' track how India is upping her manufacturing capacity in the mobile phone sector.

Indian has made notable contributions in infrastructure developments especially in high altitude Roads, bridges and tunnels. They are of vital importance for a nation to grow, develop, protect and indeed become Atmanirbhar. The episode 'Sela Tunnel Project - Making the Impossible Possible' takes viewers to the Balipara-Chardwar Tawang Road

or BCT, which connects the hinterland to the border areas of Tibet and China. The episode also covers the Sela Tunnel Project being excavated and built at over 13,000 feet and highlights the contributions of Border Road Organization in nation building.

Science should be propagated among the children if we need to develop scientific temper in our society. Toys can be used as a perfect teaching model to promote science education among children, unfortunately most of scientific toys are imported. In the episode 'Science Through Play', the indigenous toy-making industries like Stemrobo and Smartivity are highlighted.

The future of science belongs to AI technology as it is going to transform our society. The episode 'Robotics in India' highlights the advancements made by India in this sector. The contributions of start-up companies like Gridbots from Ahmedabad, Asimov Tech from Kerala, are showcased in this episode.

The country has indeed made commendable achievements in every field of science and technology.

The India Science channel has been at the forefront in dissipating the scientific information and acts as a bridge between scientists and society. The channel within a short span of time has emerged as the most wanted source of reliable scientific content for the academic community as well as the common man. The channel also uses social media platforms effectively in its effort to make science more popular.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

BENGAL WILL PROTECT HINDUSTAN AND WILL NOT ALLOW IT TO BECOME PAKISTAN OR TALIBAN. —WEST BENGAL CM MAMATA BANERJEE



SHE SHOULD SAY THIS 'PAKISTAN THING' TO HER MINISTER FIRHAD HAKIM, WHO TALKS ABOUT 'MINI PAKISTAN'. —BJP LEADER PRIYANKA TIBREWAL



Housing demand to rise on SBI's decision to offer loan at 6.7 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's residential property market is expected to witness a strong consumer demand during the festival season with various banks, including SBI, providing concessional interest rates on home loans, according to real estate developers and consultants.

They also hoped that other public and private banks would soon announce their festival offers on interest rates on home loans and processing fees.

On Thursday, the country's largest lender State Bank of India announced various festive offers for prospective home loan customers, including a credit score-linked home loan starting at 6.70 per cent, irrespective of the loan amount. Earlier, a borrower availing a home loan above Rs 75 lakh had to pay an interest rate of 7.15 per cent.

Anarock group Chairman Anuj Puri said: "This is an



extremely competitive move by SBI, and it virtually negates all the previous limitations which applied to special home loan interest rates. Instead of focusing on just budget housing, this new interest rate is genuinely democratic as buyers from any budget bandwidth will benefit."

Puri termed the SBI's decision as 'aptly timed' ahead of the festive season.

"This year, we are likely to see significantly improved traction in the housing segment

during this period. Waiving of processing fees and occupation-linked interest premium are added levels of savings," he said.

Puri expected other lenders to follow SBI's footsteps in order to remain competitive.

Vikas Wadhawan, Group CFO, Housing.com, and Proptiger.com, said the reduction in home loan interest rates by SBI will help the sector gain further momentum. "Prices are already subdued

and buyers will be able to save a little more money," he added.

Amit Goyal, CEO, India Sotheby's International Realty, said the rate cut by some of the country's leading banks will act as a catalyst for faster decisions.

"SBI decision to offer lower interest rate irrespective of the prices of the unit or loan amount is likely to benefit buyers in the luxury segment as well. Given the upcoming festive season, which is considered auspicious by a large number of Indians to make big-ticket purchases, the timing of reduction in interest rate couldn't have been better," he added. Raul Kapoor, COO Andromeda, said the reduction in interest rates by major banks is expected to give a boost to the resurgent real estate market, especially during the busy festive season.

Signature Global founder and chairman Pradeep Aggarwal said: "The market is already on the up, and we expect that the recent decision

by the SBI will help turn the table and lead to a substantial increase in sales."

Nayan Raheja, Executive Director, Raheja Developers, said the demand for affordable and mid-segment houses will go up as affordability improves.

"This will be a double dose of benefit for buyers as developers have already kept the prices on a leash, even though construction cost is going up," Raheja added.

Noida-based ABA Corp Director Amit Modi hoped that other private and public sector banks would also announce similar initiatives to revive the market confidence.

"The market has already started seeing sales increase post-May 2021, and the home loan interest rate reduction will further boost the buying sentiment. We are looking forward to a faster recovery and hope the measure will expedite the sector to reach pre-COVID levels sooner than expected," he added.

Reform package will sustain telcos' biz, support 3+1 players structure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The telecom sector reforms package announced by the government will sustain telcos' businesses, is credit positive for operators, including Airtel and Jio, and provides support for 3+1 players structure, Moody's Investors Service said on Friday.

The views come against the backdrop of a blockbuster relief package announced earlier this week for the telecom sector that includes a four-year break for companies from paying statutory dues, permission to share scarce airwaves, change in the definition of revenue on which levies are paid, and 100 per cent foreign investment through the automatic route.

The measures, aimed at providing relief to companies such as Vodafone Idea that have to pay thousands of crores in unprovisioned past statutory dues, also include the scrapping of Spectrum Usage Charge (SUC) for airwaves acquired in future spectrum auctions.



In a statement on Friday, Moody's said the change in the AGR definition to exclude non-telecom revenue will ultimately boost sectorwide EBITDA (Earnings before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortisation) as it will reduce licence fees paid by telcos.

All in all, it said, the reforms are credit positive for Indian telecom companies, including Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio (the telecom arm of Indian conglomerate, Reliance Industries) because they free up cash flow for reinvestment, enable further investment in next-generation technologies and provide support for a

three private plus one state-owned telecom operational structure.

Bharti's leverage has been improving over the last 12 months on the back of better profitability of its core Indian mobile business and capital interventions, it noted.

"Should Bharti opt for the moratorium on payments for past spectrum purchases and AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue) statutory fees, we expect this could free up around Rs 120 billion-Rs 130 billion (Rs 12,000-13,000 crore) of cash flow annually, which could be used to reduce debt further," it said.

Markets pull back from record highs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks surged to fresh lifetime peaks on Friday but finished with modest losses, snapping their three-session winning streak, as investors rotated out of RIL, metal and IT stocks at higher levels.

After gyrating 866 points during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled 125.27 points or 0.21 per cent lower at 59,015.89. It had surged to a lifetime high of 59,737.32 in the morning session. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty slipped 44.35 points or 0.25 per cent to close at 17,585.15, after touching an intra-day record of 17,792.95.

Tata Steel was the top laggard among the Sensex components, tumbling 3.57 per cent, followed



by SBI, TCS, HUL, Reliance Industries, Sun Pharma and ICICI Bank.

In contrast, Kotak Bank, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Maruti, Nestle India and Bajaj Finserv were

among the prominent winners, climbing as much as 5.26 per cent.

During the week, the Sensex surged 710 points or 1.21 per cent, while the Nifty advanced 215.90 points or 1.24 per cent.

"While the pace of vaccinations and encouraging export data helped bulls get closer to the 60K mark amidst the FTSE and MSCI rebalancing of flows, profit-taking took away all the gains ahead of the outcome of GST Council meet," said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said despite a strong opening, domestic indices gave up early gains to trade flat, driven by profit booking and mixed global sentiments.

