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HYDERABAD, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



PRAGYA OPENS
UP ABOUT HER
LOOK IN
AKHANDA

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DHANBAD JUDGE INTENTIONALLY HIT BY AUTO-RICKSHAW, CBI TELLS HC

The CBI, which is probing the death case of Dhanbad Judge Uttam Anand, told the Jharkhand High Court on Thursday that the auto-rickshaw driver, who has been apprehended in this connection, intentionally hit him with his three-wheeler. The CB, during the hearing of the case on a virtual platform, said a probe is underway to find out who all are involved in the conspiracy. The 49-year-old district judge was allegedly mowed down by a heavy auto-rickshaw while he was out jogging near Randhir Verma Chowk in Dhanbad on the morning of July 28.

VAX FOR DIFFERENTLY-ABLED, PEOPLE WITH RESTRICTED MOBILITY AT HOME

The government Thursday announced that differently-abled people and those with restricted mobility will be given Covid vaccine doses at their homes. Addressing a press conference here, Union Health Ministry officials also said the country is still in the midst of the second wave of Covid-19 even though the number of daily new cases is declining. However, they added, 62.73 percent of total infections reported last week were from Kerala alone, which is also the only State with over 1 lakh active Covid cases.

MAHA TEEN GANG-RAPED MULTIPLE TIMES; 24 ARRESTED, 2 BOYS DETAINED

Over 30 people have been accused of gang-raping a 15-year-old girl multiple times over a period of nine months near Mumbai, in a case that has left Maharashtra shaken to the core. The girl has named 33 attackers, of which 24 have been arrested. Two minors have also been detained. The tragic story began in January when the girl's friend allegedly raped her and filmed the crime. He used the video to blackmail her and rape her again. He allegedly shared the video with many others - friends and acquaintances - and they all used it to blackmail the teen.

NCDRC GRANTS RS 2 CR COMPENSATION TO MODEL FOR WRONG HAIRCUT

The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) has directed a luxury hotel chain to pay a compensation of Rs 2 crore to a woman after a salon at their Delhi-based hotel allegedly gave her a wrong haircut and hair treatment, observing that it shattered her dream to become a top model. A bench of President RK Agrawal and Member Dr SM Kantikar awarded compensation after noting that women are no doubt cautious about their hair, spend a handsome amount on keeping them in good condition, and are emotionally attached to them.

'No country managed to do what India did': SC pats Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

No other country managed to do what India did in terms of its response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Supreme Court said on Thursday, in rich praise for the government, as it reserved the order on a case involving the Rs 50,000 compensation proposed for COVID-19 deaths.

"Today we are very happy. There will be some solace to the persons who have suffered... Everything the government is performing. We're happy that something is being done to wipe out tears of the person who suffered," Justice MR Shah said.

Justices Shah and AS Bopanna also appreciated India's response to the coronavirus pandemic that drew intense scrutiny over thousands of deaths due to the lack of preparedness for the second wave and shortages of essentials like medical oxygen.

"Given the size of our population, vaccine expenses, economic situation and the adverse circumstances that we faced... we took exemplary steps... No other country managed to do what India did," the judges said.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has recommended that Rs 50,000 be given to the family of those who died of COVID-19, the centre had informed the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

It said that compensation will also be given to the family of those who died of the virus and were involved in COVID-19

relief operations or activities associated with the preparedness for dealing with the pandemic.

The government said that NDMA has issued the guidelines on September 11 following the directions of the top court given on June 30 wherein it had

recommended the authority to recommend guidelines for the financial assistance.

The assistance will not be limited to families affected by COVID-19 deaths in the first and second wave of the pandemic but will continue in future phases of the pandemic as well, the authority said.



Kin of Covid positive suicide victim to get ex gratia: Centre

Family members of people who committed suicide within 30 days of being diagnosed with Covid-19 will be entitled to Rs 50,000 ex-gratia assistance as per the guidelines, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Thursday. Deaths occurring within 30 days from the date of testing or from the date of being clinically determined as a Covid case will be treated as deaths due to Covid-19, even if the death takes place outside the hospital/ in-patient facility, the government clarified.

SC to set up expert panel to look into Pegasus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant development, the Supreme Court Thursday observed orally that it will set up a technical expert committee to inquire into the Pegasus snooping matter and pass an interim order next week on a batch of pleas seeking an independent probe into the entire issue.

The apex court's observations on constituting the committee assume significance in view of the Centre's statement that it would set up an expert panel on its own to look into the grievances of the alleged surveillance of certain eminent Indians by hacking their phones using Israeli firm NSO's spyware, Pegasus.

A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana, which was to hear some other matter, addressed senior lawyer CU Singh, one of the counsels in the pleas, that the order will be pronounced next week.

CM for Delhi today on three-day visit

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao will be leaving for Delhi on Friday on a three-day visit to attend a meeting called by Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Vignan Bhavan with Chief Ministers of States on September 26.

The meeting has been called to discuss the growing Left Wing Extremism in some areas and the coordinated measures required to be taken with the help of affected States for curb the mounting Naxal violence.

State Home Secretary and Director General of Police would also attend the meeting, along with the Chief Minister.

Before leaving for Delhi, KCR will attend the inaugural day of the monsoon session of the Legislative Assembly and later the Business Advisory Committee meeting.

The Chief Minister's Delhi visit has important State agenda as he will be meeting Union Jal

■ To attend meeting of CMs convened by Union Home Minister on LW

■ To meet Jal Shakti and Food and Civil Supplies Ministers on State's concerns



Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on September 25 to discuss the concerns related to gazette notification which will come into force from October 14.

PM meets leading American CEOs, invites them to invest in India

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday met a group of five top American corporate leaders on a one-on-one basis from a range of diverse sectors ranging from drones to 5G, semiconductor, and solar and encouraged them to step up their investments by highlighting the vast opportunities in India.

"Talking technology..." the Prime Minister's Office said in a Twitter post after Modi's meeting with Qualcomm CEO Cristiano Amon and First Solar CEO Mark Widmar. They had a productive interaction, it said.

"PM Modi highlighted the vast opportunities India offers. Mr Amon expressed keenness to work with India in areas such as 5G and other Digital India efforts," it added. Qualcomm, which started its operations in 1996, has operations specialising in wireless modem and multimedia software, Digital Signal Processing (DSP) and embedded applications, and digital media networking solutions.

Monsoon session of TS Assembly from today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Various issues, including farm and water, besides law and order are expected to figure prominently in the monsoon session of the Telangana Legislative Assembly beginning Friday.

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) of the Assembly would finalise the duration and agenda for the session tomorrow.

The cultivation and procurement of paddy is likely to come up for debate as officials, in a recent meeting held by CM K



Chandrasekhar Rao, opined that it may not be in the best interest to take up paddy cultivation in the state (on a massive scale) from the next summer season in view of the Centre reportedly expressing

inability to purchase boiled rice.

The state government has recently launched 'Dalit Bandhu' scheme (providing a sum of Rs 10 lakh) on a pilot basis for the welfare of Dalits and there have been demands that the benefit be extended to backward classes as well.

Law and order, against the backdrop of the recent rape and murder of a six-year-old girl in the state capital, is also expected to figure in the discussion.

Admn sanction for Sangameswara, Basaveswara LI schemes

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Continuing its focus on lift irrigation schemes, the State government on Thursday issued orders according administrative sanction for the Sangameshwara and Basaveswara lift irrigation schemes in Sangareddy district.

The Sangameswara Lift Irrigation scheme has been designed to irrigate 2.19 lakh acres and it would be taken up at an estimated cost of Rs 2,653 crore. The Basaveswara Lift

Irrigation scheme will irrigate 1.65 lakh acres and it would be constructed at a cost of Rs.1,775 crore.

The State Cabinet recently gave its nod for the two lift irrigation schemes in Sangareddy, Andole, Zaheerabad and Narayankhed Assembly segments. The Cabinet also gave permission to the Irrigation Department to obtain required loans from NABARD for these two schemes, which will bring Kaleswaram waters to drought-prone areas.



Cabinet panel to look into Dharani issues

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Facing mounting criticism from users of Dharani portal, with farmers turning restive on unresolved long-pending grievances related to its interface, the State government on Thursday issued a GO constituting a Cabinet sub-committee to look into concerns relating to the portal and come out with solutions.

It was decided during the recent Cabinet meeting to constitute a Cabinet sub-committee. The relevant GO was issued on Thursday forming the Sub Committee, which is headed by Finance Minister T Harish Rao.

Sunday is again 'funday' on Hyd's Tank Bund

P:3

14 Maoist militia members surrender

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Fourteen people who worked for the banned CPI (Maoist) party surrendered before the police in Bhadradi Kothagudem district on Thursday.

Among the 14, three are minors, which includes a girl, who had worked as militia members for the banned CPI (Maoist) party, police said.

Though they were not willing to work for the party, they were forced



to join it and attend training, a senior police official said.

"The banned CPI (Maoist) Party

shared the details at a press conference organized at the Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Center.

The Municipal Administration Minister said that Hyderabad city currently generated 1,950 MLD (million liters per day) of sewage per day. Of this, 1,650 MLD was being generated within GHMC, while another 300 MLD was being generated within GHMC and ORR.

- Rs3,866.21cr for sewerage network
- 31 sewerage treatment plants with a capacity of 1,259.5 MLD to provide 100 % treatment within GHMC limits
- 62 STPs to be built -- 31 in GHMC and 31 within ORRs.
- Once 31 STPs start functioning in GHMC, Hyderabad will be number one in all metro cities in terms of sewerage treatment.
- Only 46.78% of the waste generated in GHMC is undergoing treatment.



Project implementation

Package-1: 8 STPs of 402.5 MLD capacity at a cost of **Rs.1,230.21 crores**, including O&M for 15 years for North of Musti.

Package-2: 6 STPs of 480.5 MLD at a cost of **Rs.1,355.13 crores**, including O&M for 15 years for South of Musti.

Package-3: 17 STPs of 376.5 MLD capacity at a cost of **Rs.1,280.87 crores**, including O&M for 15 years for Kukatpally-HS. Lake Catchment.

However, there were currently 25 STPs in the city with a capacity of 772 MLD. Only 46.78 per cent of the total waste water generated by these was being treated.

TREDA's 3-day property show in Hyd from Oct 1

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Real Estate Developers Association (TREDA) will hold the 11th edition of the TREDA Property Show starting from October 1 to 3 at HITEC Exhibition Centre here.

Over 100 builders, developers, building material suppliers and financial institutions will be showcasing their offerings at the upcoming TREDA Property Show, TREDA President R Chalapathi Rao said in a release on Thursday.

"With Hyderabad doing remarkably well in the recent times and as we head towards the festive season, this is the right time for every prospective buyer to consider, plan and invest in a property of their choice, that could not just benefit them in short-term but in long-term as well," Rao said.

The industry friendly reforms and innovative policies undertaken by the Telangana Government has led to significant developments and this indeed helped the real estate sector to be on a progressive track, the release said.

TODAY ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Bhadrpad & Krishna Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Tritiya 08:29

Nakshatram : Ashwini 08:54

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

Rahukalam : 10:38 am - 12:07 pm

Yamagandam : 3:07 pm - 4:37 pm

Varjyam : 7:33 pm - 9:20 pm

Gulika : 7:38 am - 9:08 am

Good Time : (to start any important work)

Amritakalam : Nil

Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:43 am - 12:31 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: ScatteredThunderstorm

Temp: 29/22

Humidity: 76%

Sunrise: 6:05 am

Sunset: 06:10 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 5:00 PM

Woman raped, murdered; 2 held

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 54-year-old woman was allegedly raped and murdered in Nalgonda district and two persons were arrested in connection with the incident, police said on Thursday.

According to a senior police official, a 40-year-old man raped the woman at his house in Mushampally village and later he along with his associate allegedly murdered the woman by banging her head against the wall at around noon on Wednesday.

Both the accused were in drunken condition when the incident happened, the official said. The woman was on her way to her grocery shop when she went inside the compound of the prime accused's house to pluck some flowers, Nalgonda district superintendent of police A V Ranganath told PTI.

The man pulled the woman inside his house and later raped her, police said, adding he later murdered her with the support of his accomplice.

After some time the second accused came out of the house and informed the matter to the brother-in-law of the deceased, who after reaching the spot found the woman in pool of blood with the prime accused standing beside the body, police said.

All set for Assembly session

‘Every legislator will get opportunity to speak’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Legislature Affairs Minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy on Thursday said that all arrangements have been made for the smooth conduct of the monsoon session of the State Legislature commencing from Friday.

He emphasised that all Members of the Council and Assembly will get the opportunity to speak on every issue.

Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy and Legislative Council Protem Chairman V Bhupal Reddy, along with Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar held a meeting to review the preparedness for the monsoon session with officials of various departments.

Legislature Secretary Narasimhacharyu also attended the meeting.

The Speaker suggested that apart from implementing Covid-19 protocol and norms, required measures should also be taken. The number of persons attending the session – including media personnel – has been restricted to provide better hygiene and ensure safety.

Prashant Reddy said that the official machinery has been functioning well and with their cooperation, the previous ses-

sions were conducted successfully.

The Speaker complimented the government and officers for their efforts to bring Covid-19 under control. He said that the financial position of Telangana remained better even during the pandemic and won appreciation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the NITI Aayog Chairman.

He said that the government and officials should extend cooperation to ensure transparency in the Assembly and Council sessions and the information sought by the Members is provided at the earliest. The answers to the pending questions should be sent without delay, Pocharam said.

Later, the Assembly Speaker and Council Chairman met DGP Mahender Reddy and other senior police officials to review the security arrangements. They sought the cooperation of the police department for the peaceful conduct of the Legislature sessions.

The session is expected to be interesting with the Opposition of late in an aggressive mode and may confront the government on many fronts. The ruling party is equally prepared to take every question and

Security enhanced

The police department has beefed up security in and around the precincts of the State Legislative Assembly ahead of the monsoon session from September 24. Hyderabad Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar issued a statement saying that meetings and processions in the 4 km radius of the Assembly have been prohibited. He stated that the department took this decision to ensure there is no interruption to the debates to be held on public issues in the Assembly. He said that the prohibitory orders will be in force from 6 am, September 24 onwards. The session will see increased police presence inside the Assembly premises area and the officials in charge of security have extended the fencing on the road. The police also placed a barbed wire fence around the Gun Park and have set up barricades. On Thursday, Assembly Speaker and Council Protem Chairman met the DGP and other senior police officers and asked them to ensure the peaceful session. Meanwhile, the Assembly officials have decided to issue only one gallery pass to each media house; media personnel would not be allowed to enter the Assembly lobbies in view of Covid, nor would they be allowed at the media point. This basically means that media personnel would have to wait outside the Assembly premises for the voices of opposition and ruling party leaders. However, the authorities have relaxed rules with regard to Covid tests. Legislators, Assembly staff and others would be asked to take Covid tests only if they exhibit symptoms. The authorities are arranging Covid tests centre and a vaccination centre in the Assembly premises.

explain its stand and speak about the achievements on the floor of the House.

The session, expected to last for about a week, may see introduction of some Bills to give legal sanctity to Dalit Bandhu scheme and replacing

some ordinances.

Concerns related to river water disputes with Andhra Pradesh, paddy purchases, notification to fill vacant posts, atrocities on women and children and drug trafficking may come up for discussion.



SBI cater to needs of realtors

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

State Bank of India Builders meet organised on Wednesday at Hotel Taj Krishna, was attended by Chief General Manager Amit Jhingran, General Manager (N.W-I) Jogesh Chandra Sahu, General Manager (N.W-II) Krishan Sharma and General Manager (CCGRO) K Phanendranath. Amit Jhingran, in his inau-

gural address, appreciated and acknowledged the efforts of the builders for transforming Hyderabad into "Most Livable City".

P Ramakrishna Rao, President, CREDAI, Shri V Rajasekhara Reddy, Secretary CREDAI, R Chalpathi Rao, Secretary, TREDA and R Prabhakar Rao, TBF and other prominent builders attended the meeting. Various sugges-

tions were by esteemed builders on builder finance, liberalising security norms, legal issues and valuation of properties.

State Bank dignitaries welcomed the feedback and assured that the issues will be addressed to the satisfaction of the Industry. The bank also explained various schemes that suit and cater to the needs of real estate industry.

Revenue official lands in ACB net

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The senior assistant from Circle 24 in the Revenue section of Kukatpally was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials for demanding and accepting bribes on Thursday. Officials said that Chand Basha was caught red handed

while accepting a bribe amount of Rs 8,000 from the complainant for mutation of a property. "The accused officer thereby obtained undue advantage to perform his public duty improperly and dishonestly. The bribe amount was recovered from his possession at his instance and he was produced

before the Special Judge for SPE & ACB cases," said the officials, adding that the case is under investigation.

In case of demand of bribe by any Government, police or any employee of the department, the public is requested to contact Toll Free Number of A.C.B., ie., 1064 for taking action as per law.

CM for Delhi today on three-day visit

Continued from page 1

He will meet Union Minister for Food and Civil Supplies Piyush Goel on issues related to paddy purchase by the Food Corporation of India.

KCR, who recently met the Union Jal Shakti Minister, is expected to raise the ongoing disputes between the Telugu States related to river water sharing in the Krishna basin and the long-pending demand of Telangana for re-allocation of Krishna water to get its rightful share. At present, Telangana gets 299 tmc out of 811 tmc of Krishna water allocated to the erstwhile combined State of Andhra Pradesh.

