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KEERTHY
SURESH'S MOM
TO PLAY A
CAMEO?
Page 12GUJ: RIJJU INAUGURATES COUNTRY'S
FIRST SPORTS ARBITRATION CENTRE

Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju on Sunday inaugurated the country's first 'Sports Arbitration Centre of India' here in Gujarat which will serve as an independent body to fast track disputes in the sports sector. Rijju said this centre will have "a far-reaching impact" and play an important role in expanding the country's sports sector. "Sports Arbitration Centre of India (SACI) is going to give a major push to make the sports sector big. Because when the sector grows, there will emerge lots of issues attached to it. So you have provisions to handle those emerging issues," he said after the inauguration.

RSS-LINKED WEEKLY TERMS AMAZON
AS 'EAST INDIA COMPANY 2.0'

E-commerce major Amazon has been termed as "East India Company 2.0" by the RSS-linked weekly, Panchjanya, which has also alleged that the firm has paid crores of rupees in bribes for favourable government policies. In its latest edition, which will hit the stands on October 3, Panchjanya has carried a cover story that is highly critical of Amazon. "Whatever the East India Company did in the 18th century to capture India, the same is visible in the activities of Amazon," the article titled "East India Company 2.0" reads.

ARMY OFFICER SETS NEW GUINNESS
RECORD FOR 'FASTEST SOLO CYCLING'

An Indian Army Officer has set a new Guinness world record for 'Fastest Solo Cycling (Men)' by covering a distance of 472 km from Leh to Manali in 34 hours and 54 minutes, a defence spokesman said on Sunday. Lt Col Sripada Sriram of the strategic Strikers Division started cycling from Leh in Ladakh at 4 am on Saturday, he said. Lt Col Sriram has set a new Guinness world record for the 'Fastest Solo Cycling (Men)' from Leh to Manali (in Himachal Pradesh) on September 26. The total distance covered was 472 kilometers with a total elevation gain of approximately 8,000 metres, the spokesman said.

ROWDY CELEBRATIONS ACROSS NORWAY
WITH END OF COVID MEASURES

Police in Norway on Sunday reported dozens of disturbances and violent clashes including mass brawls in the Nordic country's big cities after streets, bars, restaurants and nightclubs were filled with people celebrating the end of COVID-19 restrictions. The Norwegian government abruptly announced Friday that most of the remaining coronavirus restrictions would be scrapped from Saturday and that life in the nation of 5.3 million would return to normal. The unexpected announcement by Prime Minister Erna Solberg late Friday afternoon to drop coronavirus restrictions the next day took many Norwegians by surprise.

You must shout &
demand 50% quota
in judiciary: CJI to
women lawyers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India N V Ramana on Sunday exhorted women lawyers to strongly raise their demand for 50 per cent reservation in the judiciary while assuring them of his "total support".

"I don't want you to cry but with anger, you have to shout and demand that we need 50 per cent reservation," he said.

The CJI said that it's an issue of thousands of years of suppression and women are entitled to the reservation and added, "It's a matter of right, and not a matter of charity."

He said, "I want to say that I strongly recommend and support the demand of a certain percentage of reservation in all law schools of the country for women, so that they can join the judiciary."

Speaking at a felicitation function organised by Lady Advocates of Supreme Court for the nine newly appointed judges, including three women judges, CJI Ramana said he has modified Karl Marx's "Workers of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chain" quote for the occasion and added: "Women of the world unite. You have nothing to lose but your chain." The CJI said, You all are laughing.

2

Srikakulam bears the brunt as
'Gulab' begins to make landfall

2 fishermen dead, 1 missing, 3 swim to safety

VKL GAYATHRI
■ VISAKHAPATNAM/SRIKAKULAM

The coastal areas of Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh were badly affected under the influence of 'Gulab' cyclone which started making landfall on Sunday night.

According to the reports, several trees were uprooted in various coastal villages of Srikakulam district due to heavy rain accompanied with gales.

According to reports, six fishermen V Nayakara, V Chiranjeevi, P Hemarao, K Bhimarao, Y Paparao and B Mohan Rao from

Manchineellapeta village, purchased a fishing boat two days ago and ventured into the sea. While three of them reached the shore safely late on Sunday evening, two others died while trying to swim ashore. The whereabouts of another fisherman are yet to be known.

One of the fishermen informed his relatives that they were in danger as the sea had turned very turbulent. With this, Minister of Fisheries Dr. S Appala Raju alerted the rescue teams and the Eastern Naval Command to rescue the fishermen.

2

ECoR cancels, diverts trains

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In view of the Gulab cyclone severity, the East Coast Railway (ECoR) cancelled, diverted and rescheduled several trains. Leaving originating station on September 26, Train 08445 Bhubaneswar Jagdalpur special, Train 02097 Bhubaneswar Junagadh Road special and Train 08127 Rourkela Gunupur special have been cancelled

Leaving the originating station on September 27, Train 08446 Jagdalpur- Bhubaneswar special, Train 02098 Junagarh Road Bhubaneswar special, Train 08128 Gunupur Rourkela special also cancelled.

The East Coast Railway also diverted several trains for the safety of the passengers. Also, several trains were rescheduled due to the impact of the Gulab cyclone.

Parishad poll results may trigger
new political alignments in StateSNV SUDHIR
■ VIJAYAWADA

Amidst frenzy of the ruling YSRCP sweeping all the ZPTCs and MPTCs with the results of Parishad polls being declared last week, the State has witnessed two important political developments. Firstly, the TDP bagged a few MPPs in both Godavari districts and one in Krishna district with the support of old friend Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena.

Secondly, Jana Sena's Political Affairs Committee (PAC) chairman, Nadendla Manohar, who is considered number two in the party,

announced Pawan Kalyan will stand in solidarity with the agitating workers of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP).

After the 2019 polls, both Jana Sena and BJP had announced electoral understanding and together they fought the polls thereafter, be it polls for urban and local bodies, Parishad polls or Tirupathi Lok Sabha bypoll.

This means if the indications are to be believed Pawan Kalyan will directly take part in the agitation taken up against its alliance partner BJP-led Centre's decision to privatise VSP. These two devel-

opments may appear to be two isolated entities. But, the political pundits and analysts are pointing out that they may act as pointers to how the political landscape may change in the coming days even as Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has been gaining strength with each passing day despite the Opposition onslaught. A glance at the election data of 2019 polls reveals that in almost 40 Assembly segments and a few Lok Sabha segments, Jana Sena has marred the prospects of TDP.

2

India disappointed over
China's reluctance to permit
stranded Indians return

PTI ■ BEIJING

India has expressed disappointment over China's reluctance to permit the return of thousands of stranded Indian students, employees and their families due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over 23,000 Indian students, hundreds of Indian businessmen and workers have been stranded in India as China has suspended the visa process as well as flights from India citing the COVID-19 situation.

2

JSP symbol 'tumbler' tumbles
out of CEC gazette notification

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a rude shock to the Janasena Party, the party symbol was not listed in the gazette notification issued by the Central Election Commission. The CEC has issued a gazette notification on the allocation of party symbols to the political parties.

As per the notification the Janasena party common symbol "glass tumbler" was not in the list published by the CEC.

The CEC has reserved symbols to three regional parties in Andhra Pradesh and finalized the symbols for eight national parties. Earlier on



May 23, the CEC had issued a gazette notification allocating

reserved symbols to only three of the recognised regional parties in the state. In AP, the ceiling fan symbol was reserved for the ruling YSRCP, the bicycle symbol for the opposition TDP. While the reserved symbols for BJP, Congress, CPM, CPI, Trinamool Congress, BSP, NCP and National People's Party under the national party status. However, the CEC has recently issued a notification in the Free Symbols category stating the glass and glass symbol allotted to the Janasena party in the last Assembly elections.

2

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Bhadrapada & Krishna Paksha

Panchangam

Tithi : Shashthi 15:42

Nakshatram : Rohini 17:41

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

Rahukalam : 7:38 am - 9:08 am

Yamagandam : 10:37 am - 12:06 pm

Varjyam : 8:38 am - 10:27 am,

12:00 am - 1:48 am

Gulika : 1:36 pm - 3:05 pm

Good Time : (to start any important work)

Amritakalam : 2:04 pm - 3:53 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:43 am - 12:30 pm

VIJAYAWADA
WEATHER

Forecast: ScatteredThunderstorm

Temp: 29

Humidity: 83%

Sunrise: 6:05 am

Sunset: 06:8 pm

Current Weather Conditions

Updated SEPTEMBER 26, 2021 5:00 PM

CLAP - JAGANANNA SWACHH SANKALPAM

CM to flag off 2,600 garbage vehicles on Gandhi Jayanti

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy will flag off 2,600 garbage collecting vehicles marking Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary on October 2. The government will launch an innovative programme called 'Clean Andhra Pradesh (CLAP) - Jagananna Swachha Sankalpam' with the aim of providing safer and better sanitation facilities and services in both rural and urban areas. Jaganmohan Reddy will formally launch the programme by flagging off 2,600 garbage collecting vehicles at Benz Circle, Vijayawada marking Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary. Through this program, the government is taking steps to provide clean and healthy conditions to every citizen living in the state with the aim of raising living standards under the slogan 'Clean Villages, Clean Cities, Swachh Andhra Pradesh, Swachha



Bharat'.

The 'CLAP - Jagananna Swachh Sankalpam' programme's goal is to make the State a litter-free, open defecation-free, and urination-free state, with the participation of citizens in the programme by distributing three dustbins of blue, green,

and red colours per household to collect 100 percent segregated garbage. In addition, the government encourages people to compost garbage at home.

Also, wet garbage, dry garbage, and hazardous waste collected from every household are trans-

ported to Garbage Transfer Centers by garbage tippers. The wet waste and dry waste from the garbage transfer centres are collected by separate vehicles for the treatment projects. Then compost manure or biogas is made from wet garbage. In addition to disposing of the harmful waste in dry waste, 'CLAP - Jagananna Swachh Sankalpam' is making efforts to bring recyclable materials into use and thus working completely in purifying the waste generated from cities in the state. As part of the programme, the government is giving high priority to garbage collection, transportation, treatment, revenue generation and visual cleanliness of the environment. As part of this program, the Government is moving forward with formulating specific action plans.

Most of the buildings were not properly maintained or rendered useless. Four staff members were hired to manage each centre and their salaries were paid to them and

all necessary steps were taken to maintain the centre and restore it to run smoothly.

Along with the existing solid waste processing centres, 4,171 centres are going to be constructed, making all the centres functional by providing necessary infrastructure machinery and sanitation workforce.

About 14,000 tricycles will be distributed to Gram Panchayats in the State for garbage transportation. As part of the drive, to further improve garbage collection and transportation, 1,000 autos will be distributed to 10,000 above-population villages and villages nearby urban local bodies.

The government will also distribute 6,417 incinerator devices to dispose of wastes such as masks and sanitary pads by burning them at high temperatures and incinerating them to make them environment-friendly.