ECL instals 250 kW rooftop solar project

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Eastern Coalfields Ltd (ECL), a subsidiary of Coal India, has commissioned a 250-kilowatt (kW) rooftop solar power project, ramping up its total installed solar rooftop capacity to 692 kW, according to a statement.

The project was commissioned on Wednesday, Coal India Ltd (CIL) said in a statement.

"ECL, the West Bengal-located coal-producing subsidiary of Coal India Ltd, commissioned a 250-kW rooftop solar power project on Wednesday ramping up its

total installed solar roof top capacity to 692 kW," the statement said.

The implemented through the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI), the newly installed 250 kW plant set up at ECL's headquarters in Sanctoria for captive consumption, has an average generation of 3.65 lakh units per annum.

This is sufficient to meet 12 per cent of the entire average annual power consumption of ECL's headquarters which is 30 lakh units.

The project cost is Rs 65 lakh, excluding SECI's incentive.

PFRDA pension subscriber base rises 24 pc to 4.53 cr till August

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) on Friday said subscriber base under its flagship pension schemes rose by 24 per cent in August this year to over 4.53 crore.

The PFRDA administers two pension schemes -- National Pension System (NPS) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY).

"The number of subscribers in various schemes under the National Pension System (NPS) rose to 453.41 lakh by



end-August 2021 from 365.47 lakh in August 2020 showing

a year-on-year increase of 24.06 per cent," the PFRDA said in a release.

The numbers of subscribers under APY grew by 33.20 per cent to 304.51 lakh as of August 31, 2021, showed PFRDA data.

Asset wise, at August-end, total pension assets under management stood at Rs 6,47,621 crore, showing a year on year growth of 32.91 per cent, it added. Of this, the assets under APY stood at Rs 18,059 crore, registering a growth of nearly 33 per cent from a year ago.

Redington to retail iPhones from its over 3,500 stores

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Redington, a supply chain solutions provider, will offer the latest range of iPhone 13 Pro and 13 Pro Max at its retail stores in 3,500 locations across the country.

The city-based company has partnered with private sector HDFC Bank to provide cash back offers on the full range of iPhones, the company said in a statement on Friday.

iPhone 13 and 13 Pro Max were recently launched by the Cupertino-based Apple Inc. Powered by the A15 bionic

chip, the handset would be available in the 3,500 retail locations in various colours, the release said.

In view of Covid-19 pandemic, the company said it was providing time slots for those customers who pre-book the device to make their purchase.

Apple recently unveiled iPhone 13, iPhone 13 mini, iPhone 13 Pro and iPhone 13 Pro Max with prices ranging from Rs 69,900 to Rs 1,79,900. Customers and regions would be able to pre-order the phones from Friday, Apple said in a statement.

PNB cuts repo-based lending rate by 25 bps to 6.55 percent

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Friday said it has slashed the repo-based lending rate by 25 basis points (bps) to 6.55 per cent.

The repo-linked lending rate (RLLR) has been changed from 6.80 per cent to 6.55 per cent, with effect from September 17, 2021 (Friday)," PNB said in a regulatory filing.

The RLLR was introduced in October 2019. It is a floating rate-based personal or



retail loan that is linked to external benchmarks, such as the repo rate of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Repo is the rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks for their short-term requirements.

UK hopes to complete FTA talks with India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The UK on Friday expressed hope that it will be able to soon complete the negotiations for the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with India, a move aimed at further enhancing trade and investment ties between the two countries.

"I can confidently predict that we will complete the India-UK FTA before we see an India-EU FTA completed," UK Investment Minister Lord Gerry Grimstone said.

Social media influencers to corner Rs 900 cr in '21

PNS ■ MUMBAI

With the trend of peddling brands over social media platforms catching up, influencer marketing is pegged to be a Rs 900 crore market in India by the end of the year, according to a report by media buyer Groupm.

The fledgling category is expected to grow 25 per cent annually to become a Rs 2,200 crore industry by 2025, the INCA India Influencer Report said.

It can be noted that with the growth in internet penetration, the proliferation of social media platforms has grown, which has been seized up by



brands by engaging with influencers to push their message.

A self-regulatory body of advertisers has also come out with operating guidelines for

such 'influencers'.

The influencer marketing industry is undergoing a transformation triggered by the pandemic as well as the rise of

brands looking to connect with consumers directly, the Groupm report said.

Even before the pandemic, India had 400 million people on social media platforms and the number has skyrocketed during the last 18 months, it said, adding there is a shift in consumer behaviour as well.

"The key factor that has got brands interested is the bond of trust and authenticity that influencers share with their audiences, thus helping brands associate with an influencer to leverage the same," Groupm's chief executive for South Asia Prasanth Kumar said.

The report said top four categories - personal care (25 per

cent), food and beverages (20 per cent), fashion and jewellery (15 per cent) and mobile and electronics (10 per cent) - contribute 70 per cent volume of influencer marketing.

Interestingly, celebrities corner only 27 per cent of the marketing dollars while a bulk 73 per cent are taken by influencers, it said.

Nearly two-thirds of the Indian population follow an influencer, it said. Brands are able to interpret that influencers and creative storytelling correlate with brand differentiation, a key advantage as attention spans get shorter, the report said.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
REVENUE (LAND ACQUISITION) DEPARTMENT
DISTRICT COLLECTOR, ADILABAD
FORM-VII
(PUBLICATION OF DECLARATION)
(Section 19 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act 30/2013) and as per the state rule 25(1))
Collector's Office File No G1/962/2016 District Collector's Office Adilabad
RDO File No. R577/2016 Date: 02-09-2021
It was felt necessary to acquire an additional 12 houses and 2 cattle sheds in Dahagan village of Bazar Hanoo Mandal as part of the Bazar Hanoo Project (Rehabilitation and Resettlement) as they are threatened of inundation due to their location of FRL+100 meters (12+2). Therefore, a declaration has been issued to acquire houses and cattle sheds (12+2) in Dahagan village of Bazar Hanoo Mandal of Adilabad district under R and R project since they are located Bazar Hanoo Project's FRL+100 meters distance as mentioned in the below schedule.
SCHEDULE
Village: Dahagan Mandal: Bazar Hanoo District: Adilabad
Sl. No. House No. Name of the House owner and Father Name Life of the Tracer Plot Area
1 1-2 Sarma/Sri K. Suresh S/o Venkanna MT&G 388
2 1-6 K. Chinniah S/o Venkanna MT&G 495
3 1-7 K. Shankar S/o Venkanna MT&G 275
4 1-8 Smt K. Bhagya Bhag S/o Venkanna MT 116
5 1-9/1 K. Chinniah Narasiah (late) S/o Venkanna MT 319
6 1-11 G Venkata Ramana S/o Venkanna MT&G 690
7 1-4/3 Theegala Parameswar S/o Bhaganna MT&G 397
8 Theegala Srinivas S/o Ramulu MT&G 397
9 1-6/6 Kalyan Kar Bopal S/o Choudhary Rao MT&G 1184
10 1-7/2 S. Boddu Bhaganna S/o Linganna MT&G 3016
11 1-7/4 S. Boddu Srinivas S/o Linganna MT&G 3016
12 1-7/5 S. Boddu Rameswar S/o Linganna MT&G 3016
Under section 15 of the Act 30/2013 the declaration has been issued to acquire (12+2) houses and cattle sheds in Dahagan village of Bazar Hanoo Mandal of Adilabad district for rehabilitation after satisfying the objections received during the stipulated period for scrutiny. A plan of the R and R rehabilitation project and the houses to be displaced by Bazar Hanoo Project can be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Officer, Adilabad and in the District Collector's office, Adilabad on any day during the office hours. Mandal officer: Additional District Collector Adilabad
DIPR R.O. No: 62/OLA/PP/Adil/Pub/21-22