With all the projects and hydel power generating stations to come under the jurisdiction of the KRMB and GRMB, Telangana's major concern is also about power generation from Srisaillam hereafter.

As hydel power is most economical, it is important for Telangana to generate power to operate its lift irrigation schemes under the Kaleswaram project and fill the reservoirs and tanks to serve the ayacut. Andhra Pradesh, however, has been objecting that in the order of priority, drinking water and irrigation facilities should get priority and if Telangana generated power and released water, it would not be able to draw water through Pothireddypadu Head Regulator to serve

Rayalaseema region and supply drinking water to Chennai under the Telugu Ganga scheme.

Telangana has written several letters to the KRMB and also to the Centre that Srisaillam is basically a hydro-electric project and AP has been illegally drawing water over and above the permitted 34 tmc of flood flows to outside basin from the Srisaillam reservoir at 880 ft and above level for its unauthorized Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Scheme to lift water for the Pothireddypadu canal.

With the opposition mounting criticism that KCR had failed to protect the interests of the State and did not object to the construction of RLIS by AP until it was too late, the Chief Minister is apparently keen to flag the issue with the Union Ministry and the Apex Council and press for a resolution.

KCR will take up with Union Minister Piyush Goel the State's concerns on paddy procurement in the wake of conditions imposed by the Food Corporation of India about the rice variety and quantity. With paddy cultivation giving record yields in the State and farmers reluctant to shift to other crops despite the State government's repeated appeals, it could land State in a tricky situation if the FCI reduced its paddy procurement drastically. KCR will return to the city on September 26 evening.

PM meets leading American...

Continued from page 1

In India, Qualcomm Ventures has invested in companies that address key domestic issues from dairy, transportation to defence.

"Toward making India a global innovation hub!" Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted. The Prime Minister had a conversation with Amon on investment opportunities in hi-tech sectors in India.

"Discussed recent electronics and telecom manufacturing PLI schemes; and measures to strengthen innovation ecosystem," he added.

They discussed investment opportunities offered in India's telecommunications and electronics sector. This included the recently launched Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) as well as developments in the semiconductor supply chain in India, the MEA said in a release.

"Strategies for building the local innovation ecosystem in India were also discussed, the ministry added.

"Powering India's Solar Potential" Bagchi said after Modi's meeting with Widmar. They discussed India's renewable energy landscape.

Widmar shared plans to use the PLI scheme for manufacturing solar power equipment with unique thin-film technology; and integrating India into global supply chains, Bagchi said in a tweet.

Cabinet panel to look into...

Continued from page 1

Ministers Talasani Srinivas Yadav, Jagdish Reddy, S Niranjan Reddy, V Prashanth Reddy and Sabitha Reddy are its members. Seshadri, Commissioner and IG , Stamps and Registrations Department, would be the convener.

Although Dharani portal was built with an objective of bringing transparency to the system of maintaining land

records and eliminating scope for manipulation, several errors had crept into the system while uploading field level data, creating problems for farmers and land owners.

Although several modules were added to the portal subsequently to facilitate correction of errors, there are still issues related to ownership, extent of land that need to be carried out with due field verification which did not happen while uploading the data,

KTR: Celebrate entrepreneurs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Municipal Administration & Urban Development, It and Industries KT Rama Rao said that as a nation, we need to start respecting and celebrate our entrepreneurs, making it easy for them to create employment and wealth which in turn will spur growth.

He was responding to a tweet by Harsha Goenka, chairman of RPG enterprises on Thursday.

Harsha shared a video on how the IT Minister laid the red carpet and sent a private plane to get KiteX Group MD to invest Rs 2,400 crore in his state.

Thanking Harsha, KTR said that Telangana offers a red carpet welcome to investors with unique TS-iPASS policy.

It may be mentioned here that the startup ecosystem in Telangana has been ranked among top 30 in different categories globally in 2021, as per Global Startup Ecosystem Report.



Ajay Gandhi, 65, co-founder of Manthan Foundation, which is largely responsible for keeping alive the intellectual discussions and debates in Hyderabad.

Monsoon...

Continued from page 1

The inter-state disputes with neighbouring Andhra Pradesh over river water sharing are also expected to be discussed.

Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Thursday said his party is keen on taking up the issue of jobs, Dalit Bandhu scheme, agri issues like remunerative price, paddy procurement, the problem of drug abuse in the state and Krishna, Godavari river water issues. The CLP would meet tomorrow to finalise its strategy, he said. He favoured holding the session for at least 20 days.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹226
Without Skin	₹246
Broiler at Farm	₹139

EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	426
VIJAYAWADA	438
ISAKHAPATNAM	438
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.26

Nearly Rs 5K-cr for civic works

Continued from page 1

The Minister said that he had brought the matter to the notice of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and explained that 100 per cent sewage treatment would be required if the lakes in Hyderabad were to be improved or if the Musi River was to be cleaned. He said that the Chief Minister then directed the authorities to build STPs not only to meet the present requirements but also for the future. KTR said STPs would be constructed as per the Chief Minister's directives to meet future needs as well. He said they he had been studying the sewerage system in the city for the past two years with a company called Shah Consultants and had drawn up a master plan based on their report. It has been estimated that after 10 years, 1,950 MLD of wastewater would be generated in GHMC.

The decision to strengthen the sewerage network had been approved by the Cabinet. "It is a matter of great pleasure and we thank the Chief Minister KCR on behalf of the people of the city, the people's representatives and the Ministry itself," KTR said. He said it was good news

for the people of Hyderabad to take such a big decision and allocate funds to meet not only the present needs of Hyderabad, but also their future needs. He said the STPs would be constructed in 31 locations of the city. The construction companies would also be given management responsibilities for 15 years.

KTR said the STPs would be set up in the vicinity of lakes and nallas, thereby creating an opportunity to conserve lakes in the city. He said this was the first time the government had allocated such a large amount of funds to the water board. He said Hyderabad would be the only city in the country to provide 100 per cent sewerage treatment upon construction of the STPs.

KTR said that KCR had directed that drinking water problems should be rectified in the suburban areas within the ORR, for which Rs 1200 crore had been allocated additionally. This would solve the drinking water problem for about 20 lakh families in the suburbs as 2 lakh new fresh water connections would also be provided. He said the government's allocation of nearly Rs 5,000 crore to the city in one day was really good news. He said it was decided to complete the two

projects in the next two years and make them available to the public.

Earlier in the day, the state government sanctioned Rs 1,200 crore for supplying adequate drinking water to 33.92 lakh people in urban local bodies (ULBs) and gram panchayats within ORR and outside GHMC limits.

The Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board would construct additional service reservoirs with 137 MLD capacity and lay pipelines for 2,100 km, as per the orders passed by special chief secretary Arvind Kumar G.O.Rt.No.674.

As per HMWSSB, the total cost of the DPR proposals, arrived at by city-based consultant M/S. NCPCE Consulting Engineers Pvt. Ltd., is Rs.1,200 crores. The related proposals have been submitted to the Government.

The proposals were designed by the consultant to cater to the water supply requirements of prospective year 2036 for the projected population of 33.92 lakhs as per CPHEO (Central Public Health Environmental Engineering Organization) norms.

The DPR components comprises construction of storage

reservoirs for 137 ML capacity, laying of inlets, outlets and distribution network for 2,108 km length and providing house service connections to BPL families and other components of providing chlorination rooms, restoration of roads, statutory and other provisions etc.

As on date, the housing colonies situated beyond the Gramakanta extent of villages were not covered in the above project. Several residential welfare associations have approached the Government and requested to extend the water supply infrastructure to their colonies on par with the Mission Bhageerata programme to provide water supply connection to each and every house as per the policy of Government.

It may be mentioned here that HMWSSB has implemented a water supply project for 190 villages situated beyond GHMC and within ORR limits at a cost of Rs.756.56 crore under the Annuity Mode of Contract. The project has been successfully completed and commissioned. Under this project, 164 reservoirs of 70 ML capacity, 1,600 km length of pipeline network have been developed and house service connections provided.

Year after breaking records, Nalgonda ryots worried over paddy procurement

A SETHA CHARYULU
■ NALGONDA

With high paddy stocks in the country, the Center has imposed restrictions on the purchase of paddy through Food Corporation of India (FCI) from the states.

After the FCI has decided to purchase only 64 lakh metric tonnes of paddy from the state of Telangana, the farmers in the combined Nalgonda district, which was the largest producer of paddy this year, are likely to face difficulties in selling their produce.

The state government of Telangana is being compelled to impose restrictions on paddy cultivation in the upcoming Rabi season after the Food Corporation of India (FCI) tweaked its rice procurement policy for public distribution system (PDS), according to official sources in the agriculture department.



The major projects in the erstwhile Nalgonda district including Nagarjuna Sagar, Musi and others help cultivate paddy in more acres.

Nalgonda district was the largest paddy growing district in the state during the last Kharif and Rabi seasons. The procurement of paddy in the year 2020-21 stood at 3,07,712 metric tonnes in Kharif and 7,84,472.880 metric tonnes in

Rabi season.

Paddy is cultivated in about 6 lakh acres in the erstwhile Nalgonda district. Farmers are now in a dilemma as the Center has imposed restrictions on the purchase of paddy.

With the state government of Telangana being forced not to purchase more paddy from the next season, mediators will be in a fix to provide the minimum support price (MSP) to the farmers.

With no restrictions from the state government regarding the purchase of paddy by the millers, it is not possible for the farmers to give the MSP to the paddy for various reasons.

Millers are likely to make more profit by exporting par-boiled rice to abroad.

In addition, about 50 per cent of rice mills that cannot buy, sell or export rice are likely to close. While the combined Nalgonda district has a maximum of 220 rice mills, single Nalgonda district has 108 rice mills. Leaders of the Rice Millers' Association, however, said that the FCI decision would put pressure on them. "We will buy according to the capacity of rice mill."

Leaders of the Farmer Associations opine that farmers would lose the minimum support price due to the decision taken by the FCI. "If the farmer does not get investment, he has no option other than throwing the produced on the roads, similar to the tomato and lemon farmers, who did it previously." The current grain stocks in the state would be sufficient for the next two years. We will act as per the guidelines of the state government, said a civil supplies official.

24 gates of SRSP lifted after inflows from Maharashtra

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD



Heavy inflows from neighbouring Maharashtra into projects on the Godavari in north Telangana prompted the Irrigation Department to open 32 of the 42 gates at the Sriram Sagar Project (SRSP) in Nizamabad on Thursday morning. But, after the inflows receded, the officials closed eight crest gates in the afternoon.

With this 24 gates were still open and if the same situation continues for the next few days in the wake of heavy rain forecast by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), officials are considering opening more gates of the project.

The inflows were brimming after all the gates of Vishnu Puri Project were opened to a full capacity into Godavari to release water from Bhabli barrage.

With the inflows continuing to increase from Maharashtra, the officials are planning to release more cusecs of water by lifting more gates, said AEE Vamshi.

Since the SRSP was receiving 1,18,000 cusecs inflows from Maharashtra and adjoining catchment areas, officials are releasing 99,940 cusecs of water downstream, said divisional engineer Srinivas.

While in the morning, the canal received 1,56,200 cusecs inflows, which prompted the officials to release 1,49,760 cusecs through 32 crest gates, 7500 cusecs for production of electricity, 800 cusecs to Saraswati canal and 150 cusecs to Laxmi canal.

Lakshman Babu to be TRS Mulug president

PNS ■ MULUG

The TRS is likely to appoint Kakulamari Lakshman Babu of Yeturu Nagaram in Mulug as its Mulug district president as he is sailing with the TRS since 2014, worked for the electoral success of MP Azmeera Chandulal, several MLAs and TRS candidates contesting in local body elections. He is also apparently having the blessings of TRS working president KT Rama Rao, according to reports from political grapevine.



Having completed the mandal-level and TRS village level committees by Thursday, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is going to handpick district TRS presidents, it is said. Lakshman Babu, who is related to former CBI director Vijaya Rama Rao, who served as a Minister in the TDP government in undivided Andhra Pradesh, is the front runner for the post.

He applied for the Mulug District president post of the TRS recently. Media reports indicated that the Chief Minister will handpick the district presidents of the party.

Lakshman Babu was known for his charitable activities in the Agency area of



Minister flags off 12 mobile CVC in district

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Panchayati Raj Rural Development Minister Errabelli Dayakara Rao has flagged off 12 mobile Covid Vaccination Centres (CVC) at Hassanparti Primary Health Center on Thursday.

Hassanparthi legislator Aaruri Ramesh and district Collector Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanthu were also present along with the Minister.

Speaking on the occasion, Dayakar Rao congratulated the representatives of CARE India for providing 12 vehicles to enhance Covid care services in the district. The Minister told the officials of Medical and Health Department to expedite the vaccination procedure by using the mobile CVCs.

Deputy DMHO Dr Madan Mohan, Deputy DMHO Dr Yakub Pasha and others were also present on the occasion.

Uppal residents to put an end to littering with 'folded hands'

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

Exhibiting a lot of courtesy, Sivasai Nagar Colony Residents' Welfare Association representative Padma Reddy and Ram Das and residents of Meenakshi Nagar at Charlapalli in Uppal on Saturday with folded hands made people who discarded the garbage in an open ground in the colony to remove it.

Discarding of garbage in open places has become a big nuisance to the residents of the colony as the garbage is emitting unbearable stink. In addition, the food in the garbage has been attracting dogs and the problem reached menacing proportions to the detriment of the residents of the colonies in the area.

In spite of advising against depositing the garbage in the open ground many times and displaying a board at the site asking people not to discard garbage there, the residents of welfare associations of colonies took the measure.

In fact, the commuters on two-wheelers have been discarding the garbage in open grounds. The worst affected people of the discarding of garbage in open ground irresponsibly are residents of Meenakshi Nagar and Sivasai Nagar. Therefore, Sivasai Nagar colony residents' association representatives Padma Reddy and Meenakshi Nagar residents adopted a novel method of weaning away discarding of garbage there. With folded hands, they made the people who discard the garbage in the open ground to clear it.

They asked the people to handover the garbage to the garbage vehicle against discarding it at some place or the other. They said that every month second week is observed as Swachh Week in the colony clearing the garbage in the colony, representative of the federation of residents' welfare associations told The Pioneer.

At least some people would mend their ways with colony residents making the people who deposited the garbage in an open ground to clear the garbage themselves.

District Collector S Venkata Rao has assured tribal champion in Taekwondo, Korean martial art, V Gopal necessary financial support through corporate social responsibility of several companies in the district to enable him to take part in a series of international championships to be held in Iran in October.

Gopal was the recipient of the two gold medals in the National Martial Arts Festival held in Haryana in 2018. Besides, he won the first prize in the zonal level championship held in Hyderabad. He won many medals at the inter-university and inter-collegiate championships.

Collector assures support to tribal Teakwondo champion

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

He received training in the sport from the coach Gajendra who arranged Rs 50,000 to enable him to meet visa expenses.

Gopal approached Peddabai Thanda sarpanch Tirupatayya for a financial support of Rs 1.60 lakh to enable him to take part in the international championships. But, so far no help came his way. However, the district Collector assured him necessary support and wished him to excel in the competitions and bring good name to the district.

Venkata Rao even arranged three years sponsorship for him to receive training in Peace Teakwondo Academy in Delhi. Meanwhile, Gopal left for Delhi to apply for visa.

ASSEMBLY SESSION

Cong to demand Govt to extend Dalit Bandhu to all Dalit families

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Congress is going to demand the state government to extend the Dalit Bandhu scheme to all Dalit families across the state in the Assembly session slated to be held from Friday.

The Congress would also raise the issues related to unemployment, Podu lands and attacks on TPCC chief A Revanth Reddy's residence by the TRS activists in the Assembly monsoon session, but the main objective of the Congress is Dalit Bandhu. CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that the attacks on the residences of opposition leaders by the TRS leaders is a venomous culture. He lamented that these attacks never took place during the Congress rule and said that they will raise the issue seriously in the Assembly session.



Though not to the extent of River Ganges, pollution is likely to cause disaster to River Godavari. Even though River Godavari is considered a sacred river after Ganges, the river has been polluted in Ramagundam. Residents of Ramagundam are concerned over the river being polluted. Sources said that plastic waste and industrial waste find way to the river.



29 get jobs in NCWA on compassionate grounds

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

In all, 29 dependents of NCWA employees of the SCCL were given appointment orders at the RG-1 GM's office here on Saturday as their parents opted out of service seeking jobs to their wards on compassionate grounds, taking the total number of compassionate appointments in the mining area to 860 so far. Of them, 22 are women.

RG-1 mining area General Manager K Narayana handed over the appointment orders to the dependents. He asked the appointees to improve their work skills in tune with the current situation and work for the development of the



Deepak appealed to the people in all villages to emulate the

SCCL. Terming getting a job in the SCCL under the prevailing situation is a boon, he said adding that the future of the company is in the hands of the young blood.

Out of the 29 compassionate appointments, parents of 25 dependents rendered themselves medically invalid to help the dependents get the job, while four others died in the course of employment. All the dependents were posted in RG-1 mining area, the GM said claiming that the appointments were made in the shortest possible time.

The appointments were made very fast on account of the initiative of the SCCL chairman-cum-managing director N Sridhar.