2

Herbal drug Fifatrol
can help check
dengue: Expert

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a rise in dengue, influenza and viral fever cases in different parts of India, experts claim that herbal drugs like Fifatrol can help in boosting immunity and hasten recovery from these diseases. Professor K N Dwivedi of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) said in Ayurveda, there are some herbs and concoctions which can prevent the progression of infections due to seasonal flu and vectors such as mosquitoes and eliminate them gradually.

He pointed out that Fifatrol, a formulation of time-tested immunity strengthening herbomineral preparations like guduchi, daruharidra, apamarga, chirayata, karanja, kutaki, tulsi, godanti, mrityunjaya rasa, tribhuvana kriti rasa and sanjivani vati, has been found to help fight infection, flu and cold.

2

Monday Mirchi

Sajjanar fighting a losing battle?

Former super cop VC Sajjanar may have become a hero among people and a section of the Police Department by the unique ways in which he dealt with rapists and acid throwers, but his latest avatar as TSRTC MD has pitted him against market forces that suggest he is now fighting a losing battle. When he took charge, employees' hopes were raised that good days are ahead for the corporation. However, Bajireddy Govardhan Reddy, soon after taking over as chairman, issued an ominous statement about eventual privatisation of RTC if it cannot be turned around. This has put Sajjanar in a piquant position. For, he has just struck a chord with the employees by his surprise inspections, travels by bus -- including those with his family members, visiting ailing employees in hospitals etc. -- all done to make employees feel comfortable with him in the driving seat of the corporation. With Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao reportedly giving four months to the corporation to 'perform or perish', Sajjanar will have to do much more than being in the good books of employees. The larger question is: Can the dreaded former police officer make the corporation profitable in four months? Tough task indeed for a man who had shined as a tough cop.

Cops 'working hard' to bare govt!

It is OK if cops occasionally go beyond their call of duty, considering social media always highlights those who break the mould, say by dancing in a unique style while regulating traffic at an intersection, holding traffic to help chicks cross the road, or penalizing helmetless riders and later compensating them with a helmet on the spot. Hyderabad traffic cops too do their part whenever it rains heavily. They are on the ground, drenched to the bone, but helping people and clearing puddles. But when pictures of how hard these cops are working amid the downturn appear on social media, they also expose chinks in the government's armour. People, particularly netizens, while appreciating the cops' seva, point how the government has done nothing to stop the inundation of roads in the first place. Previously GHMC used to face the flak that traffic cops are doing the civic body's job, while civic staffers just don't get onto their feet. With the diminishing role of GHMC Commissioner, citizens are now directly attacking the government, armed with proofs of cops' hard work amidst pouring rain.

WhatsApp'Guru' Mahesh Bhagwat does it again!

IPS officer and Rachakonda Commissioner of Police Mahesh Bhagwat has done it again. Thanks to his mentoring as a 'Guru' via WhatsApp groups, over 100 candidates from various States have bagged good ranks in the latest Civil Services exam, including 14 figuring among the top 100 rankers. Despite his demanding job, Bhagwat allocates time for his passion: mentoring Civil Services aspirants. He takes pride in guiding them to successfully crack the interview and the personality test post prelims and

main. He reaches out to them through various WhatsApp groups, earning the epithet 'WhatsApp Guru'.

Elevation of outgoing CS Adityanath Das

The outgoing Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh, Adityanath Das, may have been embarrassed with the state government naming his successor well in advance and not preferring an extension. As Sameer Sharma prepares to take over as the new CS from October 1, Das can now leave his present position with his head held high considering that the AP government has appointed him as the Chief Advisor to the State government with the status of Cabinet Minister and posted him at AP Bhavan. For Das, this would be a smooth transition to a position in which he would be handling what has been his forte for years. Das, who has headed the Irrigation Department in the combined AP as well as in residual AP state, will hopefully iron out the differences between the Telugu States over water sharing and other irrigation-related issues, and help resolve the matters amicably.

SEC fights for his own voting right

It is strange to hear, but true. He who has secured the voting right to lakhs of people is now fighting for his own voting right. Andhra Pradesh State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar, upon being removed from his post by the AP government, launched a legal battle and reassumed his post. Even after retirement he has been fighting with the AP government in the court. As SEC, in his five-year tenure, he had addressed the complaints of those who wanted voting rights. When he was in government service in the combined Andhra Pradesh Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar had transferred his name to the voters' list in Hyderabad from that of his native place Duggirala in Guntur district. After retirement, Nimmagadda, having decided to settle down in Duggirala, applied to the state election authorities for transfer of his name from the Hyderabad voters' list to that of his native place Duggirala. When Nimmagadda verified the voters' list of Duggirala village, he did not find his name. Later, he came to know that the election authorities had rejected his application. Nimmagadda has gone to court again, challenging the decision of the election authorities.

CMO babu cut to size

Sulking AP babus have a reason to cheer as Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has sidelined a CMO official who, with his 'know-it-all' attitude, had irked them by his intrusive behavior and unwarranted interference in every aspect of government functioning. Since he was known to be close to Jagan, none of them dared to talk back whenever he poked his nose. Jagan apparently had an eye on him and showed him his place when he crossed his limits. This episode suggests that it is not easy to work with the Chief Minister and that those who try to take undue advantage of proximity with him will bite the dust.

- Yours truly

AP among 14 States selected under Rs 7,270 cr scheme for road safety

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) is all set to roll out a new Rs 7,270 crore State Support Programme for Strengthening Road Safety to help realise the vision of 'Zero road fatalities on Indian roads.'

The centrally-sponsored six-year programme will be implemented in 14 states that are now contributing to 85 per cent of the total road fatalities in the country.

While MoRTH will lend a budgetary support of Rs 3,635 crore, an amount of Rs 1,818 crore will be secured as loan each from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

Of the total cost, Rs 6,725 crore will be disbursed to the 14 states based on their performance while MoRTH will use Rs 545 crore for capacity building activities.

The scheme will incentivise state governments to drive road safety interventions at the grassroots level with the main objective of curbing road accidents and achieving a reduc-

tion in fatalities, the MoRTH said in a concept note circulated to the target states.

The target states under the scheme are Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Telangana, West Bengal, Odisha, Haryana and Assam.

"This is an output and outcome-driven scheme wherein the performance of the states will be assessed on 11 mandatory and three elective indicators (road safety interventions). The grants will be distributed to the states based on the Key Performance Indicators," top official sources told PTI.

The preliminary project report prepared by MoRTH says the Motor Vehicle Amendment Act (2019) was brought in as an important intervention to achieve the fatality reduction target.

"To leverage the strengthened law, it is necessary to have focused interventions in the related areas of road safety like road engineering, enforcement,

road safety advocacy and media campaigns and efficient emergency response systems. The states need to be supported to act on result-oriented strategies. Hence the new scheme," the sources said.

India reported about 1.51 lakh road deaths in 4.49 lakh accidents in the year 2019. Of the total deaths, the 14 identified states accounted for 1,27,379.

The number of fatalities remained consistent over the last five years.

In 2020, 1.32 lakh road deaths were recorded across the country, with the Covid-19-induced lockdown resulting in the reduction in number.

The new scheme targets to reduce the fatality rate by 30 per cent by March 2027.

Cyclists, two and three-wheeler riders and pedestrians have been identified as 'vulnerable road users' who comprised about 54 per cent of road traffic deaths in India.

Under the new scheme, performance-based indicators have been proposed with the aim of reducing the impact of

road accidents on these vulnerable users.

An Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD) will be rolled out in all states by 2022-23 and applied for identifying and rectifying all black spots on state highways and major district roads.

Road safety audit will be made mandatory on state highways and urban roads by the end of the scheme period.

From 2022-23, MoRTH will launch a 'Challenge Round' every year to provide incentives to states on additional road safety interventions and also to promote competition among states.

"The grant of Rs 7,270 crore will only meet partial fund requirement for the scheme. States are expected to make their own budgetary allocations and also implement projects in Public-Private Partnership mode," MoRTH told the states.

Independent Verification Agencies will scrutinise the states' achievements, based on which the Central grant will be released.

'Tollywood not fiefdom of Power star'

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development Botsa Satyanarayana has strongly objected to the statements of Janasena Party president Pawan Kalyan.

Responding to Saturday's harsh comments on Ministers and YSR Congress leaders by the Janasena chief, the MA &UD Minister took exception to his language and attitude. Addressing the media on Sunday, the minister said that no government would be spared if it places a burden on the people. "Why will the government be silent, if they wish

to hike the movie ticket prices? As there is no control on the movie ticket prices, the government, only after consultation with the people in the film industry, has decided to introduce an online ticketing booking system. In fact, the distributors have urged the government to introduce the online ticket booking system. Even the distributors have welcomed the government's decision. What is Pawan Kalyan's stand?" Botsa Satyanarayana said.

Talking about Pawan Kalyan's language, the minister also said that in the name of freedom of speech, if he speaks anything against any-

body, no one will spare Pawan Kalyan. "Telugu film industry is not the fiefdom of Pawan Kalyan. There are several seniors and experienced artistes, producers and distributors. If they have any grievances, seniors like Chiranjeevi and Mohan Babu can represent the industry in talks with the government. It is not fair on the part of Pawan Kalyan to talk in the manner he did," Botsa Satyanarayana countered.

Talking about the Cabinet reshuffle, the senior minister said that it is completely the Chief Minister's prerogative and everyone should accept his decision.

1,184 new Covid-19 cases, 11 deaths in AP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh added 1,184 fresh coronavirus cases to its tally that now touched 20,46,841 on Sunday.

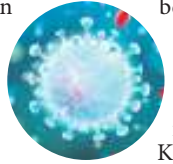
The latest bulletin said 1,333 patients had recovered from the infection in 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday while 11 others succumbed.

The gross recoveries now increased to 20,19,657 and toll to 14,136. The num-

ber of active cases is now 13,048.

In 24 hours, East Godavari reported the highest 218 and Kurnool the lowest three new cases. Six districts added

between 110 and 170 while five others registered between 10 and 60 fresh cases. Chittoor district saw three fresh fatalities, Guntur and Krishna two each, Prakasam, Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam and West Godavari one each in a day.



Pawan Kalyan comes under fire from YSRCP

Continued from Page 1

The amount collected through the portal will be transferred to the theatre owners through Reserve Bank gateway the next day, he said and slammed Pawan Kalyan for his remarks without prior knowledge.

He criticised Pawan Kalyan for claiming that the State government had been planning to take loans through an online ticketing system and said the amount is a pittance to run the State. He reminded that the State government has

been spending Rs 60,000 crore every year for implementing welfare of the people.

The Minister slammed Pawan Kalyan for his remarks on price of tickets and said it was Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy who has given a 40 percent hike to movie tickets after eight years and added that it was an utter lie that the Chief Minister was crushing the film industry.