GOVERNEMENT OF TELANGANA
I&AD DEPARTMENT, IRRIGATION DIVISION, NO. 2, ADILABAD
TENDER NOTICE
Tenders were floated vide tender notice Nos. 17/2021-22, Dt:15-09-2021 for an amount of Rs.5.07 lakhs available from 17-09-2021 @ 11:00 AM to 20-09-2021 @ 05:00 PM and tender notice Nos. 18/2021-22, Dt:15-09-2021 for an amount of Rs.6.84 lakhs available from 17-09-2021 @ 10:00 AM to 20-09-2021 @ 05:00 PM further details can be seen in <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division No.2, Adilabad.
R.O. No. : 16074-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2021-22
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, IRRIGATION DIVISION NO.2, ADILABAD

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
IRRIGATION CIRCLE NIZAMABAD
TENDER NOTICE
Tenders were floated vide Tender Notice No. 15/2021-22 Dt:15.09.2021 for an amount of Rs.499.06 Lakhs for the work of "Conservation and beautification of Raghunath Tank -Providing electrical fixtures along with poles, cables, Distribution Boards etc available from 16.09.2021 to 01.10.2021 available Further details can be seen <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>.
Sd/- SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, IRRIGATION CIRCLE, NIZAMABAD.
R.O. No. : 16090-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2021-22

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
FISHERIES DEPARTMENT
Sd/- Commissioner of Fisheries, Matsya Bhawan, Street No.4, Shamshad Nagar, Nizam Town, Hyderabad-50
Bid Notice No.1606/CT/2021 Date:16-09-2021
Commissioner of Fisheries invites Bid as e-Procurement Platform For Supply of Fresh water Scampi Juveniles (Macrobrachium rosenbergii) for selected nurseries and tanks in the state of Telangana during 2021-22. Time schedule of various tender related events (1) Bid closing date: 16-09-2021 at 11.00 AM (2) Pre-bid: Queries regarding the bid will be accepted through online to the mail ID: tenders@telangana.gov.in upto 16-09-2021 (3) Last date for opening of bids: 16-09-2021, 05:00 PM (4) Bid submission starting date/time: 17-09-2021, 10:00 AM (5) Bid closing date/time: 27-09-2021, 2:00 PM (6) Bid opening date/time: 27-09-2021, 03:30 PM (7) Bid Document Fee : Rs.10,000/-, Contact person name and phone number: Sd/- T. Srinivas, Deputy Director of Fisheries (N&P) Ph:9849402762. If you are interested in participation, please visit website at www.tender.telangana.gov.in and bid document can be downloaded free of cost from the above website and also www.telangana.gov.in.
Phone No.040-228379251, E-mail: etelangana@gmail.com. Sd/- Lacharun Bhayya Commissioner of Fisheries
RFP No.338-PP/CL-Agency/MT/1/2021-22, Dt:16-09-2021

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
4th Floor Swarnajayanti Commercial Complex, Ameerpet, Hyderabad
Public Notification U/s.15 (3) of NMDA Act,2000
(G.O.Ms.No.148 MA & UD Dept., Dated : 04-09-2021)
In exercise of powers conferred by Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority Act 2006 (Act No.6 of 2006), the Government hereby makes the following draft variation to the land use envisaged in the notified Master Plan issued vide G.O.Ms.No.33, MA&UD, Dt:24-01-2013, as required by sub-section (1) of the said section. The site in Sy.No.81/2, 82/2, 89/2, 89/3 & 90/2 of Bhongir (V&M), Yadadri District to an net extent of Ac.11.28 Gms which is presently earmarked for Open space & Semi-Public use zone in the notified Master plan MDP-2031 approved vide G.O.Ms.No.33 MA & UD Dept., Dt:24-01-2013, is now designated as Residential use zone subject to compliance of G.O.Ms.No.106 MA&UD (Pg.III) Dept., Dt:06-07-2020. The details of the above are available in websites: <http://gmmd.telangana.gov.in/> and <http://hmda.gov.in/>.
RFP No.2152-PP/CL-Agency/MT/1/2021-22, Dt:17-09-2021 Sd/- For Metropolitan Commissioner, NMDA

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
"e Procurement Notice"
MT No: 34/EE-30/SOZ/GHMC/2021-2022 Dt:16-09-2021
Name of the Work: Providing Of chain link mesh to Mini Park in Front of Gandhi Hospital near Bus stop, located in New Bhojigauda, Development of St.George Play ground located in New Bhojigauda, Development of Park located near St.George Play ground located near Bhojigauda, Dismantling & Construction of new Compound wall, Providing of Chain link mesh and Walking track to Park located near Don Bosco Naveenam Hostel at Bhojigauda, Development of Park near Sunnambatti , Bhojigauda located in 147, Bansikolpet, Remodelling of Main entrance gate at west side of Zonal Commissioner Building Sec'bad Zone and Providing arch opposite metro pillar no. 1211 Secunderabad Zone Office, GHMC in ward 150 Monda Market in circle-30, Begumpet. Estimate Amount in Lakhs: 47.90.
Bid Document Download Start Date & Time: Bid Submission closing Date & Time: Dt: 16-09-2021 @ 12:00 PM. - Dt: 24-09-2021 @ 12:00 PM. Name & Address, Officer Call No: Executive Engineer E.E., Circle-30, GHMC, Sec'bad Cell No.9899600376, Address of the officer concerned: Sr. R. Shivanand, Executive Engineer, Circle-30, GHMC, Sec'bad, Further details can be seen at e-Procurement @ <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>.
R.O. No. : 16093-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2021-22 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CIR-30, BEGUMPET



K-pop defining pop culture today

AISHWARYA D

K-pop, very unexpectedly, this term has become a part of our daily lives. So much so, that at least one K-pop fan shook the life out of you to listen to this new genre of music. Fans, also called the Army, have been going wild over the Korean artists! They find them so alluring that despite a looming Coronavirus around us, many deeply wished to have a K-pop concert in the city. Any breaking news about K-pop becomes a sensation. That is how pertinent it has become in our lives.

Discussing more about the insights on K-pop, who hasn't heard about the bands 'BTS', 'NCT', 'BlackPink', etc.? *The Pioneer's* correspondent dives deep into the subject and finds out from admirers across the city on how K-pop is easing out here in Hyderabad.

Originated in South Korea as part of their culture, it is the abbreviation for Korean popular music, which started gaining popularity in the 2000s. As per reports, most people, in general, found no interest in foreign language music

before, hence when K-pop was introduced, some music lovers called it cringy! Eventually, people actually started going crazy over the music, choreography, and its singers! There are a few large entertainment companies like SM, Big Hit which have now changed to (Hybe), JYP because they roll in Korea right now.