Pensioners take out rally, demand to resolve issues

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Telangana state government pensioners on Thursday took out a rally in the city to highlight their problems and submitted memoranda to additional collector Madhusudhan Rao, SC Corporation deputy director Satyanarayana highlighting their demands.

The pensioners urged the authorities to take their problems to the notice of the government for resolution.

Earlier, they proceeded in a rally from Ambekar Centre in the city and reached Collectorate via Dharna Chowk where they demonstrated in support of their demands.

Addressing the participants of the dharna, Khammam Chaitanya Vedika leader Talluri Venu has expressed concern over the government harassing the pensioners for not fixing their pension and not applying financial benefits



to be accrued to them in 2020.

Co-convenor of the Vedika R Shyam has noted that the government forgot to implement the tradition of disbursing pension in the first week of every month. The government has been harassing pensioners for several months by keeping payment of pension in pending for the past several months.

The leaders said that the government has revised the wages of the government employees, but ignored to protect the interests of pensioners. Government pensioners

association Kalyanam Krishnaiah said that the government suspended clearing Covid bills of pensioners and suspended payment of PRC arrears to pensioners.

If the state government did not mend its ways, pensioners across the country take out protest rallies, launch united struggles, pensioners' association state leader Chelli Babu Rao, Rangaiah, Yalamudi Ravinder, Sudarsan, Venkata Ramana, Rambabu, Venkateswarlu and others took part.

Harish Rao distributes Rs 3.14 crore to SHGs

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Finance Minister T Harish Rao on Thursday assured that the government would take up the construction of 5,000 double bedroom houses in Huzurabad Assembly constituency in the coming days.

"People who have their own house sites will get funds to construct their houses," he said.

Pointing out that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had sanctioned 4,000 houses to the constituency

five years ago, the Minister said BJP leader Eatala Rajender, however, failed to complete even a single house while other Ministers and Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy completed the houses sanctioned in their respective constituencies.

"The government would not only sanction 5,000 houses but we will also ensure their construction by bringing to the notice of the Chief Minister the injustice meted out to the people of Huzurabad, he said.

Village fetches revenue through dry waste, manure from wet garbage

MALLEPALLI GOVERDHAN
■ NAGARKURNOOL

On account of the initiative of the Chandupatla village sarpanch Ramesh Kumar and the panchayat secretary Rajani, the village is earning additional revenue by selling the wet garbage, generated in the village, to those who recycle the wet garbage to convert it into organic manure.

The panchayat is segregating the garbage, which was collected from all the houses by segregating them into wet and dry waste to recycle the wet waste. It may be recalled that Chief

Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao helped panchayats build segregation sheds in garbage yards. He provided tractors and cycle rickshaw to collect garbage daily from houses. The panchayat spent Rs 2.51 lakh to build the segregation shed.

When The Pioneer contacted Ramesh Kumar, he said that the panchayat constituted village-level committees to make good use of the facilities provided by the government. He coordinated with the panchayat secretary and implementing works there with the approval of grama sabhas.

The village supplied green



and blue garbage bins to each house for collection of garbage. The grama sabha decided to levy fines on anyone found to

be discarding outside instead of depositing them in the bins. It was communicated to the people of the village. In the beginning, the village imposed fines on the people discarding garbage outside due to their ignorance.

Tractors and cycle rickshaws were deployed for collection of garbage. Six multi-level sanitation workers were employed in the village. The garbage will be sent to the segregation shed. The plastic garbage and other garbage will be sold to those who recycle it. Initially, there was no great revenue, but the village became free of plastic,

he said.

The wet garbage is used to make organic manure and used it to grow saplings planted as part of the Haritha Haram programme, eliminating the need to procure fertiliser from outside. He said that the village would dispose of the surplus manure and earn sufficient revenue.

This stands as a testimony of the team work by the sarpanch and panchayat secretary. The village presents a hygienic look everywhere. The village appears as a model village with good avenue plantation on either side of the road.

INDIA CORNER Sufi Sajjadanashin Council chief condemns attack on Pak Hindu family

All India Sufi Sajjadanashin Council chairman Syed Nasruddin Chishty Thursday condemned an incident in Pakistan in which a Hindu family was allegedly held hostage and tortured for fetching drinking water from a mosque. Chishty said such acts are unpardonable and against the very essence of Islam. "The attack on a Hindu family in Pakistan is highly condemnable and unpardonable. Pakistan calls itself an Islamic country but such cowardly actions of violence in the name of religion is against the very essence of Islam and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad," Chishty said in a statement on Thursday. He is also the successor of the present spiritual head of Ajmer Dargah. Chishty's reaction came days after the Hindu family of poor farmers were allegedly held hostage and tortured for fetching drinking water from a mosque in the Punjab province of Pakistan, according to reports on Monday. Alam Ram Bheel, a resident of Punjab's Rahimyar Khan city, was picking raw cotton along with his other family members, including his wife, in a field. Bheel said when the family went outside a nearby mosque to fetch drinking water from a tap, some local landlords beat them up. The Dawn newspaper had reported.



NCW asks Delhi Police to probe restaurant denying entry to saree-clad woman

The National Commission for Women on Thursday asked the Delhi Police commissioner to probe the incident wherein a woman was allegedly denied entry in a city restaurant for wearing a saree, and take necessary action in the matter. The National Commission for Women (NCW), in a statement, said it has also written to the marketing and public relations director of the restaurant to appear before the Commission on September 28 along with supporting documents and explanation. It said it came across a social media post wherein the restaurant allegedly denied entry to the woman because she was wearing saree. "Reportedly, the restaurant's dress code policy for guests allows only smart casuals and according to the eatery, saree does not fall under smart casuals. 'Saree is a part of Indian culture and women in India majorly wear saree, therefore denying any woman entry to a restaurant on the basis of her attire is a violation of her right to live with dignity,' the statement said. 'The Commission condemns the arbitrary and bizarre behaviour of the restaurant staff and its policies,'" it added.



SC to recall its order on extending limitation period for filing court cases due to Covid

Taking note of the improved pandemic situation, the Supreme Court Thursday observed that it will recall its April 27 order by which it had extended the operation of an earlier direction under which the limitation period for filing court cases has ceased to run statutorily against litigants since March 15, 2020, due to Covid. In the wake of the onset of the second COVID wave, the court had on April 27, 2021 relaxed the statutory period for filing petitions, including the election petitions. The bench, also comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and Surya Kant, said that the suo motu extension of limitation period will be withdrawn on October one and after that, the usual limitation period of 90 days for filing cases in courts will come into effect once again. "We will pass orders," the bench said while reserving the order. The bench termed as "pessimistic" the submission that the limitation period be extended till the year-end as there was an apprehension of a third COVID wave in the country. Attorney General K K Venugopal said that the Covid situation has improved and presently there was no containment zone in the country and hence the order relaxing the limitation period can be recalled.



Governors in non-BJP states 'trampling democracy': Sena

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Shiv Sena on Thursday accused the governors in non-BJP-ruled states, including Maharashtra, of acting like rogue elephants and trampling under their feet democratic constitution, laws and political culture.

Without taking the name of Maharashtra governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, the party, in an editorial in its mouthpiece 'Saamana' also alleged that the Centre was using governors to destabilise those states that are being ruled by non-BJP parties.

The Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government shares an uneasy relationship with governor Koshyari. Among other issues, Koshyari has been under fire from the state government over the delay in approving the appointment of 12 MLAs from his quota.

"The governors in non-BJP-ruled states are like rogue elephants and their mahouts (handlers) are sitting in New Delhi. Such elephants trample democratic processes, laws, political culture under their feet and set new precedence," the Sena said.

How appropriate is it that the



governors are using all their power to destabilise the state government because it is formed by non-BJP parties, the party asked. Such efforts are affecting the unity of the country. It is like playing with fire. But one should remember that in doing so, one's own hands may get burnt. The use of governor's post for such work is demolishing the constitutional structure, it added.

"If some people think that Indian democracy will sustain and flourish by constructing a new parliament complex in the national capital, then they should also pay attention to the screams

of the federal governments that have been trampled. The states are not allowed to function properly and the agents of the party in power are given free hand to create chaos in the states," the Sena alleged.

"Maharashtra governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari has expressed his concerns over the safety of women and the law and order situation in the state. But why such concern is not expressed by the governors of Uttar Pradesh or Madhya Pradesh. The BJP women MLAs in Maharashtra have raised the same issue. But how come the BJP women legis-

lators from other states are not expressing similar concerns for MP and UP?" it asked.

Why they are creating so much noise over the issue in Maharashtra? Because the BJP is not in power here, while it rules those in two other states. The suspicious death of a seer or attacks on women in UP and MP seems to be purposefully ignored, the Sena said.

The Uddhav Thackeray-led party also targeted the Union government over providing police protection to those BJP leaders who indulge in "mud-slinging" against the non-BJP-ruled states. It was apparently referring to former MP from Mumbai Kirit Somaiya, who was recently given Z category security.

"Union Home Minister Amit Shah has called for a meeting of chief ministers in various states to discuss ways to tackle growing Naxal activities. However, hundreds of CRPF jawans are deployed in protecting some people who indulge in mud-slinging against some state governments. It is necessary to use such forces (CRPF) against Naxals rather than wasting them on protecting some persons," the Sena said.

Govt committed to ensuring top quality, affordable healthcare: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said it is the government's commitment to ensure top quality and affordable healthcare for citizens.

His comments came as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, also known as Ayushman Bharat scheme, completed three years.

"The importance of healthcare has been even more clearly understood in the year gone by. It is our commitment to ensure top quality and affordable healthcare for our citizens. Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY is key to realising this vision," he said.

The scheme provides health insurance of up to Rs 5 lakh to the poor households.

Modi will also be launching nationwide rollout of Pradhan Mantri Digital Health Mission on Monday.

Under this, a unique digital health ID will be provided to people which will contain all their health records, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said.

Moily says Prashant Kishor's entry process into Cong 'on'

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Former Union Minister Veerappa Moily on Thursday welcomed the possible entry of election strategist Prashant Kishor into the Congress saying that he was okay even if he takes an important position.

"Prashant Kishor, an election strategist with 99 per cent success rate, has volunteered himself to cooperate with us. The process (of Kishor's entry) is on," Moily told reporters on the sidelines of an event here.

He dubbed the entry of Kishor and other internal reforms in the party as the resurgence of the Congress.

To a question whether he will be okay if he takes up a major role in the party, Moily said, "I am perfectly alright. I am constantly in touch with him."

Regarding the sudden change of guard in Punjab, Moily said the party handled the situation very well.

He also hailed Captain Amarinder Singh, who stepped down as Chief Minister of Punjab paving way for Charanjit Singh Channi to take the reins of the state.

Congress hopes Amarinder takes back comments

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Thursday termed former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh's outburst against Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra as one out of anger and hoped he would reconsider his words as they do not suit his stature. The party also refused to comment on whether Singh would leave the party after his "unceremonious" exit as the chief minister of Punjab, and said "if someone wants to leave, we have no comment to offer." Singh had on Wednesday called Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra "inexperienced" and also threatened to pit a strong candidate against Punjab party unit chief Navjot Singh Sidhu in the coming assembly polls. Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate said Amarinder Singh is an elder and may have stated things out of anger. "He is our elder and the elderly often get angry and say a lot of things. We respect his anger, age and experience," she said.

Is there space for 'humiliation', asks Amarinder

CHANDIGARH, Congress veteran Amarinder Singh on Thursday referred to his "humiliation" by the party and asked if he is treated like this, what would be the fate of common workers. Amarinder Singh was reacting to remarks by Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate, who said in Delhi on Thursday that there was no room for anger in the party. Shrinate said this referring to Amarinder Singh's remarks against Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, whom he had called "inexperienced" on Wednesday, days after he resigned as the Punjab CM following a power tussle with state party chief Navjot Singh Sidhu. Reacting to the spokesperson's comment, the former CM said, "Yes, there's no space for anger in politics. But is there space for humiliation & insult in a grand old party like @INCIndia?" "If a senior party leader like me can be treated like this, I wonder what the workers must go through!", he said.

Centre to convene a meeting of church heads: MP

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A day after Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan rejected the opposition suggestion for calling an all-party meeting to discuss the controversial 'narcotic jihad' remark by a Catholic bishop, Rajya Sabha MP Suresh Gopi on Thursday said the Centre would soon convene a meeting of church

heads in the state to discuss their concerns. The actor-turned-politician said such a meeting was planned much earlier but it would be expedited in the current situation in the state.

Reiterating his support to Pala Bishop Joseph Kallarangatt, whose 'narcotic and love jihad' remarks had triggered a widespread controversy in the south-

ern state, Gopi said the bishop had not spoken ill of any community.

"The Centre will surely give a chance to the affected community (in the issue) to appraise their concerns. A two-day long programme, comprising meetings of church heads and seminars, was decided to be conducted in 2019 itself," he told reporters

here. When pointed out to the Chief Minister's statement that there was no factual basis for the propaganda regarding 'narcotic jihad', the Rajya Sabha member said no former DGPs, who had expressed concerns about the presence of extremist forces in the state, had so far rejected the matter raised by the Catholic priest.

RS bypoll: Maha Cong leaders meet Fadnavis

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole and state Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat met Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Devendra Fadnavis on Thursday to urge the opposition BJP to withdraw its candidate and ensure the Congress nominee gets elected unopposed in the next

month's bypoll to a Rajya Sabha seat from the state.

The by-election was necessitated due to the death of sitting Congress MP Rajiv Satav in May this year.

The Congress, which shares power with the Shiv Sena and NCP in Maharashtra, has fielded Rajni Patil, while the BJP has nominated Sanjay Upadhyay for the

bypoll, to be held on October 4. Thorat and Patole met Fadnavis to persuade the BJP to withdraw its candidate and facilitate unopposed win of the Congress candidate," a Congress source said.

Scrutiny of papers will be done on Thursday and the last date of withdrawal is September 27. Voting, if necessary, will be on

October 4 and counting of votes will be done the same day.

The 288-member Maharashtra Assembly forms the electoral college for the poll.

The BJP has the highest 106 MLAs in the House, followed by Shiv Sena (56), NCP (53), Congress (43), Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (3), and the remaining seats are held by others.

BJP back to communal politics: BSP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

BSP president Mayawati on Thursday alleged the BJP has returned to its narrow communal agenda ahead of the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections with its tall claims on development getting exposed. "The BJP has returned to its narrow agenda before the upcoming UP assembly elections with its tall claims on development being proved to be hollow," Mayawati said in a tweet in Hindi.

"Now the party has returned to playing with religious sentiments and Hindu-Muslim division, etc., but people will not be deceived again, which is clear from their mood," she said.

SP workers 'purify' places visited by UP CM Adityanath in Sambhal

PNS ■ SAMBHAL (UP)

Samajwadi Party youth workers undertook a "purification" exercise of the places visited by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Sambhal district by sprinkling 'Gangajal'.

A video of the purification exercise on Wednesday has gone viral.

A case was lodged against Samajwadi Party Yuvjan Sabha state president Bhavesh Yadav and 8-10 others, Superintendent of Police Chakresh Misra said on Thursday. Yadav has been arrested, he added.

The chief minister had inaugurated and laid foundations of projects worth Rs 275 crore and addressed a public meeting at



Kaila Devi in Sambhal district on Tuesday.

A day later, Yadav and SP Yuvjan Sabha workers undertook the 'shuddhikaran' (purification) exercise of the venue of the chief minister's public meeting and helpaid by sprinkling waters from the Ganga river.

Talking to the media during the exercise, Yadav claimed he conducted the purification drive as Adityanath has "insulted" Maa Kaila Devi by not visiting the temple when he was here.

A resident of Sambhal filed a complaint at the Bahjoi police state alleging that Yadav's action has upset followers of Adityanath who is also a religious leader.

The case was registered under IPC sections 153A (promoting disharmony, enmity or feelings of hatred), 295A (deliberate and malicious intention of outraging religious feelings) and 505 (intent to incite, or which is likely to incite, any class or community of persons to commit any offence against any other class or community).

Jungle raj prevailing in UP, alleges Dalit leader

PNS ■ ALIGARH

Azad Samaj Party leader Chandrashekhar Azad on Thursday said 'jungle raj' is prevailing in Uttar Pradesh and women are not safe, days after the body of an eight-year-old Dalit girl was found in a village here.

Azad was in Aligarh to meet the family members of the school girl whose body was recovered from a field near Kishanghar village on Monday, and said the incident is a "shocking pointer to the breakdown of law and order in the state".

"As far as security of women

is concerned, jungle raj prevails in Uttar Pradesh," he told reporters while claiming that similar incidents took place recently in a different part of Aligarh and Bijnor which was a cause of "serious concern".

According to police, the girl had left for school at around 8 am on Monday morning. Shortly before noon her school bag was spotted by some passers-by who raised an alarm.

When it was found that the girl had not reached school, her family started searching for her and found her body in the field.



ASI recovers over 1,000 plastic bottles at Daulatabad fort trench

PNS ■ AURANGABAD

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has recovered more than 1,000 plastic bottles from the trench at Daulatabad (Devigiri) fort in Maharashtra's Aurangabad, an official said on Thursday.

The fort, located nearly 12 km away from Aurangabad city, is famous for the man-made trench surrounding it, which had made it impregnable to invaders.

Tourists leave behind plastic bottles in the premises of the fort and due to wind and flow of water, these bottles come down to the trench, littering the water, the official said.