He said Pawan Kalyan should question the Prime Minister and Central

Government over GST and taxes on Movies and questioned if he has dared to do so.

The minister said Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy had clearly said that reservations to Kapu community is not possible and Rs 10,000 crore will be allotted for their welfare and questioned what he did for the welfare of Kapu and Balija communities.

Elsewhere, Irrigation Minister, P Anil Kumar Yadav too came down heavily on Pawan Kalyan.

Continued from Page 1

Paddy and horticulture fields were inundated at several places. As many as 50 NDRF troops along with the equipment, fire services personnel, police and local in the villages are participating in the relief and rescue operations.

At about 7.30 pm, three of the missing fishermen Y Papa Rao, V Chiranjeevi and K Bhi

marao reached the shore safely near Akkupalli village of Kali nagapatnam. They informed that V Nayakarao and B Mohanrao had died at the sea and the whereabouts of P Hemarao are yet to be ascertained.

Meanwhile, the officials have evacuated over 200 people from the coastal villages to the Cyclone Relief Centres and also distributed food to

them.

The APEPDCL has set up control rooms to restore power lines and police.

Meanwhile, incidents were reported from Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram districts. However, rain lashed both the districts throughout the day.

Earlier, the Eastern Naval Command and Naval Officers-in-Charge Odisha

You must shout & demand...

Continued from Page 1

Yes, I don't want you to cry but with anger, you have to shout and demand that we need 50 per cent reservation. It's not a small issue but an issue of thousands of years of suppression. It is high time we have 50 per cent representation of women in the judiciary. You are entitled (to it), it's a matter of right. It is not a matter of charity. It is unfortunate that some things are realised

very late." He said he will be "very happy" whenever the goal will be realised.

"All my sisters and all of you have carved out exceptions for people in the society and women of the society and for that matter youngsters whether male or female are all waiting and looking at you as if you are role models. Your success stories will make them more impulsive and we expect more women will join the profession and we will

achieve the goal of 50 per cent shortly. I wholeheartedly support all initiatives taken by you and so long as I am here I will support all of your causes," he said. The Chief Justice of India said that he believes in mixing with people, knowing about their ideas so that he understands what is the problem the society is facing, but added these days he is visiting lots of places and has got bored of giving speeches.

CM to flag off 2,600 garbage vehicles on Gandhi Jayanti

Continued from Page 1

Also, 10,731 High-Pressure Toilet Cleaners are allocated for the cleanliness of community toilets. During the monsoon season, 10,628 thermal fogging machines are being distributed to control mosquitoes, which are common during the outbreak of diseases like dengue and malaria.

Comprehensive Liquid Waste Management will be undertaken in 135 major panchayats.

On the other hand, in 10,645 gram panchayats, the Jagananna government will also manage vermi-compost and transfer non-recyclable waste to nearby cement factories and waste-to-energy plants.

India expresses disappointment...

Continued from Page 1

Indian Ambassador to China Vikram Misri referred to the woes of these stranded Indians at the 4th High-level Track-II Dialogue on China-India Relations held virtually on September 23.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹254
Without Skin	₹274
Broiler at Farm	₹141
EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	441
HYDERABAD	428
VISAKHAPATNAM	470
RETAIL PRICE (IN VIJAYAWADA)	₹4.41

Parishad poll results may trigger new political alignments...

Continued from Page 1

Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan himself lost in two segments due to the presence of TDP candidate in a triangular fight. It indicates that Jana Sena and TDP ate into each other's votes in the 2019 polls.

Though due to the 'Jagan wave', TDP might not have overcome the anti-incumbency but could have managed to escape the humiliation of facing its worst ever-defeat by bagging just only 23 seats by improving its tally that would have helped keep the morale of the party cadre intact.

Though it did not field candidates in the 2014 polls, Jana Sena had fought polls in alliance with BJP and TDP. Pawan Kalyan canvassed extensively for the alliance in 2014 polls. By the 2019 polls, Pawan Kalyan had snapped ties with both BJP and TDP and joined hands with

Left parties and fielded Janasena candidates.

In Achanta mandal of West Godavari, TDP grabbed the MPP post with the help of Janasena. Out of the 17 MPTCs, the TDP has won seven as against six by the YSRCP. Jana Sena won four MPTC seats. Now, with the support of Jana Sena, TDP could bag the Maldal Parishad. As part of the agreement, the TDP got the Mandal Parishad president post, while Jana Sena was given the vice-president post in Achanta.

Similarly, TDP bagged the Duggirala Mandal Parishad where the Opposition party won nine MPTCs, YSRCP eight, and Jana Sena one. Here too, Jana Sena lent its support to TDP. In other mandals like Kadiyam, Mallipuram and Razole in East Godavari district and Mopidevi in Krishna district, TDP and Janasena reached an agreement to grab the

Mandal Parishads.

TDP insiders pointed out that the latest developments are welcoming as during the 2019 polls both Jana Sena and TDP had to face electoral losses as they contested separately. Now, a section of TDP leaders wish to firm up an alliance with Janasena for the 2024 polls.

In 2014, the TDP-BJP combine secured a vote share of 46.79 percent and YSRCP got just 2 percent less votes. Coming back to the 2019 polls, the margin of vote share between YSRCP and TDP was almost 10 percent.

While the Congress could get 1.17 percent vote share, BJP mustered 0.84 percent, CPI, CPM and BSP, which contested in alliance with Janasena secured 0.11, 0.32 and 0.28 percent vote share respectively. Janasena contested in 137 Assembly segments and managed to get close to 7 percent votes.

Janasena, TDP marred each other's chances in 2019

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In the 2019 polls when Janasena candidates lost deposits in many segments, TDP leaders believed the votes polled to Pawan Kalyan's would have changed the equations in their favour as they had lost by slender margins.

For instance, TDP's six-time MLA Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar lost by around 1,100 votes. In Narendara's constituency, Janasena's Parvathi Boni got around 12,000 votes.

In Vijayawada Central, YSRCP's candidate Malladi Vishnu won by a margin of just 25 votes. The Janasena-backed CPM candidate Chigurupati Babu Rao secured 29,333 votes and played a spoilsport for TDP candidate

Bonda Umamaheswar Rao. In Mangalagiri, TDP supremo Nara Chandrababu Naidu's son Nara Lokesh had to face embarrassment in his poll debut. Lokesh lost in a triangular fight with YSRCP's Alla Ramakrishna Reddy and Janasena supported Left party candidate Muppalla Nageswara Rao.

Lokesh lost by a margin of 5,200 votes and Nageswara Rao secured 10,000 votes. In Bhimavaram, Pawan Kalyan lost by a margin of over 8,000 votes to YSRCP's Grandhi Srinivas and TDP's Puliparthi Ramanjaneyulu, who stood third, securing close to 54,000 votes.

"Similar parallels can be drawn in Gajuwaka Assembly segment and Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha.

TDP's presence spoiled the chances of Pawan Kalyan in Gajuwaka and Janasena candidate former CBI joint director, VV Lakshminarayana in Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha segment. Even if Janasena and TDP jointly contested in 2019 such an alliance would have not helped stop the Jagan juggernaut. However, there would have been a face-saving scenario for both TDP and Janasena. It's never late. Even now, if the Janasena, TDP and BJP join hands and start working towards the 2024 polls from now they can give some good fight to YSRCP, which is in a solid, comfortable and formidable position at present," observed a political analyst.

Herbal drug Fifatrol can help check...

Continued from Page 1

Developed by AIMIL Pharma, the herbal drug is being recommended by Ayurveda experts for even dengue and viral flu patients and it is very effective.

According to sources, during a trial on dengue patients at AIIMS, Bhopal, Fifatrol was found to have increased blood platelet count significantly. Professor Dwivedi explained that there are four types of dengue -- serotypes one to four -- at play, and the prevalence of serotype-two, which is more severe than other types, has been growing very fast across states.

In serotype-two dengue infection, platelet count drops rapidly, and the body's immune response becomes hyper active leading to a cytokine storm that can damage the organs.

This variant of dengue also impacts the kidneys, he said.

Cabinet rejig: Speculation rife over berths for EG dist leaders

PNS ■ KAKINADA

The comments of Minister Balineni Srinivasa Reddy created commotion in the YSRCP leaders in the EG district and they started guessing who will be in and who will be out of the state Cabinet after the reshuffle which is likely to be taken place next month.

Balineni Srinivasa Reddy made it clear openly that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is going to replace all the ministers with new faces. Three MLAs-Kurasala Kanna Babu, P Viswarup and Pilli SubashChandra Bose- were taken into the Cabinet from the EG district.

However, later Pilli Subash Chandra Bose was elected to the Rajya Sabha, and in his place, Ch Srinivas Venugopla Krishna was inducted into the Cabinet. At present three MLAs of EG district were accommodated in the Cabinet.

With the statement of Minister Balineni, the MLAs in



the district have begun lobbying to find place in the Cabinet. The followers of Minister Venugopal Krishna optimistic that he would not be dropped from the Cabinet as he was inducted only a year ago.

YSRCP leaders said that Rajanagaram MLA Jakkampudi Raja, Tuni MLA Dadishetti Raja, Kothapeta MLA Chirla Jaggireddy, Mummidivaram MLA Ponnada Satish, Pithapuram MLA P Dorababu and MLC Thota Trimurtulu are in the race in forefront for the Cabinet berth. Chirla Jaggareddy and Dadishetti Raja

Energy Minister Balineni made it clear openly that CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is going to replace all the ministers with new faces.

were given Whip posts. Dadishetti Raja might be considered to be inducted into the Cabinet, his followers said.

Interestingly, Rajanagaram MLA Jakkampudi Raja is said to be very close to the Jagan Mohan Reddy's family and would definitely be taken to the Cabinet, a YSRCP senior leader opined. However, Jakkampudi Raja has been at loggerheads with MP Margani Bharat for the last few months. The followers of MLA Raja afraid that the MP will play spoilsport in Raja getting ministerial berth. "If MLA Raja is not given Cabinet berth,

another Kapu community leader Thota Trimurtulu will be taken into the Cabinet", a YSRCP leader opined.

If present minister Venugopal is dropped, another BC community leader and Mummidivaram MLA Ponnada Satish would be inducted into the Cabinet, YSRCP leaders predicted. Mr.Satish is the second time MLA.

Present minister P Viswarupe belonged to the SC community. If he is dropped, there is no senior leader belonging to the same community in the EG district. The chances to take Anaparti MLA Chirla Jaggireddy into the Cabinet are bleak as there are many senior leaders in Reddy community.

If present minister P Pushpa Vani is dropped, Rampachodavaram MLA Dhanalakshmi, who belonging to the ST community will be taken. The MLAs of the EG district have started efforts to get a ministerial berth and are lobbying for the same.



Youth killed in bee attack

PNS ■ KAKINADA

In bizarre of incident, a youth was fatally stung by a swarm at the famous tourist place Jalatarangini in Mareduilli mandal on Sunday.