A keen K-pop lover from the city, Ranjana Verma shares, "My friend introduced me to K-pop. Initially, it was maddening but after a while, the melody and the music were so likable, that it got registered in my mind to the effect of me being addicted to it. Their music, visuals are really good-looking, the musicians put in a lot of effort, they practice and work hard to make it a success and you can watch their efforts through their vlogs and reels that they put online. If you must know, most of the singers have pre-recorded concerts but these guys have their concerts live and it's energetic, they sing and dance with coordination, it's fun and most importantly the public enjoys seeing them. Their only motto is to make fans happy."

The change in people's views has actually given

this new genre of music a new curvature; it has expanded the possibilities of more bands to emerge. Another fan of K-pop Jannath Sherin says, "I fully got into it in 2019 but when *Gangnam Style* went viral in 2013, nobody knew it was a Korean track. Much later when 'BTS' started performing in AMAs, it just blew up. Korean songs, I feel, have a lot of deep meaning to them, it really motivates the listener if they are under stress, which really was what attracted me. At the moment, I am listening to 'NCT'. I can relate to their music, they make the music with so much intensity and effect."

"The Oscar-winning *Parasite* gave even more popularity to the Korean language, whilst K-pop has low budget releases. No two songs have similar choreography or concept, is what I have noticed. They enjoy what they do," adds one more K-Pop devotee named Tejaswini. The hype is increasing and so is the fandom! With little more additions such as K-drama, their food, culture, and movies, this new love has made Hyderabadis glued to most things Korean and they are enthusiastically waiting their upcoming albums!



SHIKHA DUGGAL

Sports are the pride of our nation and we have seen many of our fellow Hyderabadis making names for themselves in this fraternity. The widely known Hyderabad Football Club co-owned by the Tollywood biggie Rana Daggubati reiterates why we Hyderabadis have such affinity towards the sport of football. Putting the sport back on the map, there came a big announcement where we saw the merger of football crazies with notable personalities — Ajay Devgn starrer *Maidaan*, the new biopic on the well-liked football coach Syed Abdul Rahim is going on floors soon!

Varun Tripathi (producer) of the football club in the city, Amit Sharma (director), Boney Kapoor, Akash Chawla, and Arunava Joy

Sengupta (producers) were all present at the event and so elated about the fact that all over again, a sports biopic is all set to take over the film industry and this time, with an interesting collab, the Hyderabad FC way!

"Hyderabad was the most preferable choice for us to set up a football club here, the history of the sport in this region is so deep-rooted! Based on the legacy and glory that our city carries in terms of football has brought us closer to this wonderful project called *Maidaan*," shared Varun.

Since there are so many new football clubs coming up and the youth's interest is building up too, Ajay Devgn exclusively reveals how his nephew advised him to definitely essay the character of Syed Abdul Rahim for all the football lovers out there! He reveals, "Like any other home, my nephew is also a fan of Messi and Ronaldo! When the

producers came through, I made my nephew sit through the narration. When he heard what our Indian football team achieved, he pushed me to do it so that every Indian knows what happened. I had the privilege to meet some of the team members during the shoot, their insights were quite helpful. The reverence they had for their coach left me awestruck! I hope that with the help of Hyderabad FC, our movie reaches all 'maidaans', 'gullies', colleges and every footballer strikes more for the country."

Evidently, the fifties and sixties were dominated by Syed Abdul Rahim, who lovingly was called 'Rahim Saab' in the football arena, and since then, this sport has kicked on from there. There are many more sports biopics in the pipeline, which hints towards the fact that audiences are drawn towards this genre of movies too and that is how the director Amit

Sharma was also keen on making one; however, Boney Kapoor and the other producers were the ones to lunge into this subject as disclosed by the director. The 'Badhaai Ho' director tells us, "I always wanted to make a sports film, football was the right choice to explore more because it has 'action'."

The coach's inspirational saga let me know now that India had a rich legacy in football too! The director, who himself had played from the 'goalkeeper' position, has got so much into the subject of his upcoming film that he says he's all set to meet Messi for interaction too (he laughs).

Whether it was an opportunity to build upon the youth's interest in the sport or the profound love for football itself, *Maidaan* will give a

boost to the grassroots of this sport.

Boney Kapoor was found narrating his fondest memories of football from his days, and he said, "I was a football follower, the locality where I used to reside in, considered the sport to be a 'religion'."

"Tilaknagar" was the common ground! My friend and I were the only fortunate guys who had the privilege of having slippers and we turned that into a goalkeeping post (he bursts into laughter), our clothes would get so grimy, we would have bruises, but we dived deep into it."

Bringing the unheard story of the famous Hyderabad coach, *Maidaan* has completed eighty percent of the post-production and it truly is a pompous moment for our city to collaborate with the movie's team.

MAIDAAN FINDS GROUND IN HYDERABAD

SUDHA REDDY

'MY GANESHA CLUTCH HELPED ME OVERCOME MY APPREHENSIONS'

SHIKHA DUGGAL

A Hyderabad woman is making noise across the world; she's none other than renowned philanthropist Sudha Reddy. Her charitable disposition landed her at the Met Gala and *The Pioneer* grabbed the chance to exclusively get in touch with the buzzing lady to know more about her association with the city of Hyderabad and her stint at the Met Gala 2021. An avid connoisseur of art and fashion, Sudha Reddy is considered amongst the well-heeled jetsetters of South India. She has made the city proud as she is the first Hyderabad based non-film luminary to attend the hotly anticipated global affair. Looking at the headlines of every news portal, it has definitely made our chests swell with pride to see her representing our country so well in her colourful costume signifying this year's Met Gala theme — American Independence.

Landing at the Met Gala 2021 as the only Indian can leave you with surrealism all your life, Sudha Reddy was beyond excited as she was always looking forward to putting India on the world map, and here she is. For her, this was an opportunity to showcase not just her personality but represent her country and her city Hyderabad too! While Met Gala is the greatest fashion night, for her it was an opportunity to propel the cause of benevolence and align with individuals who see the merit and potential in the concept of giving

back to society. "I was slightly nervous at first but I wasn't afraid. I was not sure if I would bump into any other Indian celebrity because you're technically in a sea full of people who you've never met and it takes time to build a personal bond. Since I'm a very private person, being very forthcoming doesn't come very easy to me but I met many like-minded people like Donatella Versace, Gigi Hadid, Karlie Kloss, Anna Wintour, and Lil Nas X, so it all went well. I had carried my little Ganesha clutch along with me so all my apprehensions automatically dis-

appeared," she explains. Everyone's talking about her golden embellished outfit! She opted for an opulent haute couture by Indian fashion designer duo Falguni Shane Peacock. Sudha's outfit was a bright gold sculptured gown with a dramatic four-meter metallic train that had a medley of hues borrowed from the American flag! What fully went into the making of the gorgeous outfit, Sudha tells us exclusively, "The dress is inspired by the American Revolution, it took over

very kind to fly down to Hyderabad on multiple occasions for the fittings!"