"Empty bottles come down with the wind and flowing water, due to the slope on the fort. We

fished out nearly 1,500 bottles from the trench recently, making it plastic free," conservation assistant of the fort Sanjay Rohankar told PTI.

The ASI is now trying out a new measure to prevent tourists from leaving behind plastic bottles at the fort, he said.

"We are placing stickers on plastic bottles and taking a deposit of Rs 20 per bottle from visitors. Tourists get the deposit back when they show their bottle while exiting the premises," the official said.

At least 17,200 tourists have paid the deposit since the measure was implemented in January, he said, adding that the move will help reduce littering inside the premises.

Defence ministry promulgates framework in utilisation of all types of simulators

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The defence ministry on Thursday said it promulgated existing norms to ensure synergy in utilisation of all types of simulators by the armed forces and it will also entail maintenance of the equipment by Indian companies.

It said a detailed "action plan" with assigned responsibilities to all the constituents of the ministry and industrial associations will be followed to revitalise the exploitation of simulators by the armed forces with an aim of achieving a cost effective, efficient and smart training process.

The ministry said the framework for "increased utilisation" of simulators by the three Services and the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) lays emphasis on indigenous design and development as well as outsourcing of operation and maintenance of the simulators to Indian companies.

The three services use a range of simulators to train its personnel to operate various military systems and platforms



including fighter jets, transport aircraft and helicopters.

"Avenues of application of simulation technology will be constantly explored to achieve a high-level of operational preparedness while reducing expenditure on training and preserving the life of equipment," the ministry said in a statement.

It said the policy will be applicable to all types of existing simulators as well as those

be procured in the future by the armed forces.

"The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has promulgated the framework for enhanced and synergised utilisation of simulators by the three Services and the Indian Coast Guard," the statement said.

"The overarching vision is to transform to simulation-based training across all military domains for combatants, leaders, maintainers, administrators, life science experts, procurement and financial agencies and thus achieve cost effective, efficient, safe, fast-paced and smart training," it said.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Thursday agreed to hear a plea by Internet giant Google protesting against alleged leak of information to media relating to an ongoing investigation by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) into Google's Android smartphone agreements.

The petition was mentioned before a bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh for an urgent listing and the court allowed it for hearing on Friday.

Google in a statement said that on September 18, 2021, a confidential interim fact-finding report submitted by the Director General's office to the CCI relating to an ongoing investigation into Google's Android smartphone agreements, was leaked to the media.

It said Google has not yet received or reviewed this confidential report.

The company said it has filed the petition in the court seeking redress in this matter, specifically protesting against the breach of confidence which impairs Google's ability to defend itself and harms it and its partners.

A Google spokesperson said, "We are deeply concerned that the Director General's report, which contains our confidential information in an ongoing case, was leaked to the media while in

the CCI's custody. Protecting confidential information is fundamental to any governmental investigation, and we are pursuing our legal right to seek redress and prevent any further unlawful disclosures.

"We cooperated fully and maintained confidentiality throughout the investigative process, and we hope and expect the same level of confidentiality from the institutions we engage with."

DG's findings do not reflect the final decision of the CCI and the submission of the investiga-



tion report is an interim procedural step, it said, adding that Google has not yet had the opportunity to review them, much less submit its defence of any allegations.

According to reports, the CCI probe has found Google allegedly abusing its dominant position with respect to mobile operating system Android.

On this, Google has said that Android has led to more competition and innovation.

The reports said it has been found that Google indulged in unfair business practices in relation to Android.



Breathing death

WHO's revised air quality levels are in tune with the times. India must implement these quickly

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has revised air quality levels for six pollutants, including the particulate matter (PM). Coming after 2005, they cut down the existing acceptable threshold limits by half, prodding countries like India to improve their air quality without losing time. Pollution in Indian cities is far above even the existing limits at present. The new rules render the situation worse. Of particular interest are the PM guidelines. The average PM 2.5 (respirable pollution particles) concentration cannot be higher than five micrograms per cubic metre. However, the existing level is 10. For PM10, the threshold is brought down from 20 to 15. The world organisation said the revision was necessary as pollution is growing in developing countries engaged in large-scale urbanisation and economic development. The guidelines are welcome and need to be implemented. Recent studies show air pollution is reducing life expectancy in Indian cities by six to 10 years. It is time for India to implement big-ticket anti-pollution reforms. A national pollution survey is called for, to assess the meteorological and geographical changes impacting pollution levels. In cities situated in valleys, emissions tend to stay longer, adding to pollution problems. In cities like Delhi with flat terrains, the meteorology impacts in dispersing air pollution. Studies of air movement over urban areas help authorities know about pollution patterns necessary for anti-pollution planning. In the time since 2005, Delhi, for example, grew from being a city to the

National Capital Region of Delhi, covering an area of over 55,000 square km.

Townships, satellite centres and industrial zones have come up with IT and industrial clusters. The population and number of vehicles have grown several times. Adding to the city's pollution is the new element of trans-boundary pollution with emissions originating outside the city by way of traffic from Gurgaon and Noida. Industries in the north-east and northwest sectors contribute to the problem. The expansion of Delhi has increased demand for energy from domestic, industrial and transport sectors. Air pollution emissions naturally increased along with those of sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons. Over one-third of Delhi suffers from respiratory problems. The last time was 1998 when Delhi implemented low-emission reforms. The public transport vehicles switched to CNG and that alone made a difference. Hundreds of heavy industries were either shut down or relocated, their energy systems upgraded. India's national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS), revised last in 2009, are up for another revision in 2022. The study being conducted for updating the standards should take into account the latest WHO thresholds. Common sense measures are also called for. Vote bank politics cannot encourage stubble burning by farmers in Punjab and western Uttar Pradesh. Similarly, motorists should be made to realise that apart from exhaust fumes, brake dust also causes pollution.

PICTALK



Clouds hover over the Old City area in Delhi

PTI

Marching on

The SC insists that females be given the chance in Nov itself to take the NDA entrance exam

The National Defence Academy (NDA), the cradle for grooming boys to become officers in the three Services since 1954, will for the first time welcome women cadets. The Supreme Court has prodded the Government to allow female candidates to appear for the NDA exam in November this year. The Government had told the apex court that women can take the examination in May next year. However, the



court, saying women's hopes cannot be belied, ordered that they be allowed to take the test in November. Determined to have gender parity, the only tri-Services training institute in the world, the NDA, was engaged in creating suitable infrastructure for women cadets since early this year. While there is no issue with academic curriculum, the authorities are taking meticulous care in finalising the outdoor training and physical fitness parameters for the females. Physical training includes basic combat drills besides endurance, so far customised for only male cadets. Then there is the issue of fixing standards for

physical and medical criteria for females. The male candidates who clear the written exam and interview have to pass the medical test to become eligible for joining the NDA. The test also comprises specified weight and height.

Aiming to induct women cadets in a short time, the NDA is working overtime to fix these standards regarding outdoor training and medical exam. The effort is to ensure that training standards remain top class while formulating parameters for them. The Government had submitted in the apex court that any dilution of physical training and service subjects of firing, endurance, field craft and living off the land for women cadets would impact the battle worthiness of the armed forces. The three Services chiefs had visited the NDA in August to review the infra creation progress. With changing times, female officers are serving with distinction in various wings of the IAF, Navy and Army. In fact, at least four women IAF officers are currently undergoing the final stage of their fighter jet flying training. Similarly, women officers are flying helicopters and transport planes. The Navy has also allowed women to serve on warships when they are seaward-bound. It means they will sail like their male colleagues for months together. Of course, the Navy has created suitable living bunks and other related infrastructure on the warships.

US probing Pak's role in Afghanistan

Ever since it became a sovereign nation, Pakistan has been ostensibly 'helping' the US to actually further its own interests in the region



JL KOUL **JALALI**

The US is keenly looking into the role Pakistan played in Afghanistan after its war against Taliban and terrorism following the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon on September 11, 2001. This was revealed by US Secretary of State Tony Blinken to angry US lawmakers who were protesting against Pakistan's "duplicious" role in Afghanistan. Among others, Congressman Bill Keating, Chair, House Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee, said that apart from the ISI's strong ties with the Haqqani network, Pakistan created the Taliban and helped it regroup in 2010. He bemoaned that the Pakistan PM celebrated the Taliban's takeover of Kabul.

Pakistan started following a duplicious policy towards the US soon after it came into existence in August 1947. In 1952, when the West was engaged in its efforts to contain Communism, Pakistan opted for the American bloc (and arms) purportedly to fight the expansion of Communism but actually to strengthen its muscle against India. Some years later, then Pakistan President Gen Ayub Khan said that the arms were "not to be kept wrapped". These were actually used against India in the 1965 and 1971 wars even though given only to fight the expansion of Communism, if the need arose.

The erstwhile Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 had added to Pakistan's strategic importance. It exploited the development dexterously to continue its special relationship with the US despite clear signs of duplicity and formal breakup of the Soviet Union in 1993. The US had turned Pakistan into a ground for Mujahideen fighting against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and a conduit for arms and funds to equip them with weaponry. Pakistan diverted a part of these arms to perpetrate terror in Kashmir and to train, equip and indoctrinate Pashtun students from Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The radicalisation programme started under then Pakistan President Gen Zia-ul-Haq and was meant to address the ethnic divide because of which Pakistan had failed to



have full sway in Afghanistan. Apart from fomenting terror in Kashmir, Pakistan's main aim was to create Taliban Islamic Movement to acquire leverage in Afghanistan and to establish a commanding position, especially vis-a-vis India. But despite clear indications, the US appeared to connive with Pakistan's ulterior motives to foster its own geopolitical and other interests.

The Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989 and the US too faded from the scene after ensuring that Pakistan had established its influence on the Mujahideen. After Soviet withdrawal, a civil war ensued in Afghanistan. Interspersed by its army, Pakistan introduced the Taliban militia in this civil war in November 1994. After wreaking havoc on hapless Afghans, the militia gained power in September 1996. With Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden already present there and declaring jihad against the West, Afghanistan turned into a bastion of terrorism. Pakistan, with calculated use of terrorism as a tool of its State policy, had already become the epicentre of terrorism. India continued to caution the world, both in the

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APART FROM FOMENTING TERROR IN KASHMIR, PAKISTAN'S MAIN AIM WAS TO CREATE THE TALIBAN ISLAMIC MOVEMENT TO ACQUIRE LEVERAGE IN AFGHANISTAN AND TO ESTABLISH A COMMANDING POSITION, ESPECIALLY VIS-A-VIS INDIA

UN and outside, about these dangers to world peace. In an article on October 2, 1999, titled "International Drive To Fight Terrorism", the writer criticised the narrow American approach towards the Pak-Taliban nexus but the US did not heed the warning. Obviously, the ground had been laid for the September 11, 2001, terror attacks.

Following the horrifying attacks, the US waged a war against the Taliban. The public opinion in Pakistan was that its Government shouldn't join this effort. When criticised for aligning with the West, then Pakistan President Gen Pervez Musharraf reportedly stated that had he not done so, America might have taken action against Pakistan, too. He was aware that their duplicity had begun to be noticed. The Taliban was soon removed from power. But, years later, Pakistan resumed helping the Taliban regroup. It turned into a haven for terror attacks on Afghanistan. Pakistan's duplicious attitude prompted former US President Donald Trump to say in 2019: "The US has foolishly given Pakistan more than \$33 bn in aid over the last 15 years and they have given us

nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools."

Obviously, now the inevitable has happened. Despite a positive sign or two, the Taliban's resurgence poses a serious threat to peace. Radicalisation has been the main factor behind the Taliban's rise. The challenge can be met by promotion of liberal Islam and Sufism. Though this section is a minuscule minority, Sufism has an eternal appeal and, with the passage of time and through encouragement, it can turn into a potential challenge to radicalism and extremism. As mentioned by this writer on October 8, 2016, in the article, "Islamic Radicalism and Sufi Islam", Russia, like India, too was hit hard by Jihad terrorism in Chechnya. But after dealing with the situation strongly, it encouraged liberal and Sufi Islam to root out the remnants of Jihad terrorism. If Russia could do it, the rest of the world can also do it. For survival and the betterment of mankind, the world powers must desist from turning terrorism into a geopolitical issue.

(The writer is a journalist, former IIS officer and producer. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ARMY 'BIRD' GOES DOWN

Sir — The fatal crash of a *Cheetah* helicopter has highlighted the urgency to focus on re-examining the safety of these helicopters, which are being operated by the Indian armed forces. These choppers need to be grounded immediately till a comprehensive safety audit is completed about airworthiness. Two young pilots from Army Aviation corps, Major Rohit Kumar (35) and Major Anuj Rajput (28) who lost their lives in this crash, were on training sorties and were extremely passionate about joining the armed forces and serving the nation.

The Hindustan Aeronautical Ltd (HAL) should go into an in-depth investigation to see if there is any design flaw in the *Cheetah* helicopter and take corrective measures. If this helicopter had crashed in a civilian area, casualties could have been way more. Therefore, any fault or technical glitch must be investigated at the earliest to avoid any such future crashes. It would be unjust to neglect the safety of those who protect us at all times. Major Kumar and Major Rajput were brave officers who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. Tragically, they leave behind their grieving parents. The nation will always remain indebted to them. Our hearts go out to the family members of these young pilots.

Ramesh Jethwani | Bengaluru

NOT JUST ANOTHER SHEET OF CLOTH

Sir — Who believes that saree is not a smart outfit? A restaurant in the Capital seems to have a perverted view and pointed out that saree does not qualify as a smart dress and it is a lopsided view. In the fashion world, saree has assumed a prominent place with the womenfolk preferring the six-yard wonder as the best dress for all seasons. It is worth mentioning here that the women in Pakistan prefer sarees, too. By draping the saree around your body with a proper matching blouse, you get the feeling of security and the posh look.

The symbolism of saree goes a long way in developing the personality of a

'Narcotics jihad' busted



Now that Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has exposed the falsehood of the claim of Pala Bishop Mar Joseph Kallarangatt that there is the phenomenon of 'narcotics jihad' in the State, the Bishop should show the basic decency to admit to having made a mistake and withdraw his remark. The remark made by the Bishop of Syro-Malabar Church with an intent to malign a particular community was unworthy of a spiritual leader. It led us to have a down on him. The false narrative that Christian girls

are befriended and lured by Muslim men into marriage in order to rope them into religious wars should end here and now.

Women, irrespective of their religions, cannot be denied autonomy in their lives. They are entirely free to choose their partners; they don't need a Bishop's nod. Putting religion above humanity should be anathema to educated people in its true sense. The Vatican should take a serious note of the utterances of the likes of Pala Bishop to drive a wedge between religious communities and discipline them to watch their language and behave properly and responsibly in a multi-religious society in which people of different faiths live cheek by jowl. The laity or congregation must also raise their voice against Bishops who by word or deed do harm or hurt a sense of wider secular community and neighbourliness they all cherish and share.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

woman in the office as a professional. It is a wrap worth wearing with all glamour and style. There is nothing like a saree to make you look most elegant all the time. Saree not only has cultural significance in India but, over the years, has also been seen a touch of modern fashion. In recent times, actors like Vidya Balan are diehard saree lovers and their success on the big screen is counted based on the saree culture. The present generation go for pattu and chiffon of different colours and designs. Thus, by far, the saree is the most flexible garment available in the fashion world.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

KOHLI LEFT ON A HIGH NOTE

Sir — Even if the team lifts the upcoming T20 World Cup at the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the crown of success will most probably be laid at the door of MS Dhoni. Ironically, Kohli had a stupendous success rate as captain in the shortest format of the game. He has led India to victory in the last five T20 series

though not a World Cup trophy as yet. At the same time, the presence of Dhoni at the T20 world cup can be a blessing in disguise for Kohli who can solely concentrate on batting, knowing well that the calming presence of Dhoni is more than enough for the team's prospects.

Kohli's record as the ODI captain is mixed, so is Test skipper's. But there is no denying that he has provided a new dimension to India's test match-winning ability abroad. The recent win in the truncated series against England is an example. Most international players enjoy captaining their sides in white ball cricket. Kohli is one captain who seems to relish guiding his men in the traditional form of cricket — the Tests. Therefore, it looks just a matter of time before the star batsman relinquishes the captain's responsibilities in one-day internationals, too.

Ganapathi Bhat | Nagpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

The need of the hour is to initiate actions that return the economy to a high-growth track and create gainful jobs by 2030.



Vice-President
— M Venkaiah Naidu

I express gratitude for the warm welcome Canada has shown Tibetan refugees since the time your (Justin Trudeau) late father was the Prime Minister.

Tibetan spiritual leader
— Dalai Lama

If the youth, in any way, can create or propagate an inclusive space by working with the deaf community, please do.



Actor
— Ranveer Singh

Started off my time with a wonderful afternoon with @abhinav_bindra Sir and his family. Was able to introduce my medal to its elder sibling from Beijing.

Olympics gold medalist
— Neeraj Chopra

I personally believe that *Ramayana* is an imaginary book and I don't think Rama was a great person or that he was alive.