Police said that a group of tourists went to the place. Suddenly, honey bees went amuck and attacked on the tourists.

Hundreds of honey bees stung Mohammad Abdul Khan (21). He was admitted to the Mareduilli PHC. When he was being shifted the area hospital in Ramachodavaram for better treatment he died on the way.

Two others were also stung by the swarm and they were undergoing treatment. The police were trying to find out the details of the deceased and victims.

Not proper for AP govt to back Bharat Bandh: Somu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The BJP has found fault with the Andhra Pradesh state government for extending support to Bharat bandh to be observed on September 27.

In a statement here on Sunday, BJP state president Somu Veerajulu alleged that the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy headed government had announced its support to the Bharat bandh only to divert the attention of people from the deteriorated financial position of the state.

The BJP leader found fault with the Left parties and some Farmers unions for giving a call for Bharat bandh demanding the repeal of three agriculture laws, stating that though the Union government invited the leaders for negotiations on the agriculture laws they had given a call for bharat bandh. Those who were opposing the three agriculture laws lacked knowledge and they had no sincerity on the farmers' welfare.

Referring to the announcement of I&PR minister Perni Venkatramaiah that the AP government would participate



in the Bharat bandh tomorrow, the BJP state president slammed that it is unethical and improper to the AP government to announce support to Bharat bandh when the state was stuck in a deep financial crisis. The AP government is joining hands with the Left parties which work opportunism as an agenda, he lashed out. Mr.Somu Veerajulu described the farmers agitations as an artificial agitation, being carried out with the support of vested interests.

The BJP state president said that the Narendra Modi headed Union government is creating MSP, e-marketing to the farmers and the new laws would provide an opportunity to the farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country

without hindrances. The new laws would also provide protection to the farmers from being deceived by the mediators, he claimed.

"Some elements are trying to destabilize the Modi headed Union government. There is a big conspiracy behind calling for Bharat bandh. The people of the country should understand the conspiracy and support the Union government", he appealed.

The BJP senior leader also flayed the Telugu Desam party for extending support to Bharat bandh. He defended the Union government's decision of privatizing the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) which has been earning huge losses for the last few years and stated that the TDP has no moral right to object to the move.

The Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy headed government is ruining the cooperative system in AP, and at the same time, it is opposing the privatizing of VSP, he criticised. The BJP state president called upon people not to participate in the Bharat bandh.



Six thieves arrested, Rs 7.5 L recovered

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The police arrested six thieves, who were committing thefts in aqua forms and recovered Rs.7.5 lakh cash, one lorry, one motorcycle and 10 fishing nets from them.

DSP Nagaraju told the media here on Sunday that complaints were received on the thefts at the aqua forms at Ongole, Sigarayakonda and Tanguturu surrounding areas. The police formed a special team led by CI M Lashkman to nab the thieves.

The police team conducted

checking of vehicles last night at Tanguturu toll plaza. The police inspected a lorry at the toll plaza.

The six thieves who were in the lorry tried to flee after seeing the police. The police chased and apprehended them.

The police seized Rs.7,50,000 cash, the lorry, one motorcycle, 10 fishing nets altogether worth Rs.16,90,000. The modus operandi of the gang that they used to steal prawns and other materials at the aqua forms during nights.

Swift action of SP saves a woman, two toddlers

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The swift action taken by Superintendent of police Malika Garg resolved a problem of a housewife.

The SP said that on Saturday, Chikalla Amulya a resident of Vijayanagara Colony here sent a text message to SP Malika Garg complaining that her husband Pratap Kumar, working as an SBI networks operator, torturing her physically and mentally every day without giving the household expenses.

On Saturday, her husband had beaten her and gone out. After that, her father-in-law Roosevelt tortured her and kicked her out of the house. She said she has a five-year-

old child suffering from autism and three-year-old twins. She said her father-in-law thrown her and her children out of house without showing any kindness and sent a message to Prakasam district SP as she could not go to the police station with his three children during this Covid situation.

The SP immediately responded and directed the Central Compliant Cell in-charge and SB-2 Inspector N. Srikanth Babu to find out the details and to take appropriate action. The Disha CI sent Disha staff ASI Bhaskara Rao and Woman PC Kranti to the victim's house.

They took the compliant from her and warned her in -

laws and explained them the consequences of taking legal action. After that, she and her three toddlers were allowed into home.

The staff then came to the Disha police station and handed over the report taken at the victim's house to Disha CI Murali Krishna and he registered a criminal case (Crime No. 118/2021) against her husband and in-laws.

On Sunday, the CI summoned her husband, in-laws and complainant Amulya to the Disha police station and counselled them. The complainant thanked the Prakasam district SP for sending police officers to her house and doing justice for her by responding to a message.



Minister promised all help: Film Chamber

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Narayandas Kishandas Narang, president of the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce, has said that Information Minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) has promised to address various issues faced by the film fraternity.

Narayandas Kishandas said that they expressed their concerns to the Minister about various issues being faced by Telugu Film Industry. He said that they are immensely grateful to the AP Government, under the leadership of Chief Minister, YS Jaganmohan Reddy for patiently understanding and positively responding to all the concerns and assuring that all the concerns will be favorably addressed in the near future.

He said that due to the current situation in the Industry that has suffered the onslaught of the division of the states, the pandemic and other issues, the industry is at the worst possible

situation. Various individuals have expressed their views, opinions and anguish on different platforms. These are not the voices of the Industry as a whole. "We wish to reiterate that the Apex body of our Industry is the Telugu Film Chamber of Commerce in both the Telugu States. We have always been supported by our Governments over the years. Without their support we will not be able to survive," he said.

He further said that thousands of people and their families who are dependent on the film industry have been suffering since March 2020. At this juncture we require the support of our Leaders & Governments to be large hearted and extend their continued support to us. The Telugu States of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana are the two eyes of the film industry and both the Chief Ministers have been proactive and always extended their encouragement and support to us, he added.

On the occasion, he said that the government would try to resolve any issue regarding the farmers irrespective of the party or association they belong to.

Like no other State government in the country, the YSRCP government had spent Rs 51,500 crore towards agriculture and allied sectors in the last two years, he added.

"We hope the issue will be solved amicably very soon. Our party believes that if the farmer prospers, the State and nation will prosper and ours is a farmer-friendly government," Nagireddy added.



RINL CMD opens 50 MT park near Blast Furnace

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

RINL CMD Atul Bhatt and Director (Operations) A K Saxena inaugurated a 50 MT park near Blast Furnace 1 (BF-1) complex on Sunday. Senior officers, union leaders and employees witnessed the milestone achievement of 50 million hot metal production of Godavari BF-1 since inception which was commissioned in 1990. On the occasion, the CMD congratulated RINL collective and the employees of BF-1 for achieving the historic milestone of 50 MT of hot metal production.

Godavari BF-1 was commissioned in 1990 by B Kannayya, the then senior-most employee of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

The furnace was put down in October 2013 for up-gradation and modernisation and its second campaign started in July 2014 and produced 12.26 MT so far.

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WG police launch Jagruthi to reform bootleggers

PNS ■ ELURU

The West Godavari police headed by Superintendent of police Rahul Dev Sharma have launched 'Jagruthi programme' especially to reform those who were indulging in brewing illicit liquor.

The SP with an objective of reforming the families, who depended on distilling illicit liquor for eking out livelihood in Jangareddygudem division, launched Jagruthi programme in which the police would impart training in electrical works, welding works, tailoring, handicrafts, bumbling and photo frame works in a bid to reform the illicit-liquor brewers.

A programme was organised in the Dandamuri Kalyanamandapam on Sunday at Jangareddygudem on the occasion. As many as 100 persons, who were resorting in distilling

The police counselled the illicit liquor brewers and sellers and assured them to extend the required help, if they give up the illicit activities and start leading a respectable life.

illicit liquor in the division would be imparted training in various professions. The police also counselled the illicit liquor brewers and sellers and assured them to extend the required help, if they give up the illicit activities and start leading a respectable life.

Speaking on the occasion, the SP said that no body born criminal. Addicting to vices and making friendship with criminal-minded people convert people into criminals. The police have taken an initiative to metamor-

phose those who were in illicit brewing of country-made liquor profession.

"We are taking all steps and proving the illicit liquor brewers the needed help to make them to lead a respectable life in the society. We are also creating awareness among them on laws and counselling them in a bid to reform them", the SP said. At the same time, the SP warned of stringent action, if anybody resorted to illegal activities like distilling of country-made liquor and selling them.

Talking to the media i the programme, Madhu said that he used to distill country-made liquor and he was arrested. Cases were registered against him and the court sentenced him to 3 years jail term which disintegrated his family. "Had there been such programme like Jagruthi previously, I would not have resorted to such crimes. I will strive to reform others also", he said.

A woman said that her husband was sent to prison in a criminal case and her family had lost breadwinner. Her family experienced many difficulties and they were now realized their mistakes. She promised that they would not resort to illicit activities and lead a respectable life. Special Enforcement Bureau SP C Jaga Rama Raju, Kovvuru DSPs B S Srinadh, Dr.Ravikiran and CI Gowry Shankar were among those who present.



SHORT TAKES



Police rescue 3 children from begging, counsel parents

KAKINADA: The police found three kids begging alms on the streets in Pithapuram town on Sunday and freed them. Police said that a person took the notice to Superintendent of police M Ravindranath through social media that three kids were begging on the streets in Pithapuram and appealed him to take steps to free the kids from begging. Responding to the appeal, the SP directed the police officials concerned to save the kids from begging profession. The police found the three sibling kids Pamarru Kirthi (5), Pamarru Meenakshi (6) and Pamarru Krishna (7) on the street. The brought their parents and they were counselled by the ICDS officials and sent them to their village. The police officials warned the parents not to force their children to beg on the streets.



SP makes surprise visits to Maoist-affected areas

KAKINADA: Superintendent of police M Ravindranath Babu paid surprise visits to some of the Maoists affected areas in Rampachodavaram and Chintoor sub-divisions on Sunday. He inspected the CRPF camp and sentry outpost and interacted with the CRPF officials and knew the security arrangements there. The SP held review meeting with the police officials and reviewed the security arrangements at the police stations in Maoist affected areas. The SP directed the officials to take stringent steps and enhance checking of vehicles to contain the illegal transport of ganja. He asked the officials to strengthen the intelligent network and augment the vigil on the Maoist activities. The SP directed the officials to ensure that the tribal people get the welfare schemes, being implanted by the government, so that they would not fall in the trap of Maoists. In-charge OSD Karanam Kumar and Rampachodavaram ASP Krishnakanth accompanied the SP.