When we went on to ask who she thought was the best-dressed celebrity at the occasion, the benefactress says she believes that a costume gala and fashion in every form must be celebrated. Instead, she revealed to us that she was pretty intrigued by Kim Kardashian's choice of outfit and felt she was bang on in bringing to the fore the resilience of the fashion community after a

by the less fortunate sections of society in India on a global platform, through my various appearances and associations. I hope I fulfilled the cause even this time." Well, we must let the humanitarian know that she definitely surpassed the benefits of business at the event and proceeded towards learning to give! In the end, she also reveals to us that the whole celebrity culture was very understated in the West, the 'paparazzi' were well behaved and there were no starry tantrums or obnoxious showcase of wealth and



250 hours of work to be handcrafted. It was accented with 3D embellishments of Swarovski crystals, sequins, and bugle beads along the gown's train. I wanted to imbibe a lot of Indianness in my look and since Indians love over-the-top outfits at most outings, I requested Falguni Shane Peacock to be forward-thinking in their approach. We had artisans working round the clock to deliver the outfit in time and the designers were

pandemic challenged two whole years, despite all the criticism she's been facing at the moment. She also loved the way Rihanna, Billie Eilish, Iman, and Kendall Jenner dressed up for the occasion. The event has indeed gone into the books of history now, Sudha Reddy can admire this chapter all her life! She's so elated about it that she happily tells us, "The industries of fashion and entertainment can lend to larger causes given the industry's vast popularity. It was an honour to be invited to such a prestigious global event where eclectic minds congregate for a cause larger than themselves, that of philanthropy. Philanthropy is my life's purpose too and something that I hold very close to my heart. I have always aspired to shine the spotlight on various socio-economic causes faced

fame! It was a pure showcase of 'celanthropy' and she enjoyed every bit of it.

Falguni Shane Peacock have done a tremendous job again and created a novel, edgy military-inspired look that blends well with the overall theme of the Met Gala. The design resembled fifty independent states of America! Even the clutch that she carried with the outfit was designed in the shape of an embellished Ganesha idol by Judith Leiber, which caught everyone's attention. As a supporter of fine arts, and widely known for her charitable disposition, her presence at the 2021 Met Gala was praised by many!

On a concluding note, Sudha shares, "The Met Gala has been one of the most aspirational landmark events in the world of style, one that is keenly admired by fashion greats. Monday evening's intimate gathering was special and memorable. It was an extremely rewarding outing for me as I was able to exchange notes with many notable personalities, some of who are extremely keen to explore socio-economic welfare campaigns in association with the Sudha Reddy Foundation in the future. I am extremely humbled and honoured to have received this opportunity to represent my country at this eclectic fashion parade."

Lagadapati Padma breaks stereotypes, forays into real estate

The real estate industry has most often been male-dominated with very few women in leadership positions. This slowly seems to be changing today and Lagadapati Padma is a huge part of that. The entrepreneur surprised people as she forayed into real estate.

She, along with three others, Prabhakar, Ramesh Patel and Nishant Chawda, announced their ambitious project — RNP Stellar Projects. The launch saw the presence of several women entrepreneurs of the city, including Uma Chigurupati, Chairperson FLO Hyderabad, Usharani Manne of Polmon Instruments Pvt. Ltd; Rekha Reddy, Nidhi Swarup, Maya Patel, Uma, and Manjula Reddy, among others.

"It is our special journey of creating boutique lifestyle homes in Hyderabad," said Padma, a former FLO Chairperson. "Our vision is to create best in class landmark properties to transform 'Community Living' by creating luxury homes," Ramesh Patel added.



"The project is a 195 flats residential 3 BHK high-end project. This G+15 floor high rise venture is coming up at Kondapur," informed Prabhakar. Nishant Chawda, a senior Principal Architect in the industry for more than 20 years, a successful technocrat with interest in diverse businesses says it will be one of the landmarks in the city people will look up to.

The location, promoters, the combination — architects, builders, designers and project management of Tata is their USP, believes Padma. "I have been into construction, real estate, fabrication, biodegradable products manufacturing, she informs. This will be our signature

project; a landmark in the city which people will be proud about," Padma shared. Women are known to be good at balancing work and family, they are known to multitask, which is a critical aspect in real estate, owing to the complex nature of the industry. They tend to bring in a perfect combination of compassion, focus, assertiveness, and determination in various segments of the sector. Thus, women have rightfully started gaining momentum and accepting prominent roles in real estates like never before.

Padma reportedly has ambitious plans and said will share them at an appropriate time, and we can't wait to know what they are!

what's brewing?



● Aiza



● Sofiya Syad



● Praseeda



● Jayesh Ranjan, Pallam Raju, and Khaiq ur Rehman



● Sabaiha Ali



● Ankita



● Sipra Gandhi



● Sana



● Adnam



● Prathusha



● Sumbol



● Sahana

CULINARY CRAVINGS

Sofiya Events organised an exclusive, closed-door launch of one of India's most revered culinary and bar experiences — Diablo, founded by ace restaurateur, Priyank Sukhija. The event held during the week witnessed the attendance of heads of state, Consul Generals, Diplomats, Tollywood actors, and the creme de la creme of Hyderabad.

PARTY

Photos by SV Chary

FUN

ARCHIE



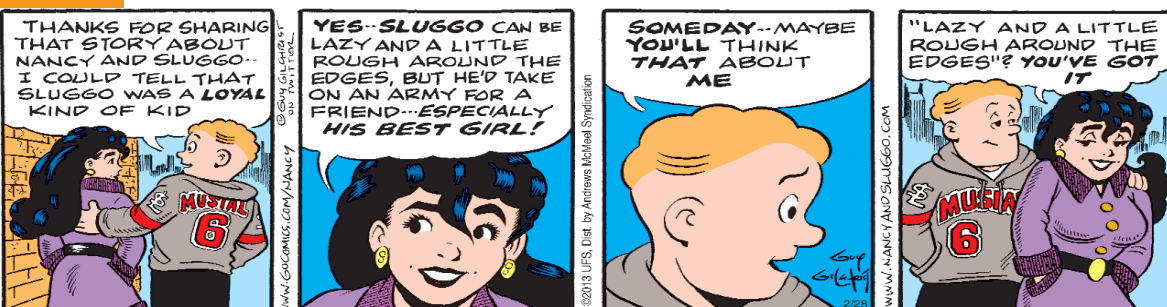
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



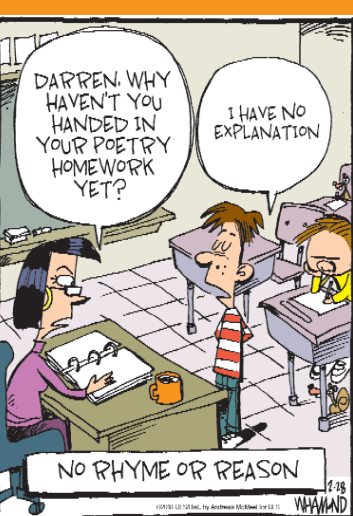
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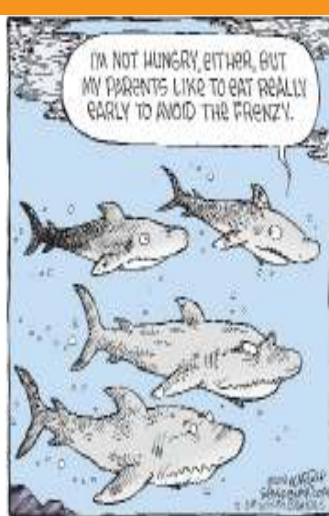
GINGER MEGGS