Former Bihar Chief Minister
— Jitan Ram Manjhi

FIRST COLUMN

QUAD SUMMIT AND MODI-BIDEN TALKS

India has a range of bilateral discussions lined up on current issues of interest



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The United States is hosting the first in-person summit of QUAD leaders in Washington and perhaps beginning of a new era of cooperation on what the White House termed as “demonstration of the priority of engaging in the Indo-Pacific, including through new multilateral configurations designed to focus on 21st century challenges”. The centrality is the realigning of the partners’ foreign policiesto Indo-Pacific coordination on shared targets. This roughly translates into keeping a sharp eye on Chinawhich is trying to defy international legal orders; therefore, a global consensus on the South China Sea is emerging. India’s focus during the QUAD summit will be tackling the Covid-19 pandemic and future cooperation, climate change issues, and an open Indo-Pacific region that allows equal and fair access for nations to prosper. During the first, virtual meeting of the QUAD leaders in March, 2021, a commitment of one billion vaccines by 2022 was made. The leaders may also talk about additional relief and assistance measures for poor countries as a goodwill



gesture. On the QUAD sidelines, a working group of senior representatives from member countries will focus on cyber security,secure supply chains infrastructure,and work towards finding a common language on emerging technologies including artificial intelligence. The global pandemic has ensured all digital economies around the globe, not to mention the QUAD members, need to find a common thread on defining paradigms for next-generation technology growth and collateral threats. The world industry facing acute shortage of semiconductor chips and other critical digital hardware components understand the importance of working with reliable trusted partners. United States, Australia, Japan and India are critical levers of the huge digital engine driving this technology towards a prosperity dream. One of the best outcomes from the QUAD summit could be for the leaders to come out with a paper on destinations and targets for this digital highway. This in itself could be one the key success stories for QUAD.

The last aspect on which most of the countries from the quadrilateral can make announcements would be on securing clean targets and achieving goals on climate change. The US envoy on climate John Kerry’s visitto India a few days back was a firm commitment towards achieving time bound targets. The US offered assistanceto India for quickly reaching its renewable energy targets of 450 GW by 2030. Currently India’s environment and climate change portfolio is held by ruling party heavy weight Bhopendra Yadav, who enjoys the blessings of the senior leadership. The only challenge for India on this green path could be about assuming more green responsibilities at international forums while trying to attract investments. That is where the will of the domestic government and the organizational skills of the current minister will come for test. Finally on the sidelines of QUAD, Prime Minister Modi and his external affairs minister will hold a whole range of bilateral talks on current issues of interest. The India-US discussions and theoutcome notes would the most watched as this would be first in-person meeting between the President of the US and the Indian Prime Minister. Narendra Modi shared a visible sense of bonhomie with Joe Biden’s predecessor Donald Trump. The same optics may not be repeated but Biden is unlikely to disappoint his counterpart. Afghanistan’s safety, security and upholding of human rights in central Asia would definitely feature as key topics during the bilateral. The hurried exit of the US from Afghanistan has placed many fringe players such as India in a spot in the Central Asian theatre. Every major player in the region including China, Russia and Iranis trying to recalibrate its position with regard to Afghanistan.

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

Role of cooperatives in Indian economy

The NCAER recently undertook a study on cooperative agro-processing and identification of institutional financial lacunae in the cooperative movement



SAURABH BANDYOPADHYAY ANUPMA MEHTA

The cooperative movement in India has regained focus after the Union Government recently created a Ministry of Cooperation to provide a separate administrative legal and policy framework for streamlining the cooperatives. The move is expected to cascade the movement down to the grassroots level for facilitating the growth of a people-based economic development model. It envisages an environment that would enable ‘sahkar se samridhi’ (prosperity through cooperation) and promote ‘ease of doing business’ for cooperatives through various proactive measures, including the development of Multi-State Cooperatives (MSCs).

The genesis of the current movement can be traced to the enactment of the Cooperative Credit Societies Act by the British in 1904. Subsequently, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gave it a fillip by integrating cooperatives into the Five-Year Plans. His vision of “convulsing India with the cooperative movement...to make it, broadly speaking, the basic activity of India, in every village as well as elsewhere, indeed to make the cooperative approach the common thinking of India” was a precursor for the establishment of cooperative societies especially in rural India, thus laying the foundation for the largest cooperative movement in the world.

The institution of cooperative marketing societies by the National Development Council (NDC), coupled with the passage of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act by the Parliament in 1984 enhanced the importance of the movement. By definition, therefore, cooperative societies were envisioned as a combined agglomerate of persons voluntarily coming together to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

It was anticipated that the cooperative movement would largely be concentrated in the agricultural sector, playing a significant role across operations spanning production, distribution, and consumption. Two of the most conspicuous success stories emerging from the implementation of this model were the White Revolutionand the Green Revolution. As per data from the National Dairy Development Board, in 2019-20, dairy cooperatives had procured 4.80 crore litres of milk from 1.7 crore members,while selling 3.7 crore litres of liquid milk per day. Farm sector experts point out that cooperatives have also positively impacted post-harvest processing, storage, transportation, trade, and input procurement for a range of activities in the agricultural sector.

The movement has reportedly fostered 5.03 lakh cooperatives, a membership of 210 million, and a network stretching through the entire breadth of rural India, while accounting for 46.31 per cent of the total agricultural creditand 23.5 per cent of the total fertiliser production across the country. These milestones have been achieved through the institution of 21 national-level, 361 State-level, and 2,572 district-level



THEREFORE, THE IMMEDIATE PRIORITY BEFORE THE NEW MINISTRY IS TO REVAMP THE NATIONWIDE COOPERATIVE STRATEGY TO ENSURE ACCESS TO COST-EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL SOURCES OF CREDIT, CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY FOR PRODUCERS, ESPECIALLY IN AGRICULTURE

(Saurabh Bandyopadhyay is Fellow and Anupma Mehta is Editor at NCAER. The views expressed are personal.)



cooperative federations in the country. Hence, every sphere of national and local economic activity has literally been brought under the ambit of the cooperative movement.

But is the picture as rosy as these statistics apparently indicate? Rumbblings of discontent among farmers, in particular, and the farm sector, in general, suggest that the contribution of cooperatives to actual growth in the agricultural sector is significantly lower than expectations. Despite the need for substantial investments in the form of plant, machinery, tools, and equipment in farming, the outcomes reflect low capital and low productivity linkages, along with the need for augmenting an under-performing marketing infrastructure.

In order to identify the ground-level roadblocks and suggest measures to overcome them, the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) recently undertook a study on cooperative agro-processing and identification of institutional financial lacunae in the cooperative movement with special attention on the role of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC). The NCAER study, covering 304 cooperative units in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal, found that marginal and small farmers sell a major part of their agricultural commodities to private traders, which prevents them from reaping the profits of their produce even during a bumper harvest. Their small quantity transactions translate into meagre cooperative shares and weak bargaining power in the market. Lack of adequate storage facilities also compromises the processing of paddy, grains, and fruits and vegetables, which, in turn, adversely impacts the shelf life

of products and compromises employment outcomes. Further, the study showed a decadal decline in the share of agro-processing in the total value of the manufacturing output from 32.31 per cent in 2000-2001 to 22.9 per cent in 2011-12.

The NCAER estimations, based on analysis of the 70th Round unit-level data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), also highlight the need for providing cooperative support for marketing penetration and storage to smallholders, who constituted 86 per cent of the total share of landholdings in 2015-16, according to the Tenth Agricultural Census. In this context, NCDC, which has been at the forefront of the cooperative movement in the country, can offer pivotal support to the agriculture sector through the development of sustainable supply chains linking farmers to processing centres and markets. Critical funding from NCDC towards cooperative sector schemes comprising fisheries, dairy and livestock, water conservation, micro irrigation, agricultural insurance and credit, among others, constitutedover 49 per cent of the cumulative lending for the period 2008-13. Yet the corporation is not being offered concessional finance under priority sector lending. Compelled to source its funds from the market, NCDC faces constraints in offering loans to cooperatives at competitive rates, which has a deterrent impact on post-harvest agricultural activities.

An assessment of the capacity utilisation of the surveyed units revealed that nearly 34 per cent of them were under-utilising their capacities in the range of 25 to 75 per cent, due to various reasons, such as inadequate supply of products for processing, shortage of skilled manpower, funds crunch, lack of demand, and non-availability of advanced machinery. In addition,

most States exhibit poor urban and rural representation of self-help groups and cooperatives in the sphere of foodgrain disbursal under the Public Distribution System (PDS) through the network of Fair Price Shops (FPS). Notwithstanding the policy for issuance of FPS licences to women’s self-help groups, village panchayats, urban local bodies, and cooperatives, the combined percentage of their FPS presence in India is merely about 26 per cent, with the rest going to private individual ownership.

It is obvious that despite its monumental potential, the cooperative model in the country is facing numerous policy hurdles. Since the administration of cooperatives has traditionally fallen under the purview of the respective State governments, the establishment of a Central Ministry to oversee their functioning may also have certain political repercussions and revive the national debate on collaborative federalism. The immediate priority before the new Ministry, therefore, is to revamp the nation-wide cooperative strategy to ensure access to cost-effective institutional sources of credit, capital equipment, and state-of-the-art technology for producers, especially in agriculture. Another vital mandate for it would be fulfilment of the fundamental objective of cooperativesof lifting the illiterate and unskilled workers out of poverty by providing them comprehensive infrastructural and marketing support for livelihood. There is no denying the fact that cooperatives have always signified viable solutions even in a failing market. It remains to be seen if the renewed political and economic focus on cooperatives can actually metamorphose into a truly people-based movement at the grassroots level, to usher in prosperity through people’s participation.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

CAST YOUR VOTE EVEN IF IT RAINS. IF YOU WANT TO SEE ME AS THE CHIEF MINISTER, YOU MUST VOTE FOR ME.
— WEST BENGAL CM
MAMATA BANERJEE



A DEFEATED CHIEF MINISTER IS MAKING DESPERATE EFFORTS. SHE DID NOT LEARN FROM THE NANDIGRAM LESSON.
— BJP LEADER
SUJENDU ADHIKARI

The misuse of law — a challenge to Indian judiciary

Public Interest Litigations have ensured against derailment of the rule of law and benefited the socially vulnerable sections

Efficient implementation of law is a pre-requisite for a stable and peaceful society and democracy is the torch bearer for a vibrant people-centric governance. The democratic fabric of a nation compliments the jurisprudence in ensuring the lawful governance. Over the years judicial activism through the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has ensured that the derailment of the rule of law is prevented and the socially vulnerable sections of the society have immensely benefited.

The PIL concept was introduced by Justice PN Bhagwati. It refers to litigation undertaken to secure public interest and created an opportunity of justice to socially-disadvantaged



VK BAHUGUNA

(The writer is Chairman of Centre for Resource Management and Environment. The views expressed are personal.)

groups and provided relaxation on the traditional rule of locus standi. Ever since its enunciation in 1980s, the judiciary has used it for the course correction of executive’s functions and several landmark judgements have provided reliefs to affected citizens.

However, in India of late a serious problem of misuse of law is cropping up and threatening the jurisprudence. This writer has been a witness to such misuse of law both by the common citizens as well as people in power. He has recently written a book “Quest for Civility-an insight into Indian Babudom” on the misuse of power by people in authority.

The trigger for this article



came from a newspaper report about challenging the appointment of Rakesh Asthana as the Delhi Police Commissioner under a PIL filed by a few non-government organizations opposed to the present dispensation at the Centre. Asthana has challenged it as misuse of law.

Now let us discuss it how his appointment was made and under what rule. The AllIndia Service officers IAS, IPS and IFS (forests) are recruited by the Union

Government and it is up to the sweet will of the government to utilize them anywhere in the country or abroad in public interest. They can be granted extension in service or transferred from one cadre to the other if need be, depending upon their service records and the opinion of the government. Such action of the Central is absolutely within its power and cannot be challenged. The government will have its reasons for the appointment. Some officers may have their reasons to be disappointed with the decision. If affected officers had gone to the Central Administrative Tribunal it would have been justified and the case could have been decided on merit. However, how could an unaf-

fected party challenge the power of the government? If the country allows such wastage of time on things based purely on ulterior motives or at the instigation of political leaders to regularly bring such matters in courts it would put the entire country’s administration as well as security to peril.

There are many other instances of misuse of powers, however, which need the attention of Supreme Court, High Courts and lower courts as well as legislatures. Crimes against women are attracting the attention of the judiciary with stringent provisions but surveys had shown that most of the provisions of section 354 of IPC and the Dowry Prevention Law (Section 498A/ 406 of

IPC) are the most misused provisions of law in India and yet no modifications seem to have been made in it. The provision, enacted to protect the dignity of a woman, has become a widely misused weapon by them and is used to harass and blackmail their husband and his family. Once an FIR is filed under 498A/406 (IPC) it becomes a tool in the hands of the police to harass the husband and all his relatives named in the FIR without even preliminary investigation.

According to a survey conducted by Fight against Misuse of Dowry law, 98 per cent of the cases filed under section 498A are false. One senior officer of Ladakh is facing a false dowry case and his father, a retired senior

officer of 71 years, is running from pillar to post. Similarly, section 354 is routinely used to harass men deliberately to settle property and other disputes. More than half of such cases ultimately prove false and no real punitive action is taken against the complainant.

The country needs to bring in a law to prevent misuse of law. If a case is dismissed, the complainant and others involved in the investigation and tendering of false witnesses must be punished. Only then the country’s judiciary as well as the police and other agencies would be spared such wastage of time and at the same time the law protecting citizens would be implemented well.

Sensex skyrockets 958 points

Global markets tempered optimism despite hawkish tilt by the Fed Reserve

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex vaulted 958 points to scale a fresh lifetime high on Thursday, propelled by across-the-board buying amid a positive trend in global equities despite hawkish comments from the US Fed.

Robust gains in the rupee further buoyed sentiment, traders said. Reversing the previous session's lethargy, the 30-share BSE Sensex zoomed 958.03 points or 1.63 per cent to end at an all-time high of 59,885.36. It scaled a new peak of 59,957.25 during the day.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty soared 276.30 points or 1.57 per cent to its new closing high of 17,822.95, after touching an intra-day record of 17,843.90. Bajaj Finserv topped the Sensex gainers' chart, climbing 5.15 per cent, followed by L&T, HDFC, Axis Bank, SBI, Reliance Industries (RIL) and IndusInd Bank.

Index heavyweights RIL and HDFC twins accounted for nearly half of the benchmark's gains.

Only five counters closed in the red -- Dr Reddy's, ITC, Nestle India, HUL and Bharti Airtel, skidding up to 1.07 per cent. "Amidst a strong start, bulls showed no signs of weakness to soar higher, boosted by strong global cues and broad-based buying led by realty, metal and banking stocks. Global markets tempered optimism despite a slightly hawkish tilt by the Fed Reserve intimating that the US central bank will begin reducing its asset purchases in November and conclude the tapering process around mid-2022."

"However, investors continue to remain on the edge awaiting clarity on the Chinese economy. The domestic realty sector continued its rally sparked by demand revival in the property space," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at

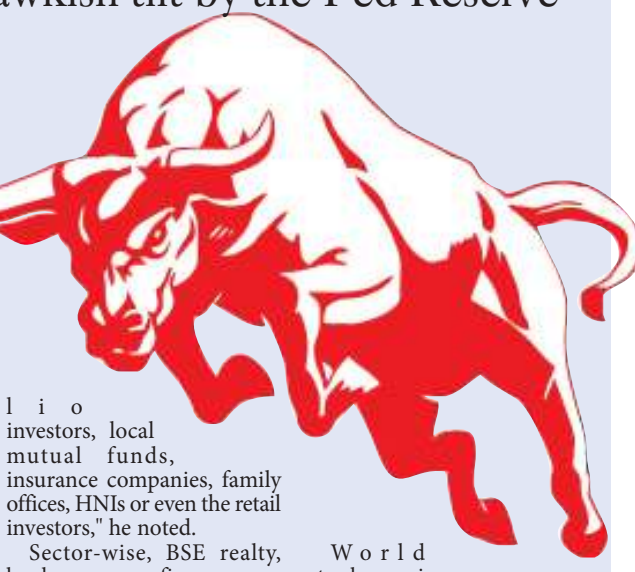
Geojit Financial Services.

Devang Mehta, Head - Equity Advis-ory, Centrum Broking, said the market took the US Fed statement of starting tapering as soon as November in its stride. "...the rally today was symbolic of the prevailing strong sentiment locally on the back of reduction in COVID cases and the strong vaccination numbers."

With improvement in economic activity and the optimism around the capex cycle revival, the earnings trajectory for India Inc will naturally get a big boost.

"Most of the companies which are market leaders in their respective domains have seen operating efficiencies and productivity improve and also been able to reduce debt with prominent gain in market share as well."

Liquidity remains extremely strong, be it foreign portfolio



investors, local mutual funds, insurance companies, family offices, HNIs or even the retail investors," he noted.

Sector-wise, BSE realty, bankex, energy, finance, capital goods and industrials indices rallied up to 8.71 per cent, while FMCG closed in the red.

Broader BSE midcap and smallcap gauges followed the benchmarks, surging up to 1.28 per cent.

World stocks maintained their upward trajectory even after US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said the central bank will likely begin reducing its asset purchases as early as November, and also hinted at rate hikes from next year.

E-comm cos to log 23% rise in gross GMV at over \$9 bln

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

E-commerce platforms are expected to potentially clock over USD 9 billion gross GMV (Gross Merchandise Value) during the festive season this year as against USD 7.4 billion last year - a growth of 23 per cent, consulting firm RedSeer said on Thursday.