INDIA CORNER

Cong asks workers to join 'Bharat Bandh' on Sept 27

The Congress on Sunday asked all its workers, state unit chiefs and heads of frontal organizations to take part in the 'Bharat Bandh' called by farmer unions on September 27 to protest the Centre's three agri laws. The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, the umbrella body of over 40 farm unions spearheading the farmers' agitation, had earlier appealed to the people to join the bandh. Congress general secretary (organization), K C Venugopal, said the Congress and its workers will extend our full support to the peaceful 'Bharat Bandh' called by farmer unions on Monday. "We believe in the right of our farmers and we will stand by them in their fight against the black farm laws," he said in a tweet. "All PCC Presidents, Chiefs of Frontal Organizations are requested to go out in front with our Annadatas in their peaceful Bharat Bandh across the country," Venugopal said. The government and farmer unions have held 11 rounds of talks so far, the last being on January 22, to break the deadlock and end the farmers' protest.



New AIIMS will correct regional imbalance, says Nitin Gadkari

The new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences built in the country are destined to correct the longstanding regional imbalance in the health sector, according to Union minister Nitin Gadkari, who also said doubling the number of AIIMS will better serve people's aspirations. The minister of road transport and highways was speaking at a digital event to mark the 3rd Foundation Day of AIIMS, Nagpur. The programme was also attended by Bharati Pravin Pawar, the Minister of State for Health among others, a health ministry statement said. "Keeping in view the requirements of the Vidarbha region, with the establishment of an institute of repute like AIIMS, Nagpur, at Nagpur, the patients of all the bordering states of Central India will have access to affordable and modern medical facilities. "However, we have to ensure that the benefits of these facilities reach not only to the cities but also to the people of the remote villages of our region," Gadkari was quoted as saying in the statement.



Warm welcome for PM Modi at Palam airport on return from US

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was given a warm welcome by BJP leaders, including party chief JP Nadda, after his arrival from the US at the Palam airport here on Sunday. Modi, who walked for nearly two kilometres meeting party workers and the people lined up along the road outside the airport, thanked them for welcoming him. Lavishing praise on the prime minister upon his arrival in the country from the United States, Nadda hailed him as a "global leader" who has made India a "global player". Citing Modi's meetings with US President Joe Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris, besides his participation in the Quad meet and address at the UNGA, the BJP president said the prime minister put across strongly and frankly global issues and also India's views over threats like terrorism and expansionism. Folk artistes from different states in their traditional costumes greeted the prime minister playing different kinds of drums and musical instruments, Delhi BJP vice-president Virendra Sachdeva said.



PM urges people to ensure no one is left out of vaccination

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the festival season, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged people to keep following Covid protocol and ensure that no one is left out of vaccination's "circle of safety".

In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radio broadcast, the prime minister also said that common people are getting connected to digital transactions through fin-tech Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and its prevalence is increasing.

Noting that the festival season is approaching, Modi said when the whole country will celebrate 'Maryada Purshottam' Shri Ram's victory over untruth, people should also remember the fight against Covid. "Team India is making new records everyday in this fight. With regards to vaccination, the country has made



many such records which are being talked about the world over," the prime minister said in the radio broadcast that was recorded before he left for the United States for an official visit. Asserting that every Indian

"Those around you who have not gotten vaccinated also have to be taken to the vaccine centre. Even after getting vaccinated, the necessary protocol has to be followed," he said, urging the people to continue taking precautions.

"I hope that once again Team India will keep the flag flying high in this fight...Wishing you all, every person in the country, the best for the forthcoming festivals," Modi said.

The prime minister's word of caution comes as the festival season is round the corner with Durga Puja, Dussehra and Diwali celebrations approaching.

In his remarks, Modi also stressed on the resolve for "economic cleanliness", asserting that the way building of toilets enhanced the dignity of poor, similarly economic cleanliness ensures their rights.

PM maintains busy schedule to keep fatigue at bay: Officials

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ability to maintain a high level of energy while keeping a busy schedule on his trips abroad has drawn curious enquiries from admirers and sceptics alike. Official sources say that one of his tricks is to pack his hours with back-to-back engagements so that it doesn't let the mind think much about any fatigue.

"When he used to visit the US in the 1990s, an airline at that time used to give a monthly travel pass at heavily discounted rates. To make the most of it, Modi would always travel in the night as this ensured that he could visit most places while not having to spend a penny on hotels. His night would be invariably spent at the airport and in the plane," a source said.

Centre plans to intensify operations against Naxals

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Intensifying operations against the Naxals and choking the flow of funds to them were the two key issues discussed at a high-level meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and attended by six chief ministers and top officials of four other states here on Sunday, sources said.

Action against frontal organisations of the Maoists, filling up the security vacuum, concerted action by the Enforcement Directorate, the National Investigation Agency and the state police were other vital issues discussed during the nearly three-hour-long meeting. The chief ministers who attended the meeting were Naveen Patnaik (Odisha), K Chandrashekar Rao (Telangana), Nitish Kumar (Bihar), Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Madhya Pradesh), Uddhav Thackeray (Maharashtra) and Hemant



Soren (Jharkhand), official sources said. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Bhupesh Baghel of Chhattisgarh, Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan did not attend the meeting. Their states were represented by senior officials. According to sources, intensifying operations against the Naxals, filling up the security vacuum, choking the flow of funds to extremists and concerted action by the ED, the NIA and the state police were discussed threadbare in the meeting.

Focused investigation and prosecution of cases, action against front organisations, coordination amongst states, capacity building of state intelligence branches and special forces of the states, construction of fortified police stations were other issues discussed at the meeting.

The home minister reviewed with the chief ministers and officials the security situation and ongoing operations against Maoists and development projects being carried out in the Naxalism-affected areas, the sources said.

PM to launch Digital Health Mission today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the Pradhan Mantri Digital Health Mission on Monday via video conference, his office said.

The pilot project of National Digital Health Mission had been announced by the prime minister from the ramparts of the Red Fort on August 15, 2020. Currently, the Pradhan Mantri Digital Health Mission (PM-DHM) is being implemented in pilot phase in six Union Territories.

In a historic initiative, Prime Minister Modi will launch the PM-DHM on September 27, 2021 at 11 AM via video conferencing, which will be followed by his address on the occasion, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement.

The nationwide rollout of PM-DHM coincides with National Health Authority (NHA) celebrating the third anniversary of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), the statement said. Union Health Minister Mansukh Madaviya will be present on the occasion.



Based on the foundations laid down in the form of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile (JAM) trinity and other digital initiatives of the government, PM-DHM will create a seamless online platform through the provision of a wide-range of data, information and infrastructure services, duly leveraging open, interoperable, standards-based digital systems while ensuring the security, confidentiality and privacy of health-related personal information, the PMO said.

The mission will enable access and exchange of longitudinal health records of citizens with their consent, it said.

The key components of PM-DHM include a health ID for every citizen that will also work as their health account, to which personal health records can be linked and viewed with the help of a mobile application, a Healthcare Professionals Registry (HPR) and Healthcare Facilities Registries (HFR) that will act as a repository of all healthcare providers across both modern and traditional systems of medicine.

SC students asked to wash utensils, keep them separate

PNS ■ MANIPURI

A school principal here was suspended and two cooks terminated over complaints that scheduled caste students were asked to wash their mid-day meal utensils themselves and keep them separate, a senior official said Sunday.

Chief Development Officer Vinod Kumar said the action was taken after village pradhan

Man Hanju Devi's husband Saheb Singh filed a complaint Saturday, alleging SC students were being discriminated against at the government primary school in Dodapur in Bewar block.

Singh said in the complaint that the SC students, around 80 in all, unlike others were made to clean their utensils after eating the meal and asked to keep them separate.

Upon receiving the complaint, the CDO, along with Basic Shiksha Adhikari Kamal Singh and project director KK Singh, inspected the school and its kitchen, and found the allegations true, the officer said. Taking cognisance of the matter, the CDO terminated the services of the cooks on the spot and suspended principal Garima Singh Rajput on the charges of dereliction of duty, he said.

VP Naidu arrives in Jaisalmer on five-day Raj visit

PNS ■ JAISALMER

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu arrived here on Sunday on a five-day visit of Rajasthan. Governor Kalraj Mishra received Naidu. Rajasthan Energy Minister B D Kalla, Rajya Sabha member Rajendra Gehlot and Jaisalmer MLA Rooparam welcomed Naidu.

The vice president will visit Tanot Mata temple, Longewala war museum and Sam sand dunes in Jaisalmer on Sunday.

Owaisi factor creates ripple among parties

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Asaduddin Owaisi's AIMIM, which is going to contest next year's Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls on the promise of creating leadership among Muslims, has created unease in the political parties that so far considered the members of the minority community as their core "vote bank".

Different castes, including Jatavs, Yadavs, Rajbharas and Nishads, which constitute a relatively small part of the population of Uttar Pradesh, more or less have their own leadership, but Muslims, who account for more than 19 per cent of the people in the state, do not see any united leadership. So the AIMIM, led by Owaisi, wants to end the "slavery" of Muslims in the hands of the Samajwadi Party (SP), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Congress, which had been using them as their "vote bank", according to the leaders of the party.

There are 82 Assembly segments in the state where Muslim voters are in a position to make or mar the political fortunes of the candidates.

Buoyed by winning five seats in last year's Bihar polls from the Muslim-dominated Seemanchal region, which gave jitters to the RJD and the Congress, Owaisi has already announced that his party will field candidates in 100 of the 403 seats in the Uttar Pradesh election expected to be held early next year.

The Hyderabad MP launched his poll campaign



from Ayodhya earlier this month and since then, has been addressing public meetings at different places.

AIMIM national spokesperson Syed Asim Waqar told PTI on Sunday that the main goal of the party is to create a political narrative and leadership among Muslims for the progress of the community and a better future.

"Even the so-called secular parties, which were getting the votes of the Muslims, never allowed a Muslim leadership to emerge. The report of the Sachar Committee has made out the condition in which the parties have pushed them to," he said. The opinions of experts differ on whether Muslims, after the rise of Hindutva politics, have become aware enough to create their own acceptable leadership. The SP and the BSP have accused Owaisi of serving the interest of the ruling BJP by trying to divide Muslim votes and dismissed any possibility of the AIMIM having any impact in the country's political heartland.

Srinagar air show makes a comeback

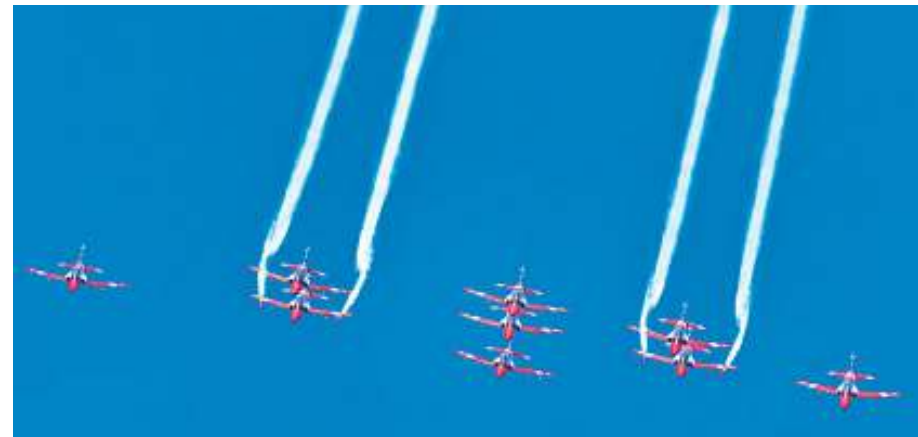
PNS ■ SRINAGAR

The skies over Srinagar roared on Sunday morning with fighter jets and Chinook helicopters exhibiting adrenaline-pumping manoeuvres at an air show conducted after 14 years here.