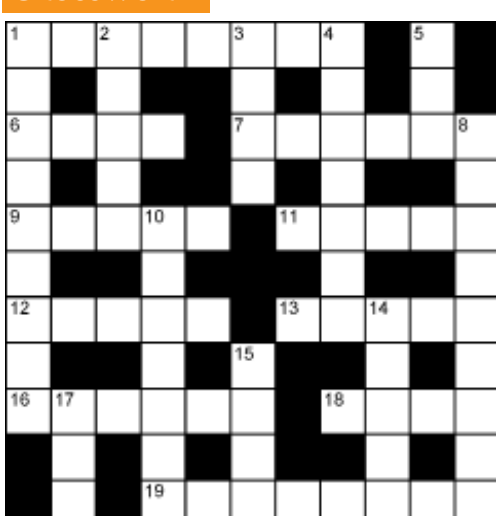
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

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

- Sick people in hospital
- A feeling that makes you scratch
- Ran after trying to catch
- One of your five senses
- Pimples on the face
- Requires
- Opposite of winner
- Attend classes here
- Young child
- Studied closely

DOWN

- Wash your hair with this
- Frozen water
- Smashed to pieces
- This turns into a frog
- The country of the Spanish
- A biting insect
- A popular pet



ANASUYA TO HEADLINE SAMPATH NANDI'S NEXT PROJECT



Anchor-turned-actress Anasuya Bharadwaj is one talented actress who is working on a series of interesting films. She was last seen playing the lead role in *Thank You Brother*. As the anchor seems to be doing exceptionally well in films, we hear that director Sampath Nandi has roped in Anasuya Bharadwaj for his upcoming production venture, which is touted to be an intense family drama. The actress, sources say, could play the female lead!

Sampath Nandi produced a Telugu web series, *Black Rose*, with Bollywood actress and Miss India crown winner Urvashi Rautela in the lead, which is yet to be released. He is planning to produce a movie with one of his associates. Sources say that very soon the official announcement regarding Sampath Nandi and Anasuya Bharadwaj's project will be made. Currently, Sampath Nandi is basking in the glory of his recently released directorial venture *Seetimaarr* which has Gopichand and Tamannah Bhatia in the lead role. The sport-based



movie was released on September 10 and has been doing decent collections at the box office.

Meanwhile, Anasuya is playing an important role in Ravi Teja-starrer *Khiladi* and is also part of Allu Arjun and Rashmika Mandanna starrer *Pushpa: The Rise*.

Aparichitudu Hindi remake in tough waters

A couple of months ago, it was announced that Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh has been roped in for the Hindi remake of *Anniyan/Aparichitudu*. The movie will be helmed by Shankar and bankrolled by Jayantilal.

Even as the news excited fans, the original producer Aascar Ravichandran has moved to court against Shankar and Jayantilal.

Ravichandran had claimed that he owns the copyright of *Anniyan* and the movie cannot have a remake without his consent.

"I own the copyright of the film and no other person has the right over it as I am the author of the movie," Ravichandran had reportedly said.

Ravichandran shared the latest update in the matter. He said that the South Indian Film Chamber is in support of him and will soon send the letter to Shankar and his team. He further added that he is also remaking *Anniyan* and the announcement will be bigger than that of Shankar's film.

"Yes, I am also remaking *Anniyan* and it will be on a grand scale," he said in the statement. He added that his film will have one Bollywood and one international artist, and will be remade in Hindi and English respectively. "Everybody is thinking I have asked for money, I have never asked for money. It is my property. Somebody is misguiding producer Jayantilal Gada. Before December the big announcement will be made, that's why I kept quiet all the while," said he.

He concluded that he was shocked when Gada announced the Hindi remake: "And I have been waiting for the opportunity for ten years".

Shankar and Jayantilal Gada had announced in April 2021 that they will be remaking the film in Hindi with Ranveer Singh playing the lead.

Rana's look reveal as Daniel Shekar gets a date



While works of *Bheemla Nayak*, the film starring Power Star Pawan Kalyan and Rana Daggubati, is going on at a brisk pace, the makers are all set to release a character video of Rana who is playing Daniel Shekar.

The film is the official Telugu remake of the Malayalam hit film *Ayyappanum Koshiyum*. The first look of *Bheemla Nayak*, starring power star Pawan Kalyan, was met with thunderous applause.

The team had earlier mentioned that they would release the first look release of the Rana as Daniel Sekhar, and on Friday, they officially announced the date. "Get ready to experience the #BLITZofDANIELSHEKAR, @RanaDaggubati from 20th Sept #BheemlaNayak @pawankalyan #Trivikram @saagar_chandrak @MenenNithya @MusicThaman @dop007 @NavinNooli @vamsi84 @sitharaents @venupro @adityamusic" the tweet read.

In the freshly released poster, only half of Rana is shown in

traditional attire, similar to that of Pruthvi Raj in the original version.

Rana Daggubati and Pawan Kalyan will reprise their roles as Biju Menon and Prithviraj Sukumaran, respectively, from original version, in *Bheemla Nayak*. Samuthirakani, a National Award winner, plays a pivotal part in the movie.

Suryadevara Naga Vamsi's Sithara Entertainments is producing the movie, which will have Thaman's soundtrack. The film is slated to hit theaters on January 12, 2022, during Sankranthi.



RANA CHILLS WITH THE HAASAN SISTERS

A refreshing picture of Tollywood hunk Rana Daggubati chilling with the Haasan sisters has been going viral on the internet. Shruti Haasan, daughter of versatile actor Kamal Haasan, who is an active Instagram user, took to her profile to share a selfie with Rana Daggubati and her sister Akshara Haasan.

The *Vakeel Saab* and *Krack* actress came up with an interesting caption, "Good people = good days made something special today that makes me so excited to make art and I get to be around truly beautiful people."

Shruti also shared a video on her stories and said, "I am so excited, I can not wait to share this with you guys, such a special day." The actress then shared a hilarious video with Akshara Haasan, where she asks her sister, "What did you think of the shoot, the special secret shoot," and her sister replies with, "Super!"

While Rana Daggubati is awaiting the release of *Virata Parvam* that was scheduled for release on April 30, but was postponed due to the rising number of Covid-19 cases across the country, Shruti Haasan will soon be seen in Prashanth Neel's directorial venture *Salaar* with Prabhas as her co-star.



Samantha says yes to a new project?

Even as a lot is being written and said about Samantha Ruth Prabhu's personal life, the actress has been maintaining a dignified silence on these rumors.

Meanwhile, we're told that the talented star her focus tight on her career.

After a good gap, Samantha, sources tell us, has now signed a new Telugu film which will be launched in November or early December. Touted to be a female-centric story, the film will be bankrolled by producer Krishna Prasad of Sri Devi Movies, which recently produced films like *Sammohanam* and *Gentleman*. The film is likely to be helmed by a newcomer.

Samantha is said to have liked the script, and if all goes as planned, this will be the first film she will sign after the completion of Gunasekhar's *Shaakuntalam*.

AKHANDA'S MUSIC promotions to begin soon

Nandamuri Balakrishna and director Boyapati Srinu's *Akhanda* is all set to hit the theaters soon. The film, which is in its final leg of shooting, currently is shooting its songs on the lead pair, Balakrishna and Pragya Jaiswal.