For the full year, the overall online gross GMV is expected to touch USD 49-52 billion, which is around 37 per cent higher than last year (USD 38.2 billion), primarily driven by strong consumer funnel expansion and the high adoption of online shopping post-COVID across the categories, RedSeer said in its eCommerce Festive Season Report.

During the first week of the festive season, online platforms are expected to register 30 per cent year-on-year growth in gross GMV to USD 4.8 billion, it added.

Gross GMV refers to total value of goods sold on platform prior to subtracting cancellation or return.



"The growth will be mostly driven by the accelerated online adoption which has been witnessed as an effect of COVID. Secondly, tier-II cities and beyond will continue to drive growth as they are 55-60 per cent of the total shopper base this year, similar or higher than 57 per cent in 2020 festive days," Mrigank Gutgutia, Associate Partner at RedSeer, told reporters. On the other hand, as offline retail and mobility is recovering almost upto pre-COVID levels, this will impact the online festive sale as customers may opt for offline shopping as well, he

added.

In terms of categories, mobile will continue to dominate - driven by new launches - and account for 11 per cent of the gross GMV (USD 4.8 billion) in the first week of festive sale. Electronics and Appliances category will continue to grow (from 14 per cent share festive sale last year to 16 per cent this year), driven by ever-expanding selection and reach, and consumers holding back their purchases (earlier in the year) in anticipation of new launches and attractive pricing (as per RedSeer survey), RedSeer said.

MONEY MATTERS

E&P, ethanol-blended fuel to help in self-reliance goals

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said the Centre is focusing on exploration and production of oil and natural gas to make India a self-reliant country in energy requirement, and the work on meeting the target of 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol by 2025 is on track.

Puri, the minister for petroleum and natural gas, said nine per cent ethanol blending in fuel has already been achieved. "Exploration and production of natural gas is the top priority for the government to attract foreign and domestic investment and enhance output," he said. Augmenting ethanol blending in fuel is critical for the energy security of the country, the minister said. India imports almost 85 per cent of its liquid hydrocarbon requirement and spends over Rs 12 lakh crore. The Centre is targeting to have 20 per cent ethanol-blended fuel by 2025. Earlier, it had planned to achieve the goal by 2030. Allying fears of large scale farming of the bio-fuel raw material impacting food security, Puri said, "We are looking at agricultural waste and even bamboo in the north-east region for ethanol. So, this should not be a problem."



NCL joins hands with NTPC to instal solar project in MP

State-owned CIL on Thursday said its subsidiary Northern Coalfields Ltd (NCL) has joined hands with power major NTPC to install a 50 MW solar power project in Madhya Pradesh. This is the first ground mounted solar project of NCL for which project consultant NTPC has invited bids with a pre-bid date set on October 7 and tender opening date on October 22. Coal India (CIL) said in a statement. "In a bid to promote green energy, Coal India Limited arm Northern Coalfields Limited has joined hands with NTPC to install a 50 MW solar power project at Nigahi coal mines of NCL in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh," the statement said. CIL NTPC Urja Pvt Ltd (CNUPL), a joint venture of Coal India Ltd and NTPC, which will co-ordinate for this entire project, is confident that the project would be completed within the stipulated timeframe of one year.



Jio, Airtel add subscribers in July, VIL loses 14.3 L users

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's largest telecom operator Reliance Jio added mobile subscribers at a scorching pace in July, and Airtel also spruced up its user tally, even as Vodafone Idea lost 14.3 lakh customers, according to the latest data from regulator Trianet.

Reliance Jio gained 65.1 lakh subscribers in July cementing its market lead, while Bharti Airtel added 19.42 lakh customers during the month.

Riding on the massive subscriber gains, the wireless user base of Jio swelled to 44.32 crore in July, according to monthly subscriber data released by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai).

Airtel's subscriber count rose to 35.40 crore in July. Vodafone Idea lost 14.3 lakh wireless users during July, as its subscriber count slipped to 27.19 crore.



FADA seeks government support

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile dealers' body FADA has urged the government to formulate a task force to monitor the compensation structure being worked out by Ford India for its dealer partners across the country.

In a letter to Heavy Industries Minister Mahendra Nath Pandey, FADA President Vinokesh Gulati also requested the government to instruct Ford India to keep the industry body in the loop regarding the compensation structure for the dealerships.

"We humbly request your Ministry's intervention... Create a task force which takes day-to-day updates from Ford India to monitor the compen-



sation plan for automobile dealers and dealership employees," Gulati said in the letter.

Also, instruct Ford India to keep FADA in the loop for dealership related issues and compensation structure, he noted. Besides, Gulati also requested the ministry to make sure that Ford India indemnifies

dealers from various consumer and civil cases, both under pendency and against any future cases that may arise directly or indirectly out of the automaker's restructuring announcement. "Ford India is forcing its dealers to first sign Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) latest by September

PG Electroplast applies to avail PLIS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

PG Electroplast, a contract manufacturer of electronic goods, on Thursday said it has applied for the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme and committed to investing Rs 300 crore to manufacture air conditioner components.

Through its wholly-owned subsidiary PG Technoplast, it has committed a capital expenditure (capex) of Rs 300 crore over the next five years for manufacturing AC components, according to a statement. The company has



already started the first phase of its planned investment, said PG Electroplast adding that it is also building up its design and R&D (research and development) capabilities for the AC segment.

PG Electroplast Managing Director (Operations) Vikas Gupta said, "We want to create a strong domestic component ecosystem in the nation. With this, we will be able to help India turn into a world-wide manufacturing powerhouse." Earlier this month on September 16, the government had said as many as 31 companies, including Voltas, Daikin, Panasonic, Hitachi, Blue Star and Havells, have applied for availing PLIs for manufacturing of components, proposing an investment of around Rs 4,995 crore.



Vizhinjam port to be operational in Dec '23

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Minister for Ports Ahamed Devarkovil and the Adani group on Thursday said the Vizhinjam port, part of a multi-crore International Deep water Multipurpose Seaport project, would be operational by December 2023.

However, the entire Rs 7,525 crore project, including providing national highway connectivity to the port and carrying out land acquisitions, would be completed by December 2024, an Adani official said. The joint announcement was made to the media after a meeting of the Adani Group with the

minister with regard to completion of the project which was scheduled to be finished by 2021.

The minister told reporters that the Adani officials have said the work got delayed due to various natural calamities since 2018 and thereafter, the Covid outbreak from 2020.

He said these were genuine issues raised by the company and the same can be addressed. The minister further said that the meeting and the subsequent announcement was made in the wake of some news reports which created confusion regarding completion of the project -- the state's first-ever deep water container transshipment port.

Entitlement under SEIS for services exports capped

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday said it has imposed a limit on the total entitlement under services export incentive scheme SEIS for shipments made during 2019-20, at Rs 5 crore per exporter.

The Directorate General of

Foreign Trade (DGFT) has notified a list of eligible services and rates under the Services Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) for exports made during 2019-20 is being notified.

"A limit of total entitlement under SEIS has been imposed for service exports rendered in the period April

1, 2019, to March 31, 2020, and capped at Rs 5 crore IEC (import-export code)," the DGFT said in a notification.

Further, it has been notified that the facility to claim benefits under SEIS on payments in Indian rupees would not be available for services rendered in 2019-20. The deadline for submis-

sion of SEIS for 2019-20 will be December 31, 2021, and SEIS applications for 2019-20 will become time-barred after December 31 this year.

Services Export Promotion Council of India (SEPC) Chairman Maneck Davar said the move will benefit small and medium enterprises in the sector.

"SEPC is also committed to guide and advise all exporters on obtaining SEIS benefits. It has also written to DGFT to extend the date of filing for 2019-20 to March 31, 2022," he said.

Depending on the nature of services, the government gives duty credit scrips or certificates.

Upper middle class to revive consumption cycle again soon

PNS ■ MUMBAI

With higher consumer confidence following the rise in vaccination levels and sitting on already-built-up-savings through the pandemic months, the top 20 per cent of upper-income consumers will help recover the near-term consumption demand, as per a report.

These consumers account for the bulk of the rural and urban demand. While the economy fared the worst last year, contracting a record 7.3 per cent due to the pandemic, the problem with the economy had begun much earlier in FY16 when consumption demand began to disappear from the economy. The pandemic only added to the contraction.

The top 20 per cent of the consumer universe control 59 per cent of the discretionary consumption in rural areas and a much higher 66 per cent in urban areas, according to UBS Securities India.



The upper-income households have built up forced/precautionary savings during the pandemic period as their spending on discretionary

items and services fell due to mobility restrictions.

However, now these upper-income consumers have the opportunity to spend with the

progressive reopening of the economy post-second wave, given the improvement in demand indicators such as demand for vehicles, property,

and homes; also for personal care, consumer durable items etc.

The top 20 per cent of the population account for the bulk of discretionary consumption. We expect the near-term consumption demand for goods as well as high contact intensive services, to recover in the second half beginning next month as more people are vaccinated and consumer confidence improves. Tanvee Gupta Jain, the chief economist at UBS Securities India said quoting their in-house UBS Evidence Lab survey findings.

The number of the fully-vaccinated people as of September 21 stood at 15.5 per cent or 21.2 crore, and those given the first shot is 42.2 per cent and the total doses given so far to 82.7 crore.

The post-pandemic consumption outlook survey was conducted online between July and August 2021 among 1,500 upper-middle-class consumers.

The survey indicates these

consumers largely saw income continuity since the pandemic began last year. While 42 per cent of them saw a decline in income during this period, 54 per cent saw stable or increasing income.

The survey also found that the formal sector has gained market share during the pandemic, but the informal economy has suffered (mostly workers employed in the non-agricultural sector in rural areas and high contact services sector in urban areas), which may not have been adequately captured by the survey results.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents anticipate income to increase in 2022. Across age groups, income expectations diverged with the middle-aged (35-44 years) being more optimistic. The optimism about income growth and a better financial situation is a key metric to track a swift normalisation of consumption trends, the report said.

PAINTING HIS PASSION

YAMINIKRISHNA
BANDLAMUDI

Making art is not just a mere expression of inner feelings, it also implies that the artist has a sensitive eye to every detail around him/her. Such a nature actually differentiates an artist from the rest of the world. This holds true in the case of Giridhar Arasavelli, 45, a passionate painter from Vijayawada who has received international recognition for his work. Speaking to *The Pioneer*, he talks about his art-work and his long journey in the field for the last 25 years.

Giridhar needs no introduction to the writers and poets of Vijayawada city. He is always caught busy in the same old tiny office room since 1997 at Durgapuram Road, working on paintings and designing a variety of cover pages for poetry books or novels of reputed personalities and writers. "As I used to help my father with designing catalogues and jewellery, I picked up the work culture and techniques of doing it myself. Earlier, I used to do manual artwork but thanks to digital printing, things are much easier now," he says.

Though he has been designing cover pages for books of reputed writers and poets like Yandamoori, Devi Priya, Malathi Chandoor, Prasad Murthy and many other famous personalities, his passion for painting has never stopped.

About his work, he shares, "I take natural shots of people of different backgrounds and try to sketch using pencil, acrylics, watercolours, and oil paintings. My paintings are usually loaded with simple ordinary sights like flower sellers, working labourers, rural women, frolicking children, or some natural meadows in my surroundings. Be it watercolour, or oil paints or acrylics, the mode of painting is mainly based on the situation, sight, and occupation of the people I come across."



Giridhar has exhibited his paintings at several art exhibitions in Vijayawada and Hyderabad, and has participated in group exhibitions held by the Amaravathi cultural department of Vijayawada. He also received appreciation from several art associations and poets for the extraordinary expressions of his art.

He tells us that he worked for a few Telugu movies, he designed the appearance of main characters, one of them being the recent release *Uppena*. "I've sketched portraits of hundreds of artists, politicians, movie stars, and many writers using watercolours and digital software."



The sketch I did of Leo Tolstoy with watercolours in 2018 is one among the 137 shortlisted Indian paintings, out of 1200 entries, by the International Watercolour Society of Shillong. The painting received appreciation from international artists, which I personally consider a huge milestone.

"In the past 25 years, I designed cover pages for more than 8000 books all over from Andhra Pradesh, majorly for famous publications like Navasahiti, Sahiti Mitralu, Navaratna, and Sri Sri Printers of Vijayawada. The recent edition from Sri Sri Printers, *Mahaprasthanama*, a bound volume of the legendary poet

Sri Sri in multicolour, was designed by me through a digital medium that took almost a year to finish, and that feels like an achievement of a lifetime to me.

It

was well received by the number of lyricists, directors, and artists of the Telugu film industry.

Giridhar is the one who introduced plain art in watercolours to Vijayawada, which was previously only being done in foreign countries. Every weekend, he does

outdoor painting and makes it a habit to have all of his team of painters of the city choose a spot in the villages nearby and draw the live scenes that are right in front of them.

"Though I experienced the joy of experimenting with acrylics and watercolours before, oil painting seems to have a unique charm that always entices me. My dream is to master it and have my paintings exhibited at more prestigious Indian and international art exhibitions," concludes the passionate painter.

SHIKHA
DUGGAL

As domestic travel in India begins its recovery following the second Covid-19 spike, new research has found that quarantine and testing remain a key concern for travellers in relation to international travel. Through comparing data collected from a total of 18,500 travellers in pre-pandemic times to travellers during the pandemic, the findings reveal that while physical wellbeing has been at the forefront of discussions, travellers are now just as worried about their mental wellbeing as they are about their physical wellbeing!

Societal awareness of the importance of mental health has increased sharply over the past few years, including the impact of travel on our mental wellbeing.

When asked what travel brands could do to help the situation, 24% of Hyderabad travellers said they value propositions that show there's consideration for their mental health on their journeys.

The findings also showed that travellers are specifically looking for visible

Post pandemic shift in travellers' priorities

health and hygiene measures when they travel, such as hand sanitisers throughout the airport, and socially distanced spaces in which to de-stress and relax away from the crowds. With 38% of the respondents saying that they would pay for lounge access to better protect their well-being at the airport, we got in touch with Roshini Jaiswal, CEO of Swanrose, and says, "The pandemic has turned the health care system upside down and challenged consumers' sense of well-being. In many ways, consumers are taking charge of their health more than ever before. For many people, the uncertainty surrounding Coronavirus is the hardest thing to handle. We don't know how

important, which indicates that Covid-19 testing has now crossed the line from being just a government pre-requisite for travel to some destinations, to an element that people want to see in order to give them the confidence to take to the skies once more.

"While there are increasingly positive signs for a travel recovery, the only way to make it a success is to understand how traveller needs and fears have been changed by their experiences through the pandemic," said David Evans, Joint CEO at Collinson, which conducted the survey. He adds, "It's so important the travel industry recovers, and it's even more important the industry is able to do so in a collaborative and informed way. What this research lays out is how to go about

reason they gave was that they were worried they would need to quarantine either on arrival or return! Wanting to avoid long quarantine periods is likely a reason why Indian passengers see testing on arrival as an important component to their travel experience. But interestingly, a similar 48% of respondents said that pre-departure testing was also



exactly we'll be impacted or how bad things might get. And that makes it all too easy to spiral out into overwhelming dread and panic. A pandemic of this magnitude has made people realise the importance of personal hygiene, truly! Things such as hand sanitisers, face masks, and surface disinfectants are now an essential part of our lives. Personal hygiene habits such as using hand sanitisers have become new normal in 2021 as brushing teeth used to be in the past. Also, they are of the view that the improvement in the quality of hygiene will boost the overall economic and social growth of the country."

When asked why some of the explorers might be hesitant to travel in light of Covid-19, the top



Roshini Jaiswal



Priyanka Lakhani

rebuilding traveller confidence, by focusing on mental as well as physical health, and understanding the factors causing stress. By working together on the issues highlighted in this study, the travel industry has yet more information to ensure travel thrives again in the future."

"Despite many of us planning holidays to relax and recharge, the pandemic is resulting in the travel section of our trips being viewed as more stressful than before. Many travellers are now paying more attention to their mental well-being while travelling, and not just their physical. This is an important insight, as by understanding what travellers need, to feel more comfortable and confident, brands within the travel ecosystem can implement required practices and in turn, help expedite the recovery of the industry," says Priyanka Lakhani, Commercial Director Middle East, and Africa and Director South Asia, Collinson.

Chapter 3 highlights the privacy policies of social media and e-commerce platforms and the resulting virtual profiling of customers. In this context, the author has shared his point of view on the way forward. The fourth chapter elaborates on the Toolkit and Pegasus controversies. The Data Protection Bill, which is currently under consideration in the parliament, has been touched upon and broadly analysed in Chapter 5. The concluding Chapter 6 throws light on the implications of the fundamental right to privacy and how it's ushering transformational changes in society. The Right to consume alcohol in privacy in prohibition States, the rights of LGBT couples to live with dignity, and the right to privacy of live-in couples have been delved into by the author.

Referring to the section on how privacy is being compromised/jeopardised by the digital footprints of customers, the author opined, "Massive profiling of individuals is taking place in the virtual world by commercial enterprises for targeted advertising

Vivek Sood's *Right to Privacy* sparks debate on informational privacy

Vivek Sood, a senior counsel and author of *The Fundamental Right to Internet, Cyber Laws Simplified, and Cyber Crimes, Electronic Evidence & Investigation (Legal Issues)*, authored his fifth book titled *Right to Privacy: Arguing for the People*. He comes with close to three decades of litigation experience in criminal law, constitutional law, and cyber disputes.