The air show organised by the Air Force Station, Srinagar and the government is part of the ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations, officials said.

The IAF's Akash Ganga skydiving and Suryakiran Aerobatic Display teams took part in it.

The main aim of the show, under the theme of 'Give Wings to Your Dream', was to raise awareness among the youth of the Kashmir Valley and motivate them to join the Indian Air Force and to promote tourism in the region, they said.



The event was witnessed by hundreds of school children and people from across the valley at the Sher-e-

Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) overlooking the Dal Lake here. It was flagged off by J-K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The event started with the oldest fighter jets of the IAF -- MiG 21s -- flying over the famous Dal Lake and past the enthusiastic audience at SKICC.

Punjab CM carries out first cabinet expansion

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi carried out his first cabinet expansion on Sunday, inducting 15 Cabinet Ministers which included seven new entrants. The new faces in the Channi Ministry are Randeep Singh Nabha, Raj Kumar Verka, Sangat Singh Gilzian, Pargat Singh, Amarinder Singh Raja Warring and Gurkirat Singh Kotli.

Rana Gurjit Singh has made a comeback after resigning in

2018 from the Amrinder Singh Ministry.

Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit administered the oath of office and secrecy to the legislators.

Brahm Mohindra, Manpreet Singh Badal, Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa, Aruna Chaudhary, Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria, Razia Sultana, Vijay Inder Singla and Bharat Bhushan Ashu, who were ministers in the previous Amarinder Singh led cabinet, were retained as Cabinet Ministers.

India's Mars probe completes 7 years in orbit

PNS ■ BENGALURU

India's Mars Orbiter spacecraft has completed seven years in its orbit, well beyond its designed mission life of six months.

"Indeed, a satisfying feeling," K Radhakrishnan who was then Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) led the Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) team told PTI on the milestone.

MOM is the maiden interplanetary mission of ISRO. Launched on November 5, 2013, the probe was successfully inserted into Martian orbit on September 24, 2014 in its

first attempt. MOM is primarily a technology demonstration venture and all the mission objectives were successfully met, according to officials of Bengaluru-headquartered India's national space agency.

The main lessons learnt were in the field of design and realisation of systems and subsystems, launch for interplanetary mission, insertion into other planet's orbit, operation of the spacecraft and scientific instruments around Mars orbit, they said. The lessons learnt have raised the confidence of ISRO scientists for taking up future interplanetary missions.



ISRO has been continuously monitoring the spacecraft

and its five scientific instruments, and officials said scien-

tific analysis of the data being received from MOM spacecraft is in progress.

On the health of the spacecraft, M Annadurai, who was the Programme Director of MOM, said the spacecraft's "moving elements are facing some issues and some of the redundancies we have to switch over." "The spacecraft's health is reasonably good considering that we are in the seventh year," Annadurai told PTI. He expects the spacecraft to have a mission life of probably another one year.

On the reasons for the long mission life, Annadurai said ISRO had done corrections

after learning lessons from the Chandrayaan-1 venture, in terms of reconfiguring the spacecraft and optimisation of fuel management, among others. Noting that Earth remote-sensing satellites typically have a mission life of seven to nine years, he said it was a very satisfying moment that India could establish that around Mars also, a spacecraft can be in operation for such a long period.

On some criticism in some quarters that scientific output of the MOM was "low", Annadurai said it was more of a technology-demonstration mission.

The influencer

Modi has had a good trip to the US, with markers among UNGA, Quad and magnates

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is back in India, having wound up his three-day visit to the US, after attending the first in-person Quad Summit, meeting other world leaders and addressing the UN General Assembly as its first speaker. It is in stark contrast to his earlier visits that were marked by hype, festivities and fanfare. This time round, the political dispensation in the US has changed from the much-friendly Trump Administration. Modi met US Vice-President Kamala Harris, Australian counterpart Scott Morrison, Japanese PM Yoshihide Suga and the CEOs of five multinational companies. The Australian and Japanese PMs are in the US for the Quad Summit (A virtual Summit was held in March this year). This diplomatic and military arrangement is widely viewed as a response to increased Chinese economic and military power. Addressing the Summit, Modi said Quad would act as a “force for global good” and “will establish peace and prosperity in the world”, he added. The culmination of the visit was, of course, the Prime Minister’s speech at the UN General Assembly that was high on rhetoric but piercingly aimed at China and Pakistan. Modi also addressed the Afghanistan situation and, without naming Pakistan, cautioned it against using Afghanistan for fomenting trouble. Modi said “regressive mind-sets were giving terrorism a political meaning”; a statement that may be interpreted as “don’t use terrorism as a tool of diplomacy and changing the geopolitics of the region”. For good effect, he underlined the need to be alert against any country using



Afghanistan’s vulnerability for “selfish interests”.

The context was that Pakistan PM Imran Khan had made direct and scathing attacks on India, insisting that the two nuclear powers have to “behave, else the consequences would be grave”. Modi, without naming either China or Pakistan, hinted that terrorism as a State policy was not a good idea and the countries should refrain from doing so. He also mentioned the accomplishment of the Indian presidency at the UN Security Council last month. Modi also referred to the issue of the “origins of the COVID virus” and the cancellation of the World Bank’s “Ease of Doing Business Index”, both of which have been laid at China’s door for a lack of transparency by the global institutions. He also emphasised the need for cooperation, saying he represented India as the “mother of all democracies”. Earlier, at a meeting with Kamala Harris, both sides emphasised safeguarding democratic values and upholding human rights in respective countries. Modi also offered condolences to the pandemic victims. Overall, it was a well-crafted speech and well delivered though his “*chaiwala*” reference is better avoided as it has become rather clichéd. Though Modi also had a meeting with President Joe Biden, it was more to do with protocol than anything else. The personal chemistry between them was clearly missing.

PICTALK



Goddess Durga's idols being readied ahead of the Durga Puja, in Hyderabad

S Lanka looks at empty plates as hunger gnaws



PRAFULL GORADIA

From a carefree, merry-making and well-fed nation, our neighbour has run out of foreign exchange, having overborrowed from China

Since 1964, I have been in touch with Sri Lanka intermittently. At the time, I was told that the butter and ice-cream they ate came from New Zealand. Many vegetables were also imported, including from India. A few days ago, I read that Colombo has declared a national “food emergency”. What their people eat as a habitual diet will now be from ship to mouth. The country has run out of foreign exchange; its Government over-spent on development by borrowing from China, a greedy lender. The takeover of Hambantota port by the lender was a signal that what Sri Lanka could not pay back China in cash, it is having to fork out in kind, namely real estate at the cost of its sovereignty.

Two characteristics of the Sinhala people I have noted are (One) they love life and enjoy themselves when the going is good. Two, they are a little suspicious of Indians, because of the Tamils. They fear that someday a situation may arise whereby India may take over Sri Lanka. Given identical lending terms by India and China, they would prefer the latter. The presumption is that the yellow giant is far away whereas India is next door along with its Tamils. The food emergency is the result of the focus on “today, tomorrow and the day after will take care of themselves”.

Truly, Sri Lanka has good guns but no bread. Right after its independence, Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) has not insisted on growing its staple food on a sufficient scale. In the early days and for years, the country concentrated on tending its tea gardens, rubber and copra trees. The foreign exchange earnings were so plentiful that there used to be a picnic of imported goods. The first painful pinch was felt in 1964 when NM Pereira was the Finance Minister and he went to Parliament to pass very stringent laws. After working a whole career, on retirement, foreigners were henceforth allowed to remit only ₹75,000 for Indians and ₹2,50,000 for others. The discrimination was severe. Had the Indian High Commissioner not been very helpful, my father-in-



law could not get permission to remit a total of ₹1,50,000 after working in a British Company for 32 years, all in Sri Lanka. Such was the foreign exchange famine suddenly discovered.

Although I must confess, the management at New Delhi was no better. In 1990, the Indian treasury had run out of foreign exchange. In order not to fail commitments overseas, the Government sent many crates of gold to banks in London. Fortunately, in 1991, India was gifted with a decisive Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao who liberalised and globalised Indian economy. He thus brought about an economic revolution.

A small country is vulnerable both economically as well as politically. Its Government must play very cautiously. Sri Lanka liberalised before India and recovered from the cave-in of 1964 that is described above. But any significant decline in foreign exchange earnings should be taken seriously. Otherwise, trouble can surround the economy before giving the Government a chance to draw in the reins. The picture of tea industry has been rather sad

A SMALL COUNTRY IS VULNERABLE BOTH ECONOMICALLY AS WELL AS POLITICALLY. ITS GOVERNMENT MUST PLAY VERY CAUTIOUSLY. SRI LANKA LIBERALISED BEFORE INDIA AND RECOVERED FROM THE CAVE-IN OF 1964

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A STRONG MESSAGE FROM THE UNGA

Sir — Calling India the mother of all democracies, PM Narendra Modi hails a clear message to the world that all those who want to tarnish India’s image by calling it an anti-secular State must watch their mouth. Also, the timely use of ‘Right to Reply’ by Indian diplomat Sneha Dubey to slam Pakistan for its attempt to propagate abhorrence against India on a global platform is equally commendable. India categorically highlighted strategic issues of geopolitics, inter-government, terrorism, UNSC Reforms, climate change and neighbours’ expansionism. India clearly messaged that it has no space for friendship with terror supporters.

Pakistan, who has blamed India many times at the UN General Assembly, must introspect where it stands against India. We do not need to remind Pakistan that it still remains in the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Thus, for peaceful inter-regional relations with India, it should cooperate rather than blaming. Also, Prime Minister Modi must bring forward the view-point of India, and showcase a glimpse of what India’s geopolitics and diplomacy will be in the years to come. India is and will be firm against all those forces who spread scorn in society.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

SNOOPING FOR NATIONAL SECURITY?

Sir — Pegasus is back in the news, thanks to the Supreme Court of India. It is claimed that this zero-click digital snooping spyware of the Israeli tech firm NSO Group, upon installation, follows the attacker’s command and controls servers to receive instructions and sends back the target’s private data, including passwords, contact lists, calendar events, text messages, and live voice calls. The attacker can control the phone’s camera and microphone as well. The spyware is designed to evade forensic analysis, avoid detection by antivirus software and can be deactivated and removed by the attacker. In short, the spyware is designed to invade people’s privacy.