Meanwhile, the makers have begun promotions for the songs. The first song *Adiga Adiga* will be unveiled on

Saturday. Thaman has composed music for the film. Miriyala Ravinder Reddy is bankrolling *Akhanda* on a grand scale. The film also has actress Poorna in a key role. Jagapathi Babu will be seen playing an antagonist.

Akhanda is one of the most-awaited movies by Nandamuri fans. It marks Balakrishna and Boyapati's combination for the third time, after *Simha* and *Legend*.



NZ put off Pak tour over security



IAN S ■ RAWALPINDI

New Zealand have called off their white-ball tour of Pakistan because of security concerns ahead of the first of three ODIs at Pindi Cricket Ground in Rawalpindi on Friday. New Zealand were visiting Pakistan for the first time after 18 years for a white-ball tour featuring three ODIs which were to be followed by five T20Is in Lahore.

Players and support staff members from both sides did not come out of the hotel and were asked to stay in their rooms. Spectators were not allowed to enter the stadium. After a period of uncertainty and chaos caused by the delay apart from rumours of COVID-19 outbreak in either camp, a statement from New Zealand Cricket (NZC) was issued.

"However, following an escalation in the New Zealand Government threat levels for Pakistan, and advice from NZC

security advisors on the ground, it has been decided the BLACK-CAPS will not continue with the tour. Arrangements are now being made for the team's departure," read the NZC statement.

The chief executive of NZC David White said it was simply not possible to continue with the tour given the advice he was receiving. "I understand this will be a blow for the PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board), who have been wonderful hosts, but player safety is paramount and we believe this is the only responsible option."

New Zealand Cricket Players Association chief executive Heath Mills echoed White's sentiments. "We've been across this process throughout and are fully supportive of the decision. The players are in good hands; they're safe -- and everyone's acting in their best interests."

NZC also said it will not comment on the details of the security threat nor the updated

arrangements for the departing squad. New Zealand, led by Tom Latham, had arrived in Islamabad on September 11 after losing a five-match T20I series to Bangladesh 3-2. Since the start of this century, New Zealand first came to Pakistan in 2002 under Stephen Fleming. They had to abandon the tour on the morning of the second Test in Karachi after a bomb exploded outside their team hotel. The last time New Zealand toured Pakistan was in 2003 for a five-match ODI series, which they lost 5-0.

The PCB issued a statement shortly after NZC released one, saying that no security threat of any kind existed for the visitors. "Earlier today, New Zealand Cricket informed us they had been alerted to some security alert and have unilaterally decided to postpone the series."

"Pakistan Cricket Board and Pakistan Government made foolproof security arrangements for all visiting teams. We have

Pak Minister links New Zealand tour cancellation to Afghanistan

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Hours after the New Zealand cricket team called off its tour of Pakistan just before the start of the first ODI in Rawalpindi, Pakistan Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad said on Friday that the tour was cancelled under an international 'conspiracy', Express Tribune reported.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Ahmad said that he will not name the conspirators. However, he added that some forces want to make Pakistan a scapegoat



after what has been happening in Afghanistan.

The New Zealand authorities do not have substantive proof of a threat in Pakistan, the minister said, hours after the Kiwis cancelled their tour of Pakistan, Geo TV reported.



National Open Athletics: Harmilan Kaur sets national record in 1500m

AP ■ WARANGAL

Punjab's Harmilan Kaur Bains stole the thunder from the sprinters by breaking Sunita Rani's long-standing national record in the 1500 metres on the second day of the 60th National Open Athletics Championships in the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Hanamkonda on Thursday.

The 23-year-old start-to-finish specialist cruised home in 4:05.39 to erase the mark set by Sunita Rani at 4:06.03 in the Asian Games in Busan in 2002. She also shattered OP Jais's meet record of 4:11.83 set in Delhi in 2006. Del's KM Chanda gamely shadowed Harmilan until the Punjab runner sped away at the bell to win by a sizable margin. Harmilan, undefeated in eight national-level 1500m races since January 2020, has shown rapid progress, improving from 4:14.68 in the Khelo India University Games in Bhubaneswar last year to 4:08.70 and 4:08.27 in the Federation Cup (March 16) and Indian Grand Prix 4 (June 21)

respectively in Patiala. On Thursday, she capped it with a National mark, the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) said in a release on Thursday.

It needed such a strong effort to push a couple of good sprint events to the shade. Naresh Kumar (Andhra Pradesh) and Delhi's Tarandeep Kaur took the honours as the fastest male and female athlete of the meet by winning the 100m dash Naresh Kumar's 10.30 seconds win came with the second-fastest time by an Indian in 100m this year behind Gurindervir Singh's 10.27 seconds in Patiala on June 26. It also gave the 23-year-old from Guntur a place among the five fastest sprinters in Indian history. Quite inevitably, it gave him the meet record, improving on Anil Kumar's 10.37 seconds set in 2001.

The race produced personal bests for Assam's Amlan Borgohain and Harjit Singh (Services) with times of 10.34 seconds for both, a photo finish separating them by six-thousandths of a second to secure the silver medal for the former.

England's tour of Pakistan next month in doubt now: Reports



IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

England's tour of Pakistan next month was thrown into doubt on Friday after New Zealand abandoned their international series there on security grounds.

According to a Daily Mail report, the Black Caps did not leave their hotel for the first one-day international and no spectators were admitted to the stadium in Rawalpindi after the country's cricket board received security advice. Before the scheduled time of the toss for the day-nighter, confirmation came that the tourists would be returning

home before a ball had been bowled.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) then said that they will decide on whether next month's tour of Pakistan can go ahead in the next 48 hours.

"We're aware of New Zealand's decision to pull out of the Pakistan tour due to a security alert," a spokesperson was quoted as saying by standard.co.uk. "We are liaising with our security team who are on the ground in Pakistan to fully understand the situation. The ECB Board will then decide in the next 24-48 hours whether our planned tour should proceed."

Shiva sails into last-16, Gaurav Bidhuri bows out of National Championships

PTI ■ BELLARY

Five-time Asian medallist Shiva Thapa (63.5kg) stormed into the pre-quarter-finals with a knockout victory but former world championship bronze-winner Gaurav Bidhuri (57kg) exited after an opening loss in the men's National Boxing Championships here on Friday.

Representing Assam, Thapa knocked out Shubham Mamta of Steel Plant Sports Board (SPSB) in the opening round of his bout. Shubham was attended to by the medical team after the body shot threw him off balance in the ring.

"There is pain but he should be alright. He will be assessed again tomorrow," a top official at the tournament told PTI. However, Bidhuri (Railways Sports Promotion Board) was upstaged by Haryana's Sachin, who prevailed 4-1 in the bout. Sachin is the reigning youth world champion. Another Haryana pugilist and South Asian Games champion Ankit Khatana made his way into the 75kg quarter-finals after he



out-punched Himachal Pradesh's Dharm Pal in unanimous victory.

Telangana's Savio Dominic Michael (54kg) and Goa's Ashok Patil (67kg) too progressed to the last-eight stage with identical 4-1 victories.

While Savio defeated Jharkhand's Krishna Jora, Ashok Patil got the better of

Himachal Pradesh's Mohan Chander.

Chandigarh's Kuldeep Kumar (48kg) and Sachin were among the other boxers to make progress on the third day of the Championships.

Kuldeep booked a berth in the quarter-finals after an easy 4-0 win over Rajasthan's Sushil Sahran.