The book, as the name gives it away, is about the recognition of the Right to Privacy by the Supreme Court in Puttaswamy's case and its impact on the lives of Indian citizens. The book avoids legal jargon and commentaries, and has been written keeping in view the general readers and common public as well as people from the media, corporate, and IT sectors. In the book, Vivek Sood has covered topics of extensive depth and diversity like views on Aadhaar, the significance of informational policy, social media, adult entertainment, data protection, LGBT rights, and many more. The foreword has been penned by Shashi Tharoor!

"Through the chapters, the book highlights interesting and thought-provoking issues such as informational privacy of citizens that is vulnerable to being compromised by law enforcement agencies of the State and non-State entities," shares author Vivek Sood.

Right to Privacy: Arguing for the People has 6 chapters. The first chapter sets the



How a feeding tube can make life easy

Feeding Tube, what is that? Rahul Tyagi from Porvoo Transition Care explains exclusively to *The Pioneer* that it is a medical device used to provide nutrition to patients incapable of doing so through the mouth or have issues in swallowing.

However, does it have multi-purposes attached to it? He replies in the affirmative. A feeding tube can be also used to provide food and fluids to patients, in administering medication when the situation demands or in situations where the stomach of the patient is unable to process its contents, the tube can also be used for drawing out fluids present in the stomach. He states there are multiple types of feeding tubes that can be used for patients, it is as follows:

Gastric tube: This tube is directly inserted into the stomach by performing an incision in the abdomen thereby resulting in the nutrients directly reaching the stomach without involving the process of swallowing.

Jejunostomy tube: A Jejunostomy tube is inserted directly into the jejunum. However, the incision site for the insertion of this tube is slightly lower than that of the gastric tube. Due to its narrow nature, only thin liq-



Rahul Tyagi

uids and powdered medications can pass through this tube.

Nasogastric tube: This tube runs from the nose of the patient through the throat and oesophagus and into the stomach. It is not a long-term feeding tube and has to be changed or removed after 4-6 weeks.

Orogastric tube: It is similar to a nasogastric tube but it can only be used for a period of 2 weeks after which it needs to be

removed or changed with a long-term feeding tube.

"One of the most common types of feeding tube used is the Ryle's Tube or Nasogastric Tube. A nasogastric tube, as the name suggests is a narrow tube passing through the patient's nose to the stomach. Silicon or polyurethane nasogastric tubes are not affected by gastric acid and hence can be inserted and kept in the stomach for a longer duration of time, unlike a Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) tube which needs to be replaced every fortnight," shares Rahul.

Here are some central pointers to be kept in mind for Ryle's tube and its care:

1. Keep it clean while administering continuous feeding, the tube should be flushed every 4 hours
2. Dispense all medications as a liquid and flush before and after with at

least 5 ml of water, if possible

3. Clamp the tube when it is not being used. This helps in maintaining a closed system

4. Keep the skin around the tube clean and dry. Clamp the tube when you aren't using it. Keep the skin around the tube clean and dry

Well, everything has its consequences too. A worrying aspect of the tube experience is the environmental tube it creates. From formula cartons to syringes, all of the associated products should be made from biodegradable materials to decrease their toxic impact on our world. We have already witnessed how medical equipment takes its toll on the Earth. Currently, tube extensions are made of polyurethane or silicone and need to be replaced every six months. These materials are then destined for a landfill. Hence, if a smart feeding tube had an extension like a rubber straw that only required replacement once or twice every several years, we could cut down on waste. A smart feeding tube may sound far-fetched, but plenty of people spend their lives with a pace-maker or inspire device which is used to treat sleep apnea inside their bodies. A robust smart tube should be made simply because it will improve thousands of people's quality of life!

The purpose of a detox plan is to ease the function of major organs like the heart, kidneys, and liver in order to help them recuperate and perform better. Ayurveda recommends constantly detoxing the body with the changing season to reap good benefits. Ayurvedic detox diets are said to bring about positive changes in the body and mind, enhancing physical health and increasing mental focus and clarity. Regular detox is known to improve blood circulation, boost immunity, increase energy and flush out toxins.



DETOX YOUR BODY AYURVEDIC WAY

DETOX KAADHA FOR EARLY MORNINGS & EVENINGS:

What you need:

- Cumin seeds: 1 tsp
- Coriander seeds: 1 tsp
- Fennel seeds: 1 tsp
- Water: 1 litre
- Honey to proportion

How to make:

- Bring the water to boil, add the seeds and let it boil for 10 more minutes on a low flame.
- Turn off the heat and simmer for 5 more minutes.
- Strain, add honey and serve hot.




MOONG STEW:

What you need:

- Green whole moong: 1 cup
- Finely chopped green vegetables of your choice: 1 cup
- Water: 2 cups
- Finely chopped garlic: 6 cloves
- Finely chopped onion: 1
- Tomato paste: 5 tbsp
- Cold-pressed sesame oil
- Salt
- Mustard seeds
- Pepper
- Turmeric powder: 1 tsp
- Coriander-Cumin powder: 2tsp
- Finely chopped coriander leaves
- Juice of 1 lemon

How to make:

Pressure cook the Moong with some salt and turmeric until soft. In a pan, add sesame oil and once hot, add some mustard seeds. Once they start to



sputter, add the finely chopped garlic and the veggies. Cover and allow to cook for 10 minutes. Once tender, add the tomato paste and the boiled Moong. Add coriander-cumin powder, salt and pepper and let it all blend well. Allow cooking on a low flame for 15 more minutes. Switch off the flame, squeeze the juice of a lemon and garnish with fresh coriander leaves. Apart from this, remember to follow these basic rules to help you with your detox routine, drink warm lemon water half an hour before every meal to open up blocked intestinal channels. Eat more natural, raw and fresh breakfast, lunch and dinner. Steamed vegetables, quinoa, porridge, and fresh seasonal fruits are great options. Avoid snacking and if you're still hungry between meals, eat a fruit or some nuts and seeds.

GOLDEN MILK:



What you need:

- Coconut milk: 200 ml
- Ghee: 1 tsp
- Organic turmeric powder: 1 tsp
- A pinch of black pepper
- A pinch of ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg or cardamom
- Honey to proportion

How to make:

Heat the ghee in a pan, add the turmeric powder and black pepper and let it form a paste. Now add the coconut milk and mix well. Allow it to come to a boil while continuously stirring. Let simmer on low-medium heat for 5 minutes. Add the additional spices, add honey and serve hot.

Get screened every six months after your Covid recovery

Covid-19 led to complications and health risks manifold for patients with non-communicable diseases. Almost 75-80 percent of the Covid patients don't require hospitalisation and can recover at home with teleconsultation, but Covid-19 infections can leave the patient with long-term side effects. There are many instances where symptoms of Covid-19 have persisted for several months. Apart from damaging the lungs, the virus can also cause acute myocardial injury and chronic damage to the cardiovascular system. According to research published in the European Heart Journal, Covid-19 patients who suffer cardiac arrest have a higher possibility of dying as compared to those who are not infected with it, and especially women are at an increased risk of death for the same reason. The virus may directly breach the ACE2 receptor cells, within the myocardium tissue and cause direct viral harm. Covid-19 can result in inflammation of the heart muscles which is known as myocarditis and it can lead to heart failure over time, if not taken care of. People with a pre-existing heart problem need to be extra cautious. A significant number of patients have suffered cardiac arrest during the recovery period, often resulting in death. Expert suggests that even though the Covid virus wanes, the immune response continues to be hyper-active and that often ends up attacking other organs. It has been observed that almost 80 per cent of these patients have had cardiac arrests 2-3 weeks after testing Covid positive. We tend to ignore some of the warning signs and due to lack of awareness, sometimes, we fail to prevent certain cardiovascular issues during Covid-19 or even after recovering from Covid-19. After someone has had Covid-19, if that patient is experiencing a rapid heartbeat or palpitations, it is recommended to contact the doctor immediately because even a temporary increase in heart rate can signal a lot of different things, including the aftermath of being very ill, prolonged inactivity and spending weeks convalescing in bed and even dehydration. It is necessary to make sure that the patient is drinking enough fluids, especially if the fever persists. Sometimes, people who are recovering from Covid-19 may show symptoms of a condition known as POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome). However, the link between the development of POTS and Covid-19 is yet to be established. Although, POTS is a neurologic problem, and it is not directly a cardiac issue. It affects the part of the nervous system and may hamper the heart rate and blood flow. The syndrome can also cause rapid heartbeats while standing up. Some of the symptoms of a rapid or irregular heart rhythm may include: Feeling of a rapid or irregular heartbeat in the chest (palpitations) Shortness of breath Feeling lightheaded or dizzy, especially upon standing Brain fog Fatigue Chest pain Rapid ups and downs in the pulse rate Several instances of cardiac arrests post Covid recovery has emphasised the importance of frequent monitoring of heart health. As per experts, cardiac tests like ECG, X-Ray Chest, and lipid profile should be repeated every six months in high-risk individuals with pre-existing conditions like diabetes and hypertension in order to understand whether there is any damage to the heart. Apart from regular monitoring, post-Covid patients must stick to a healthy diet consisting of all the essential nutrients and spicy, oily, canned, artificial sweeteners and processed flavours, or junk food should be strictly avoided. Taking out time for physical exercise, cutting down on alcohol and smoking is necessary. Even the smallest of the symptoms should be taken into consideration and should be immediately addressed by an expert doctor.



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ARCHIE



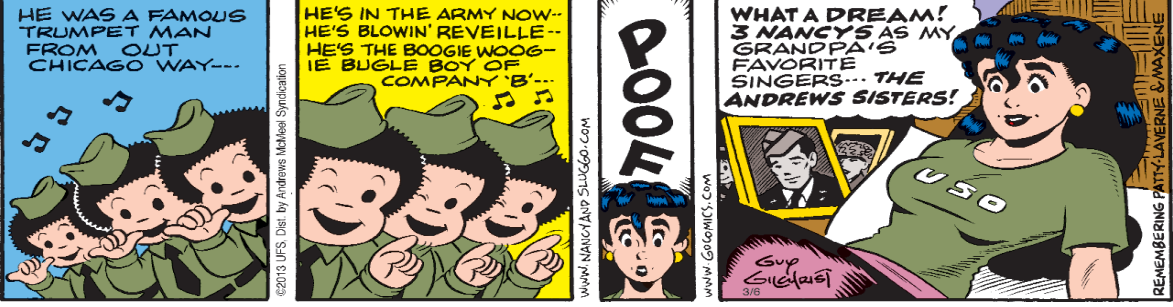
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



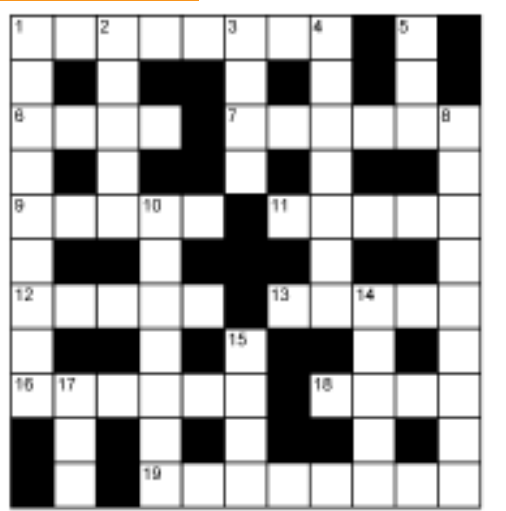
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

- 1 A large extinct animal
- 2 Do this in water
- 3 Me
- 4 A person from Moscow
- 5 Unwell
- 6 Someone who catches fish
- 7 Houses for horses
- 8 Wide awake and watchful
- 9 Doing nothing, lazy
- 10 A bird that hunts at night

DOWN

- 1 Vanish
- 2 Hit these in with a hammer
- 3 A large number of soldiers

SOLUTION

N	T	D	G	W
L	O	G	I	V
A	L	I	G	H
H	I	G	H	A
T	I	N	G	E
H	E	N	S	D
T	O	W	N	E
I	D	N	E	Y
T	U	N	D	D

PRAGYA OPENS UP ABOUT HER LOOK IN AKHANDA

Kanche fame Pragya Jaiswal is pairing up with actor Balakrishna for the first time and the actress' excitement for the project is so much that she cannot stop thinking about the film and her role.

In *Akhanda*, directed by Boyapati Srinu, the actress dons a look that audiences haven't seen before.

It is learnt that the director meticulously designed her character and look.

About her look and her character, the actress shares, "My look in the film is very different. The director, Boyapati sir, went through my looks from every single previous film of mine, and he made sure that I did something different and unique in this film while sticking to the character that I am playing. So that was a huge challenge for him but he wanted to give a complete changeover and freshness to my character."

Pragya says he had worked very hard and gone into every single detail

to design this look for her and that she is really looking forward to the film's release.

She adds, "I can't wait for the audience to see our labour of love. It's Boyapati sir's film, so you know it's going to be a theatre movie and there is going to be a lot of action, drama and fun. It's a super exciting story."

The track *Adiga Adiga* from the film released recently and Pragya is completely in love with her look and the song.

"I am excited that the first song from my film has finally released. *Adiga Adiga* is my favourite song, which I think is a very beautiful song. The voices of singers SP Charan and Shruti are the sweetest and do complete justice. The song has been shot beautifully and I think I look my most beautiful self in this," she says. While the release date of *Akhanda* has not been announced, it is inclined to be a theatrical one.



The film *Ram vs. Ravan*, starring Solomon Judson, Raj Bala,

Manochitra, and Ananya Mani in lead roles, went on floors on Thursday. Actor Saptagiri will be seen playing a key role in this film that has K Shukran is helming the project. The film is being bankrolled by Dr. AS Judson under the

Ram vs Ravan goes on floors

banner of Shana Productions. The opening ceremony of the film was held at Ramanaidu Studios, Hyderabad. Director Maruti, fight masters

Ram Laxman, and producer Sindhura Puvvu Krishnareddy were present at the pooja ceremony and gave the team their best wishes.

On the occasion, director K Shukran, shared, "The story of the film is set in a village and shows how two young men fought for the good of the village. Entertainment accompanies the story along with the action."

Other technical crew of the film include: cinematography by Rajamathi, music by Vikas Badisha, stunts by Ram Laxman, and BJ Sridhar.



Jr NTR pays shells out Rs 17 lakh for car number



We know how Junior NTR adores his swanky Lamborghini Urus Graphite Capsule car. We now hear that the actor bought a fancy registration number '9999' by spending a whopping Rs 17 lakh during an auction for his car at the Regional Transport Authority (RTA), Khairatabad. According to officials, the actor bid for the number TS09 FS 9999. We're told that the transport authority earned over Rs 45 lakhs in the bidding of the fancy numbers on Wednesday, with NTR alone contributing Rs 17 lakh to this sum.

VISHNU ANNOUNCES HIS PANEL FOR MAA ELECTIONS

The controversial MAA elections is the news of the hour for Bollywood artistes. While actor Prakash Raj

announced his panel some-time back, on Thursday, actor Vishnu Manchu announced his panel for the upcoming elections to Movie Artists Association (MAA), the apex body of Bollywood.

"For my MAA, our privilege and honour," tweeted the actor while posting the names of his panel members who will be contesting for various posts.

Vishnu will take on well-known actor Prakash Raj for the post of president in the elections scheduled to be held on October 10.

The elections are likely to see a triangular contest as character artiste C.V.L. Narasimha Rao has also announced his plans to contest. He is yet to announce his panel.

From Vishnu's panel, actor Raghu Babu will be contesting for general secretary, veteran actor and former minister Babu Mohan for executive vice-president, actor-producer Madhala Ravi and comedian Prithviraj Bali Reddy for vice-presidents, actor Siva Balaji for the post of treasurer, and character artist Karate Kalyani and comedian Gautham Raju for joint secretary.

Vishnu also named 18 candidates for the posts of executive members: Archana (Veda),

Ashok Kumar, Geeta Singh, Harinath Babu, Jayavani, Malakpeta Shailaja, Manik, Poojitha, Rajeshwari Reddy, Rekha, Sampurnesh Babu, Shashank, Sivannarayana, Slakshmi, P. Srinivasulu, Swapna Madhu, Vishnu Bopanna and M. R. C. Vadlapatla.

Prakash Raj has already announced his panel and is actively campaigning. He also received support from actors Jeevitha Rajasekhar and Hema, who dropped their plans to contest against him and joined his panel.

Jeevitha will be contesting for the post of general secretary while Hema is in the race for vice-president's post.

Actor Meka Srikanth is contesting for the post of executive vice-president, Banerjee for vice-president's post, while actors Uttej and Anitha Chowdary are the candidates for the post of joint secretaries, senior character artiste Nagineedu is in the race for the treasurer's post.

"I came here to serve the film industry. I want to serve my fellow artistes and industry people," Prakash Raj had said while announcing his panel.

Tollywood sources say Prakash Raj has considerably bright chances of winning the election as MAA president. He enjoys the backing of Megastar Chiranjeevi.

In 2019, actor-producer Naresh was elected as MAA president, defeating Shivaji Raja, who was contesting for a second consecutive term.

On Naresh's panel, Jeevitha Rajasekhar was elected as general secretary while her husband actor Rajasekhar was elected as executive vice-president.