No more false claims



In a significant ruling, the Supreme Court has stated that caretakers/ servants of a specific property can no longer claim ownership in that property irrespective of their long possession. This shows that the ownership of the property does not pass on to them merely because they enjoyed staying there for a long time. Therefore, the property should be vacated upon being asked by the owner. In Karnataka, during the Devaraj

Urs regime as the Chief Minister, tiller of the land was made its owner through a legislative action. Because of this obnoxious law, many owners lost their properties.

The order of a trial court and the High Court, which had refused to allow a plea of an owner for not proceeding on a suit filed by a caretaker seeking that he should not be vacated from the premises, has been set aside by the Supreme Court. The Bench, headed by Justice Ajay Rastogi, has come to the rescue of the owners who acquired the property with their hard-earned money. Had this judgment not come, and if the trial court order and High Court had come to stay, the plight of owners would have come to a sorry pass. The Supreme Court has observed that the trial court has committed a manifest error. This ruling in unambiguous terms has definitely come as a whiff of fresh air to the owners of the properties.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

and Government-approved labs, or just some random pathological laboratories are looting the public. The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare should probe into the matter. Those offering such cheap packages should be directed to give details of their labs in the SMSes along with their website details.

Any consumer who gives samples for tests should be given a unique ID and a changeable password whereby a complete record of his/her tests may be accessed from the website of the concerned laboratory. A reputed pathological laboratory of Delhi which also covers other cities has dual pricing for medical-tests. Charges for ordinary patients are much higher than those under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS). At least such dual pricing must not be allowed in health-services including for pathological and biochemical tests.

Madhu Agrawal | Delhi

INEXPENSIVE OR CHEAP?

Sir — There is a flood of SMSes on mobile phones offering a complete package of so many blood-tests at just ₹599 or less, that too, with home sample collection facility. But these SMSes do not give details and addresses of laboratories where those blood-tests are conducted. Such messages are available on Facebook as well. Either such offers do not come from recognised

Evergreen

Dev is the quintessential romantic ever since he graced the screen, to this day and forever

The Peter Pan of Indian cinema may have faded away 10 years ago, but not before leaving an indelible imprint on the hearts, minds and romantic doctrines of millions. He kept in thrall at least three swooning generations, who swore by his charisma, never-say-die spirit and debonair style. The soigne star — part of the unsailable troika comprising thespian Dilip Kumar and simpleton Raj Kapoor, who ruled the silver screen for over three decades — is best remembered for essaying Raju’s character in *Guide*. The 1965 movie, which was Dev’s first outing in colour and simultaneously shot in Hindi and English, was arguably a better show than even the much-hyped *Sholay*. The thinking masses adored it; it was much ahead of the times for addressing an issue like extramarital affair; and the one point that everyone claims worked for *Sholay* — that the characterisation was so good the audience still remembers each character — holds good for *Guide* too. After all, who doesn’t remember the voluble and exploitative



Raju, the beautiful Rosie, the jealous-repentant-revengeful Marco, Raju’s friend Gafoor and even the bit players?

His magnetism was such that youngsters took to puffing on cigarettes after watching him lip-sync *Main zindagi ka saath nibhata chala gaya* (*Hum Dono*). The number was voted the “best inspirational film song” in a survey by one of the top two national dailies a few years back. Since the time Gregory Peck influenced his mannerisms to developing an inimitable style of his own, Dev had had many an infatuation. His first famous affair was with Suraiyya, who was elder to him, but her grandmother forbade the alliance. Suraiyya never got married. With his swaying walk and impeccable dressing sense, it was no surprise that girls swooned over him. The Mayor of Bombay had to issue an appeal against the star appearing in public wearing a black suit after a girl fainted and fell from a multi-storey in the melee to catch a glimpse of the star. Dev looked so dashing that even Madhubala had to be content with the No. 2 slot in terms of grabbing eyeballs in *Kala Paani* (1958). Dev didn’t just spend his life, he lived. And loved. As the penultimate scene of *Guide* shows, after all the excesses, it all boils down to: “*Na deen hai, na duniya, sirf main hoon ... Main hoon ... Sirf main ...*”. Long live, Dev saab!

everywhere, be it Sri Lanka or South India. But to Sri Lanka, it makes a big difference. The price of a plain to medium tea was ₹2/kg (though earlier the weight was in pounds) in 1939. By now it should have been in step with the inflation, ₹600 to 800. But it is only the equivalent of ₹200 (Indian).

Garments are another Sri Lankan activity. When there is prosperity, it can earn good foreign exchange. On the other hand, when there is a crisis like the current one caused by COVID, there can be a slump in demand. People, short of money, can do without buying clothes for, say, a year or more. These are the kind of things that look like having brought trouble for Sri Lanka. More so, because the country has borrowings to return. Tourism is another cause of the crisis. It was the largest single foreign exchange earner for Sri Lanka. Due to COVID, it is substantially down.

In the interim, Sri Lanka virtually ignored India, probably embarrassed by its passionate affair with China. After the yellow giant claimed Hambantota, perhaps things changed somewhat. The current Indo-Sri Lanka ties have improved. India may offer food grains, wheat, rice and all else available. And India may consider swap loans whose return would be in Sri Lanka rupees. India can buy only Sri Lanka goods with the returned money against the swap loan. Sri Lanka has described traditionally as the Emerald Isle. It is indeed a beautiful country with sea on its periphery.

People, especially from the Western world, find it irresistibly attractive. The beaches are out of this world and monuments of Buddhism are also engaging, whether Anurudh-apuram, Pollanaruha or Sigirra. The Emerald Isle also has a charisma which few other equally beautiful places have. Its infrastructure for the keen tourists is praiseworthy with its many five-star hotels, its transportation *et al*.

(This is the first part of a series on India making multi-dimensional advancement across nations and spheres). (The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

SOUND BITE

We need to scale up our banking. There is a need for at least four-five more SBI-sized banks.



—Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman



We have a chance to stop climate change’s worst effects, but we have to act right now. We must pass our ‘Build Back Better’ Agenda.

—US President Joe Biden

Playing in overseas leagues gives you a lot of experience, especially in the T20 format. And, of course, you get to learn a lot.



—India batter Smriti Mandhana



You have to be blessed to be able to get a chance to make a film and that’s why I cling on to the studio.

—Filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali

The BJP Government does not have a single logical reason for why it is against the caste-based census.



—RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav

FIRST COLUMN

TIGRAY: SPARTA IN AFRICA



GWYNNE DYER

Tigray's army has already covered about a third of the distance to Ethiopia's Capital

We have to deal with anyone who's still shooting," said Getachew Reda, spokesman for the Tigrayan forces, last month. "If it takes marching to Addis to silence the guns, we will." In fact, Tigray's army has already covered about a third of the distance to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, since it took back its own provincial capital, Mekelle, in late June.

The fighting has been bloody, for the Ethiopian army is much larger, but the Tigrayan army is more professional and determined. Not only has it liberated all of Tigray except the far west, but it has also seized around one-third of neighbouring Amhara.

Seven million Tigrayans defeating the army of a country of 110 million people may seem odd, but Ethiopia is a patchwork quilt of dif-



ferent ethnic groups, languages and religions that was held together in the past by a centralised monarchy or dictatorship backed by ruthless military force. Until quite recently, it was Tigray that provided that force.

The Tigrayans earned that job by being the most effective guerrilla force in the long struggle to overthrow the former Communist regime, the Derg. They parlayed that role into an ethnic dictatorship that lasted from 1991 until just a few years ago. But the other ethnic groups then united to instal a new prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, who started to dismantle that corrupt autocracy.

He did it, but the Tigrayan military elite withdrew to their own homeland and sulked. It was a well-armed sulk, for almost half the Ethiopian army was based in Tigray, and it consisted largely of ethnic Tigrayans. When it became clear that Abiy's project to destroy the old ethnic pecking order was not negotiable, they rebelled.

This was all pretty inevitable, but then the Ethiopian prime minister decided to invade Tigray and end the problem for good. The Tigrayan army pulled out of the province's cities for a while, and by last November Abiy Ahmed declared the war over. But the Tigrayan leaders were just mobilising their forces, and in June they counter-attacked. The Ethiopian forces broke and ran, and most of Tigray was liberated without a fight.

If it had stopped there, some sort of Ethiopian state would have survived, albeit with a semi-detached Tigray, but Abiy then made the serious mistake of resorting to a blockade to starve the Tigrayans out. By now many people in landlocked Tigray are close to famine, but their leaders have countered with an invasion of Amhara province.

They are now within striking distance of the roads that carry 95 per cent of the Ethiopia's import and export traffic between Addis Ababa and the port of Djibouti. Their success has also emboldened the Oromo Liberation Army, a rebel army seeking autonomy or even independence for Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, to make an alliance with the Tigrayans.

If Abiy makes a quick deal with the Tigrayans that ends the blockade and recognises their independence and borders, he may have enough troops and credibility left to suppress the Oromos and other ethnic insurgents who will soon come out into the open. If not, Ethiopia probably splinters, and it's Yugoslavia all over again.

And what would the Tigrayans do next? Some of them are confident enough to dream of invading Eritrea and taking down President Isaias Afwerki, who sent troops to help Abiy invade Tigray.

Some of the Tigrayan elite may even be speculating about uniting the two countries. After all, half the Eritrean population speaks the same Tigrinya language, and joining the two together would give Tigray access to the sea, which sometimes comes in handy.

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

Two sides of the cooperation argument

Considering the high stakes involved, the tussle to control the cooperative sector has become the core of politics in Gujarat and Maharashtra



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

The recent decision of the BJP Government to constitute a new Ministry of Cooperation under the charge of Union Home Minister Amit Shah had mixed reactions. It was hailed by Government supporters as "the new entity which would help cooperatives across states progress as a true people-based movement reaching the grassroots". On the other hand, the opposition camp termed it as a "sinister move to hijack the cooperative movement for political gains".

After formation of the Ministry, the first ambitious move was to come out with a national framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country but the Supreme Court on July 20 said that cooperatives is a

(The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman, Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)

State subject and States have exclusive power to legislate on topics reserved for them. The SC upheld an eight-year-old Gujarat High Court verdict limiting the Centre's say in cooperative sector. This had put spanner in the path of the Government because if it wanted to create a "national framework", permission had to be sought from 28 States which include opposition-ruled ones.

Now, the onus of finding a way out is on Amit Shah who is not new to the field of cooperatives who started his political journey as the Chairman of Ahmedabad Cooperative Bank and later helped in turning around the Madhepura Mercantile Cooperative Bank. By 2016, he helped in edging out the Congress from all 33 cooperative banks in Gujarat.

The success of BJP in the politics of Gujarat passes through the route of dairy cooperatives. The dairies including Amul are a huge part of Gujarat's economy.