Sharath named chairman of BCCI junior selection committee

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian cricket board (BCCI) on Friday appointed the national junior selection committee with former Tamil Nadu batsman Sridharan Sharath as its chairman.

While S. Sharath is the representative selector from South Zone, former Gujarat wicket-keeper-batsman Pathik Patel is the selector from West Zone and former Bengal medium-pacer Ranadeb Bose is from East Zone. Former Punjab batsman Krishan Mohan, who is now with Himachal Pradesh in coaching capacity, is the North Zone selector while ex-Madhya Pradesh pacer Harvinder Singh Sodhi is the selector from Central Zone.

"Former Tamil Nadu captain Mr Sharath Sridharan will head the committee," said a statement from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The first cricketer to play 100 Ranji Trophy matches for Tamil Nadu, Sharath scored 8700 runs, including 27 centuries and 42 half-centuries in 139 first-class matches with an impressive average of 51.17, during his 15-year-long domestic career.

Not getting selected for T20 World Cup not the end of it all: Pacer Siraj



IAN S ■ MUMBAI

Indian pace bowler Mohammed Siraj has said that the recently-concluded Test tour of England was a "great experience" and that he was happy that he could repose the faith of his captain Virat Kohli during the series.

Siraj played a key role in India taking a 1-0 lead in the series, notching eight wickets in the Lord's Test, which led to the visitors winning the tie by 151 runs.

"The England tour was a great experience by any stretch of imagination. I am glad that I could repose the faith of my captain Virat bhai, head coach Ravi Shastri, the support staff and the entire team," the 27-year-old, who has so far amassed 30 wickets in the nine Tests, told Sportstar on Thursday.

Siraj though said that he was a bit disappointed at not being selected in the side for the ICC T20 World Cup in the UAE and Oman in October-November this year.

"Well, selection is not in our hands. It was certainly a dream to play in the T20 World Cup. But, again, that is not the end of it all. I have many more goals -- the biggest being to play a lead role in helping the team to win matches," said Siraj.

"I will take things as they come for I believe in destiny and be content in whatever opportunities I get even as the pursuit for excellence at the highest level continues," he added.

Siraj said that sharing the ball with the likes of pace stalwarts Ishant Sharma and Mohammed Shami was a great experience.

Elyse Perry set to return to new-ball role against India women

IAN S ■ MACKAY

Australian women's team pace bowler Elyse Perry, who is set to return to her role as new-ball bowler after her career over the past 18 months was hampered by hamstring injury, has termed the forthcoming ODI series against India as an opportunity.

"With Megan Schutt missing for this series, there might be more opportunity there with the new ball, especially initially," said Perry ahead of the ODI series against Indian women's team that begins on Tuesday (September 21).

Perry, who has picked 298 international wickets across 246 Tests, ODIs and T20s, is just one of seven bowlers to have taken 150 wickets in women's ODIs.

She barely bowled during the one-day series against New Zealand in March-April, sending down just six overs in the first two matches as first change. She didn't bowl in the third ODI.

F1 drivers Vettel, Stroll to remain with Aston Martin for next season

IAN S ■ LONDON

Formula 1 team Aston Martin have confirmed an unchanged pairing of Sebastian Vettel and Lance Stroll for next year.

Vettel had joined Aston Martin from Ferrari at the start of this season, netting the team's first podium at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. The four-time champion will continue his journey with the British team next year alongside Canadian driver Stroll, as Formula 1 moves into its new era of regulations.

"I am really looking forward to racing the new generation of Formula 1 cars," said Vettel. "Their look is very different and the new technical regulations should give us cars that can race much more closely than recently," the German told formula1.com on Thursday.

"More exciting racing will be great for the drivers as well as for the fans. The changes are so big that every team will be starting from a new beginning, so it will be a great opportunity for us at Aston Martin? I believe in the strength of our new growing team, so I am already looking forward to 2022."

Stroll, meanwhile, added, "Next season I will be embarking on my sixth year in Formula 1, alongside my teammate Sebastian? and I greatly look forward to continuing the journey with him



next year. We have not achieved what we set out to do this year, but that has only amplified our hunger and drive for success next season."

Vettel was signed to Aston Martin on a 'one plus one' contract, giving the team an option on his services for 2022, which they decided to take up. Speaking of his driver line-up for 2022, Team Principal Otmar Szafnauer said, "Lance is one of the most gifted drivers in modern Formula 1, and to that raw talent he is now adding serious racecraft."

"A four-time world champion, having driven 271 Grands Prix, of which he has won 53, Sebastian is also a massive asset to our team, and next year we expect both of them to race well in what will be a very different formula from the current one."

Academic & sporting excellence achievable: Paralympic medallist & IAS officer Suhas

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Suhas Yathiraj lives by the philosophy of 'sports helps you conquer your own self'. And he lived by his own words by clinching a silver medal in badminton at the Tokyo Paralympics. Significantly, his achievement also helped break a common stereotype in India that does not equate sporting excellence with academics.

Yathiraj is an officer in the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), having achieved success in one of the toughest examinations in the country at the very first attempt.

It was only in 2015/16 that he turned into a professional para-badminton player and has since then been managing his duty as the District Magistrate of Gautam Buddha Nagar and his training as a sportsperson to good effect.

"I think this (Tokyo Paralympics) medal was celebrated by everyone in the country. The amount of reception that we got in New Delhi airport (shows that)," Yathiraj told Olympics.com. "I think the myth that studies and sports can't be pursued together has



been broken. Many are surprised that a person can be good in both studies and sports.

"Parents also want their children to be good in studies and sports. They look at studies as the more stable option. I think many of the youth can at least get the confidence to pursue both," he added.

The celebration at home around his achievement at the Paralympics medal also makes him believe that the Tokyo Olympics

and Paralympics was a watershed moment for India as it helped to develop a sporting culture.

"The amount of support, love that everyone is showing is great. There was a time when celebrities in the country used to be film stars and only cricketers," Yathiraj said.

"But I think now, the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics would be a watershed moment in the history of India, because of the amount of adulation and recognition the Olympians and Paralympians are getting. I think it's definitely heart-warming," he added.

And badminton remains a spiritual experience for him. He, however, is extremely methodical in his approach towards the sport and likes to work on its crucial details.

"Badminton is meditation for me. I am extremely methodical, I develop my attack skills, defense skills, my reach. I work minutely on that part and also how I would cope up in the match. I visualize matches in my head. So yeah, I do have methods that give me comfort while playing," Yathiraj explained. Moreover, he is not active on

social media and stays away from it, in part because of his professional role and because he believes that it doesn't add value to his life. "I am not at all a reserved person. Because of the administrative job that I hold, I have intentionally kept myself away from social media because I don't see any value addition through it. I have always believed that we should not go behind fame or money or anything," Yathiraj said.

Yathiraj, 38, also considers the silver medal at Tokyo Paralympics will motivate him to go one better at Paris Paralympics in 2024.

Yathiraj, who has an impairment to his ankle, overcame the challenges thrown at him to excel in badminton. And he has several international achievements to his name.

He became the first-ever serving Indian bureaucrat to represent and win a medal for India at the global level when he won gold at the 2016 Asian Para Badminton Championships. That journey has now taken him to the Paralympics where he was just beaten in the final of the SL4 category men's singles by Lucas Mazur of France.