Ram Charan celebrates 43 years OF CHIRANJEEVI'S ACTING



Actor Ram Charan on Thursday celebrated 43 years of acting career of his father Megastar

Chiranjeevi with a photo on social media. Sharing a photo collage of Chiranjeevi from his first release *Punadhiraalu* in 1978. However, his *Punam Khareedu* released first on September 22, 1978 in theatres.

In his four decades of cinematic journey, Chiranjeevi has starred in more than 150 movies and is continuing to rule the box office as Megastar. Remembering his acting

debut, Chiranjeevi tweeted: "While 22 August is my birthday, September 22 is my birthday as an actor. It is the day the art form took birth in me and introduced me as an actor with the blessings of you all. An unforgettable day of mine. Feel humbled & grateful for the invaluable of lakhs of my bros & sisters made this day possible (sic)."

Chiranjeevi completed the 150th mark in his movies with *Khaidi No.150* and currently has a bunch of films in the pipeline. While his *Acharya* is in the last leg of its production, he commenced the second schedule of the *Godfather* movie in Ooty on Wednesday.

Chiranjeevi also has *Bholaa Shankar* and an untitled project with director Bobby in the works.



Shalini can't keep calm about Bollywood debut

Arjun Reddy actress Shalini Pandey, who is all set to make her Bollywood debut in the Ranveer Singh starrer *Jayeshbhai Jordaar*, says she has been looking forward to the film's release for more than a year now. Shalini, who turned a year older on Thursday, said: "I've been crazily looking forward to the release for more than a year now and I can't wait for audiences to see the film. I know it's a good film and I also know it's a very special film which we made with so much love and dedication."

For Shalini, the experience of working in this film has been emotional as it is her first Hindi film debut. "I can't wait for the film to release because I know people are going to love the film and the characters. Also, I can't wait for theatres to open, because I want people to go to theatres, even I want to go

back to theatres and watch the film there on the big screen as this film has its own journey, and I want people to experience it as soon as possible. I literally can't wait, it's so special and I get excited every time when I think about the film releasing," an elated Shalini shared.

The talented actress has landed a three-film contract from Aditya Chopra, who is mentoring her to be an actress.

She said, "Working with YRF with a three-film contract is a big deal, it's a big launchpad for sure. It is a dream come true, I've grown up watching Yash Raj Films, and I always wanted to be a YRF heroine."

The actress says her parents are happy because they have been watching a lot of movies. "I couldn't have imagined it, to be very honest, it happened all of a sudden, with *Jayeshbhai*, and it has started with a very special film," she said.

RCB seek return to winning ways against resilient CSK

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Star-studded Royal Challengers Bangalore would look to shrug off the crushing defeat in the previous outing and get their mojo back when they take on Mahendra Singh Dhoni's resilient Chennai Super Kings in an Indian Premier League (IPL) match, here on Friday.

While RCB will look to start afresh, CSK got a confidence-boosting 20-run win against defending champions Mumbai Indians on Sunday night. It is imperative for RCB to improve upon their batting as they seek to keep their place in the top half of the points table. It will be important that the openers -- Devdutt Padikkal (217 runs) and skipper Virat Kohli (203 runs) -- provide a solid start. But the opening duo would also need support from the middle-order, which crumbled against Kolkata Knight Riders.

The likes of Glenn Maxwell (233 runs) and AB de Villiers (207 runs) will have to perform in unison against a strong CSK attack. Australian Maxwell did justify his high price tag during the first leg, becoming the side's top scorer. He would be raring to go once again as will the ever-reliant De Villiers.

CSK could have suffered the reversal in their tie against Mumbai had it not been for youngster Ruturaj Gaikwad's mature unbeaten knock of 88 off 58 balls.

The team's leading run-getter Faf du Plessis (320 runs), Moeen



Ali were out for ducks while Ambati Rayudu was retired hurt on nought. Veterans Suresh Raina and Dhoni also failed to reach double digit scores and the side was reeling at 24 for 4. But Gaikwad was not ruffled and kept

his calm, steering the three-time champions to a respectable 156 for 6. He stitched crucial partnerships with all-rounders Ravindra Jadeja and Dwayne Bravo, who smashed 23 runs off eight deliveries, taking the team over the 150-run mark.

Defending a modest total, CSK showed immense resilience as the bowlers led by pacer Deepak Chahar and Dwayne Bravo handed the "Yellow Army" their sixth win of the season.

A win on Friday will take

them back to the top of the table. CSK will also have the option to choose young England all-rounder Sam Curran, who had been one of the breakout stars of last year's IPL, shining with both the bat and the ball.

I respect team's decision to let Pant stay as captain: Iyer

PTI ■ DUBAI

Shreyas Iyer says he relished captaining the Delhi Capitals in the IPL but completely respects the team management's decision to let Rishabh Pant stay as leader of the pack till the end of the 2021 season.

Iyer had led the Capitals to the summit clash of the 2020 season but he missed the first phase of this year's season due to a shoulder injury and the management asked Pant to captain the side.

The 26-year-old returned to the side before IPL's resumption after the COVID-19 forced break but the Capitals chose not to change the leader again, keeping Pant in the captain's chair.

The young Mumbai batsman, who hit a blistering 47 in team's win on Wednesday night, said he understands team's policy and has no complaints.

"When I was given the captaincy, I was in a different frame of mind and my decision-making and temperament level was very good and I benefited from it in the last two years," Iyer said at the post-match press conference.

"This is part of the decision-making from the franchise or whatever decision they took, I respect the fact and Rishabh is leading the side well from the start of the season and they thought that he should be continued till the season end and I completely respect the decision," he added.

The 26-year-old said he continues to enjoy the pressure situation as he thrives in such circumstances.



"And no drastic change has come that my focus has increased in batting. When I was captain, I like to soak in the pressure, when there is pressure, there are more challenges and, in such situations, I perform, that is my mind-set."

"Even today (Wednesday) when I went in, there was pressure to win the game. The wicket was playing uneven, so the mind-set is the same that being a main part of the team, you have to finish the match and whenever I play, my mindset is that I play till the last ball and see to it that I make the team win."

The aggressive batsman it is a "really good feeling" to contribute in team's win in his first match post comeback.

"I wouldn't say that I'm satisfied because the hunger has just gone up and the appetite keeps on increasing every match you play, so yeah, not satisfied or not contained," he said after DC demolished Sunrisers Hyderabad by eight wickets.

You have to be best on that day: Rohit on match against KKR



FIANS ■ ABU DHABI

Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma believes that T20 is a format in which one has to be at his best on that day. He added that the match against Kolkata Knight Riders in the Zayed Cricket Stadium on Thursday will not be a cakewalk for his team.

"I honestly don't believe in past records because T20 is game of/on that particular day what happens. It's a game of that. You have to be best on that day," said Sharma in a video posted by the franchise on social media. Mumbai vs Kolkata matchup in the IPL presents a very one-sided story. In 28 matches between the two teams, Mumbai, IPL winners for five times, have the dominant hand, winning 22 times against Kolkata, the two-time champions.

"They (KKR) are a good opposition. They play cricket really well as a team and they will be obviously coming off from some confidence after their last win. So, it's not going to be a cakewalk for us. I know we've had a very handy record against them. But it's important we turn up really well on that particular day and do the job," added Sharma.

Sharma missed Mumbai's first match of the UAE leg of IPL 2021, the 20-run defeat to Chennai Super Kings in Dubai on Sunday. Chasing 157, Mumbai were hurt by lack of partnerships by their batsmen. "When you are chasing a score like 157, you need to build those partnerships. Small partnerships and make sure that you are keeping yourself in the game as long as possible," observed Sharma.

The 34-year-old praised New Zealand pacer Adam Milne, who took two wickets for 21 runs in the match against Chennai. "Adam Milne, especially, is coming from a very good tournament in UK. He's a good bowler, bowls really fast. It's all about getting that confidence and he got the confidence in the first game. So, I just hope that he builds on it."

Sharma concluded by saying that the defending champions are capable of making a fightback in the tournament. "We just have to come back and comeback really strong and tick those small boxes. I think, if you look at the potential in this squad, we have got all bases covered."

Army Red withdraws from quarterfinal due to Covid

FIANS ■ KOLKATA

The Durand Cup quarter-final match between Army Red and FC Bengaluru United (FCBU), scheduled for Friday at the Kalyani stadium, has been called off after a Army Red player tested positive for Covid-19 virus on Thursday.

As the player had come into contact with other teammates during Thursday's training session, the Army Red squad decided to withdraw from the tournament as a result and



FCBU received a bye into the semi-finals.

All decisions have been taken, keeping in mind the health and safety of players and officials primarily and the continuity and success of the tournament, the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) of 130th Durand Cup informed in a release on Thursday.

It is learned that one player of Army Red tested positive in the mandatory Rapid Antigen Test conducted in the morning. He was asymptomatic while the

other players have tested negative.

The organising committee has decided to go ahead with other matches as they are being held at other venues and there has not been any contact between the players since the last Covid test which had come negative for the said player.

Meanwhile, the LOC has also decided to shift the quarter-final match between FC Goa and Delhi FC from the Mohun Bagan ground to the Kalyani Stadium because of heavy rains in Kolkata.

Odisha to host Men's Junior Hockey WC

FIANS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha will host the International Hockey Federation's (FIH) Men's Junior Hockey World Cup from November 24 to December 5 at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced on Thursday.

Addressing a special event organised here for this purpose, Patnaik said that recently the Hockey India had approached the state government to support it for the Men's Junior Hockey World Cup, which is to be held in two months' time.

"It is a short notice for making arrangements for such an event, especially during the pandemic period. But since the country's prestige is at stake, we readily agreed to support," he



said. Stating that the junior India team had won the last hockey World Cup, he said, "As a defending champion, I am sure that our team will emerge victorious again on home turf." The Chief Minister further said that hockey has a special place in the minds of the people of Odisha and hockey players from the state have led the country in many international tournaments.

Paralympics bronze winner Sharad diagnosed with heart inflammation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tokyo Paralympics bronze medal-winning high jumper Sharad Kumar has been diagnosed with heart inflammation and has undergone a few more tests, reports of which are still awaited.

Kumar, who won a bronze in the T-42 high jump event in the Tokyo Paralympics on August 31, was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) after experiencing chest congestion last week.

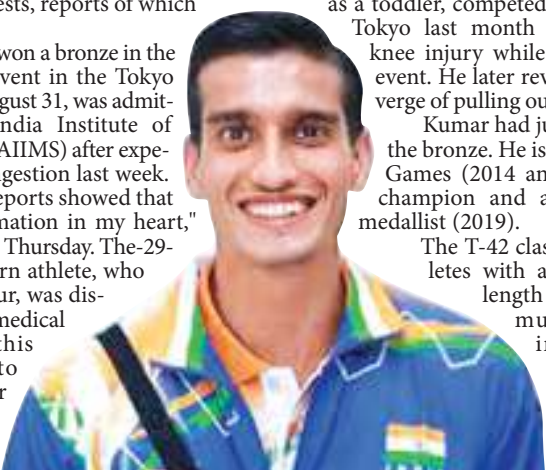
"The earlier reports showed that I have an inflammation in my heart," Kumar told PTI on Thursday. The 29-year-old Patna-born athlete, who stays in Chhatrapur, was discharged from the medical facility earlier this week but had to come back for some more tests.

"I have come

back here for more tests. Since I live just 10 minutes away, I had asked the hospital authorities to allow me to go home," he added.

Kumar, whose left leg was paralysed after he was administered a spurious polio vaccine as a toddler, competed in the T-42 final in Tokyo last month despite suffering a knee injury while training before his event. He later revealed he was on the verge of pulling out of the competition. Kumar had jumped 1.83m to win the bronze. He is a double Asian Para Games (2014 and 2018) high jump champion and also a world silver medallist (2019).

The T-42 classification is for athletes with a leg deficiency, leg length difference, impaired muscle power or impaired passive range of movement in the legs. The athletes compete in a standing position.



HC asks Centre to conduct inquiry into allegations against TT body

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday stayed the Table Tennis Federation of India's mandate on compulsory attendance at the National Coaching Camp in order to be selected for any upcoming international event and asked the Centre to conduct an inquiry into



Manika Batra's complaint against the sports body. Justice Rekha Palli further said that if warranted, the Union Sports Ministry may look into the affairs of the TTFI as well. Justice Palli was hearing a plea by Batra who was left out of the Indian contingent for the upcoming Asian Table Tennis Championships and has alleged that the national coach Soumyadeep Roy "pressurized" her to "throw away" an Olympic qualifier match in favour of one of his personal trainees.

The judge said the rule mandating compulsory attendance at the national camp has been enforced "at a point when there was a complaint pending against the national coach" and the same "does not inspire confidence". "They are overreaching the court. I will issue a notice of contempt. I pass an order and you appoint a new person. This is shocking... I am expressing my anguish," the judge stated. "I am of the view that the operation of the rule is required to the stayed till the next date of hearing. Respondent no. 2 (Sports Ministry)...Is itself inclined to hold an inquiry into the serious allegations by the petitioner. There is no reason why respondent no 1 (federation) should continue with its rule," she ordered.

La Liga: Asensio, Benzema star as Real beat Mallorca 6-1

FIANS ■ MADRID

Marco Asensio scored a hat-trick and Karim Benzema struck a brace of goals as Real Madrid soared on their goal-scoring prowess to thrash Mallorca 6-1 and rose to the top of the table in the Spanish La Liga.

Asensio scored in the 24th, 29th, and 55th minute while Benzema struck in the third and 78th minute as Real Madrid produced another goal-fest for the Santiago Bernabeu faithful. Isco scored the sixth goal in the 82nd minute while Lee Kang-In got the

lone goal for Mallorca in the 25th minute.

The game was a lively affair and played at a high intensity throughout. The Real got off to an electrifying start when Benzema latched onto a missed controlled ball by Gaya and fired it past goalkeeper Manolo Reina to net his seventh goal of the league campaign after with just three minutes on the clock. In the 7th minute, the hosts almost doubled their lead when Marco Asensio's in-swinging corner kick was cleared off the line by the defence.

The visiting goalkeeper Reina was once again beaten in the 229th minute. Rodrygo picked up the ball inside the box with his back to goal, turned, and crossed. The ball deflected off both Valjent and Reina falling kindly for Asensio who slammed in the rebound for his first goal of the evening.

Mallorca's response was immediate, as Lee Kang-In produced a fine piece of individual skills before curling the ball superbly past Thibaut Courtois.

Real took control after Mallorca reduced the margin.



The game was an end-to-end affair, Benzema linked up with Asensio after 29 minutes, his superb control and finish saw him dispatch the ball expertly past

Reina. The Balearic midfielder doubled his tally and could have made it three seven minutes later. Vinicius Jr. delivered to the far post, Benzema got on the end of it and headed towards the penalty spot where Valjent was on hand to clear Asensio's effort off the line as the team went for half-time with Real leading 3-1.

The intensity did not let up after the break and Real Madrid came close to the fourth goal on two separate occasions. Firstly, Benzema played the ball into the path of Vinicius Jr but his spectacular left-footed cut-back to his

marker in the 48th minute was kept out by Reina. Rodrygo then picked up the ball in his own half, raced past Battaglia, and delivered a perfect ball for Benzema to head home. However, the goal was ruled out by the referee after he spotted a foul by the striker.

Real could not be denied for long and the Los Blancos' fourth goal came in the 55th minute courtesy of a superb effort by Asensio, who received the ball on the edge of the area before firing in a left-footed shot that Reina could do nothing about.

Natarajan's positive COVID-19 test did not impact game: Bayliss

PTI ■ DUBAI

Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Trevor Bayliss has asserted that their pacer T Natarajan's positive COVID-19 result did not impact their performance against Delhi Capitals on Wednesday since all the players are used to last-minute setbacks.

The game went ahead after other members of SRH squad tested negative but Delhi Capitals cruised to an eight-wicket win with 13 balls to spare. "I don't think that would have



affected the result of the match. They played way too well for us tonight. It was a little bit of an upset," Bayliss said at the post-match press conference.

"Natarajan was going to play, but these guys are professional players. Every now and then, there's an injury just before play and you have got to make a late replacement. So, I am sure all of the players are, in a way, used to that. But we hope Nattu (Natarajan) gets over it pretty quickly and we can move on," added Bayliss.

The Sunrisers Hyderabad coach said Delhi Capitals' world-class tall pacers used the wicket pretty well and deserve the credit for scripting their team's victory.

"Give Delhi the credit. They bowled particularly well. They have got some world-class bowlers and upfront some world-class very fast bowlers, so they had a good day. We didn't have such a good day and that's the game of cricket,"

"Their bowlers upfront bowled exceedingly well. A lot of pace and used the wicket well with cutters, with the ball just holding in the wicket little bit and jumping up a little-bit, those tall fast bowlers took full advantage of it."

Women's European Championship cash doubles, vast gender gulf

AP ■ NYON

UEFA has doubled prize money for the Women's European Championship while maintaining vast disparities with the cash distributed for men's tournaments. The 16 teams in the women's competition next year will share 16 million euros (\$19 million), while 4.5 million euros (\$5 million) will go to clubs who release their players. The 24 teams at the men's European

Championship shared 371 million euros (\$435 million) in UEFA prize money this year, but clubs were also guaranteed at least 200 million euros (\$235 million) for the release of players. UEFA said it was "ensuring that more money than ever before is distributed across the women's game."

The Women's European Championship is being hosted by England next July after being delayed by a year due to the pandemic.