The opposition is apprehensive about the government's intention of exporting the "Gujarat model" of cooperatives to other states. This is apparent from the reaction of the former agriculture minister Sharad Pawar who conveyed his concern about the "formation of the coopera-

tion ministry and the amendment to the Banking Regulation Act" and calling it an encroachment in federalism and powers of the state.

It is pertinent at this stage to understand the significance and structure of cooperatives in the Indian context. The dairy cooperatives were initiated by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as grassroots organizations to harness the power of collective bargaining for a common goal. Later, with the pooled resources of farmers and other workers, the cooperatives found their way into agriculture, sugar, textiles and other sectors.

The financial clout of cooperative sector can be gauged from the fact that at present, the biggest beneficiaries of state funds and subsidies

are the cooperatives in the finance, sugar and dairy segments.

Considering the high stakes involved, the tussle to control the cooperative sector has become the core of politics in Gujarat and Maharashtra. With its strong network of around 225,000 cooperative bodies controlling sugar, dairy and finance, Maharashtra is the prime example. The Congress and NCP have controlled it for decades, and the BJP has been trying to break the monopoly. Incidentally, what the present Government is trying to do through the newly formed Ministry of Cooperation was opposed in 2013 by present Prime Minister and then Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi. He challenged certain

provisions of the 97th constitutional amendment that empowered the Centre to design a framework for the cooperative sector. However, the way out of the impasse was crafted by the NDA-I government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee by passing a law in 2002 allowing multi-state cooperative societies (MSCS) to help cooperatives diversify and operate outside their home state.

Some experts in cooperative affairs find justification in the formation of a separate Ministry and the Reserve Bank of India monitoring on the grounds that in the absence of regulations, there have been allegations of scams in several cooperatives. Money was siphoned off to fund businesses of politicians, bureaucrats and cooperative leaders. The

NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

Does AUKUS cast a shadow over Quad?

With a vision of deterring China and ensuring free international waters, there should not be any doubt that AUKUS will cast a shadow over Quad

The decision to form AUKUS came two weeks of the US withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. It displays the geopolitical resolve that the US has to counter the Chinese threat in the Indo-Pacific region, which is increasing with each passing day. Many experts now think that AUKUS might strategically and tactically sideline Quad. That is not the case. The objectives, either stated explicitly or otherwise, are the same. Chinese expansionism has driven this new military alliance, but both Quad and AUKUS complement each other if seen strategically.

With India and Japan, there are essential constraints that make them more susceptible to the Chinese threat. Apart from the common factor of geographical proximity to China, both aspire to become permanent members of the UNSC. An upfront, direct military alignment against China might adversely affect those aspirations. Individually, India has also to deal with an unholy alliance of China, Pakistan, and the Taliban. Apart from this, it is concerned about Russia's shifting foreign policy priorities towards a Sino-Pak alliance. On the other hand, Japan faces issues such as the dependence on raw materials and food supplies and ageing workforce apart from its Article 9 clause that prohibits the re-armament of Tokyo.

The emerging arrangement seems to present before the world a ring of defence, paving the way for future multilateral alliances against Chinese expansionism. A very look at the map of the oceans will give us a common understanding that the South China Sea, Pacific Ocean, and the Indian Ocean taken together are very difficult for either of the powers to defend by themselves. There have to be multiple security arrangements for a strong defence. In the present circumstances, if India and Japan decide to institutionalise a military alliance with the help of the US, Beijing might resort to increasing its aggressiveness either in the SCS or on the Indo-China border, a purpose which then might be self-defeating.

Thus, strategic manoeuvrability is probably a part of the solution. India and Japan together can possibly hold back China on account of their non-participation in any military bloc while simultaneously keeping up the ante against its hegemonic diplomacy. For this reason, India's joint battle commands need to be operationalised soon. The absence of any institutionalisation will also give time for both India and Japan to modernise their maritime assets. India, in particular, needs to speed up on the interoperability within its forces. France then plays an essential role for India and Japan, apart from other European countries, followed by Israel.

Concerning Japan, it has to gradually move beyond its circumstantial clause that led Tokyo to adopt a 'peace constitution'. From 'self-defence', it has to evolve a 'maritime defence' force to handle

BRITISH AND AMERICAN SUBMERSIBLES AND ANTI-SHIP MISSILES WOULD DETER CHINA FROM THREATENING NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES. IN CASE OF SEVERE PROVOCATIONS, THE AUKUS CAN PROVIDE TACTICAL COVER-UP FOR ESSENTIAL SEA ROUTES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN APART FROM THE PACIFIC OCEAN AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

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

Beijing. The move might instigate some powers like South Korea to put forward their anti-Tokyo stance. However, time demands that those countries that are not compatible with each other bridge their strategic differences and work for a common cause, especially when they have a shared substantial threat and are covered under the US security umbrella. Thus, an expansionist China allows them to resolve their differences and work for a common goal.

British and American submersibles, anti-ship missiles and other striking capabilities would deter China from threatening the countries. In case of severe provocations and open hostilities, the second layer, the AUKUS, can be a deterrent and a defender at the same time by providing a tactical cover-up for essential sea routes in the Southern and Eastern Indian Ocean apart from the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea. It then might try to divert attention to the Malacca Straits against India or Japan, but the Indian Navy would present a formidable force there, thus making its 'Malacca Dilemma' a reality. Additionally, the 'five eyes' intelligence sharing mechanism also increases the concerns for China.

Nevertheless, without any institutionalised alignment, it might be difficult for China to go in for the first move against a non-militarily aligned country such as India and Japan and create more complexities. In case of severe threats and imminent attacks, the two might not hesitate to join AUKUS formally. Joint sea denial strategies then have an essential role to play in the upcoming multilateral security

arrangements. Thus, it would not be wrong to envision a consortium of powers guarding the entire Indo-Pacific region, with each player understanding its role and responsibilities well. It is for this reason that both India and Japan have together welcomed the new alliance AUKUS.

One can easily recall that in 2010, Yang Jiechi, China's then foreign minister, on his trip to the ASEAN summit in Hanoi, commented, "China is a big country, and you are small countries, and that is a fact". Today, the time is ripe to reverse the 'big fish-small fish' syndrome. China has reiterated that the Quad will find no support within the Asia Pacific countries. Beijing perhaps fears the expansion of Quad to include other democratic, "like-minded countries" such as Vietnam, the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan. All of them have coastlines and have been harassed by China for long. Other pertinent issues such as Chinese illegal fishing, climate change and natural disasters also underline the need for security overlaps with the other countries. Hence, Quad +4 can be envisioned. The small countries with the support of various extra-regional powers have to make formations via unwritten multilateral security arrangements.

The scope of an expanded Quad can include joint technical cooperation and military exercises to increase the interoperability of the forces between themselves and within their force to counter the military challenges before them. As states have security and economic convergences, an understanding can be built to 'strategi-

cally encircle' China and keep it guessing on multiple fronts. In essence, the Quad then remains the strategic linchpin of navigational freedoms marked by a "free, open, transparent and inclusive Indo-Pacific region" apart from focussing on other new and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence apart from climate change. India and Japan thus will have a more significant role from here onwards.

Developments in Afghanistan, China-Pakistan's unconditional support to Taliban and the shifting sands of alliances in the Asian region strongly indicate that the time for multilateral re-alignments and acknowledgement of the reality has arrived. AUKUS fulfils this purpose and consequently occupies the space of an "institutionalised security alliance" having a formalised treaty, ready for action either as a deterrent or more if the situation demands. The 'friendly' nuclear submarines will detect and intercept the Chinese nuclear submarines collecting essential data of the Indo-Pacific Ocean. In this direction, Quad and AUKUS are entirely complementary to each other. Having a joint shared vision of freedom of the high seas and a common challenge of deterring China, there should not be any doubt that AUKUS will cast a shadow over Quad. Apprehensions concerning this new approach should not be viewed from the prism of China. Instead, it should be taken as a part of comprehensive diplomacy not only for deterrence against China's compulsive 'cabbage policy' but also for the peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE *KHELA* (GAME) WILL START FROM BHOWANIPUR AND WILL FINISH AFTER WE WIN IN THE ENTIRE NATION.
—BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER
MAMATA BANERJEE

MANY WOMEN WERE RAPED AND MANY OF OUR ACTIVISTS WERE KILLED IN BENGAL. THIS IS WHAT THE TMC MEANS BY *KHELA HOBE*?
—UNION MINISTER
SMRITI IRANI

470 infra projects show cost overrun of Rs 4.3 lakh crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 470 infrastructure projects, each worth Rs 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns totalling more than Rs 4.37 lakh crore, according to a report.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation monitors infrastructure projects worth Rs 150 crore and above.

Of the 1,718 such projects, 470 reported cost overruns and 560 were delayed.

"Total original cost of implementation of the 1,718 projects was Rs 21,99,181.52 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 26,36,710.50 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of Rs 4,37,528.98 crore (19.90 per cent of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for August 2021 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till August 2021 is Rs 12,52,298.40 crore, which is



47.49 per cent of the anticipated cost of the projects.

However, the report said the number of delayed projects decreases to 373 if delay is calculated on the basis of the latest schedule of completion.

Further, for 871 projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative ges-

tation period has been reported.

Out of the 560 delayed projects, 96 have overall delay in the range of 1-12 months, 128 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 210 for 25-60 months and 126 projects have delays of 61 months and above.

The average time overrun in

these 560 delayed projects is 46.94 months.

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

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

The report also cited state-wide lockdowns due to COVID-19 as a reason for the delay in implementation of these projects.

It has also been observed that project agencies are not reporting revised cost estimates and commissioning schedules for many projects, which suggests that time/cost overrun figures are underreported, it added.

Diesel price hiked again

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diesel price on Sunday was hiked by 25 paise per litre - the second increase in rates after the state-owned oil firms ended a three-week hiatus in rates following international oil prices surging to their highest since 2018.

Price of diesel was hiked to Rs 89.07 per litre in Delhi and to Rs 96.68 in Mumbai, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

Petrol price was not changed. It costs Rs 101.19 a litre in Delhi and Rs 107.26 in Mumbai. State-owned IOC, BPCL and HPCL had on September 24 resumed daily price revision, ending the pause in rates hit since September 5. On September 24, diesel rates were hiked by 20 paise a litre. On that day too petrol price had remained unchanged. Global benchmark Brent crude has risen to USD 77.50 a barrel as crude inventories shrunk from Europe to the US. Oil rates are up 2 per cent for the week and this is the fifth weekly gain.

Many districts lack bank branches despite high economic activity: FM

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday said despite the huge thrust on financial inclusion and high economic activity, there are districts in the country not having any banking presence at all.

She asked the lenders to get their act together and open either a full-fledged brick-and-mortar branch or an out-post rendering banking services, wondering how banking presence eludes even pockets which have high economic activity.

It can be noted that policy-makers have been focusing on financial inclusion for over a decade and also had set a target of ensuring banking presence in every village with a population of over 2,000 people. A few years ago, the RBI had liberalised branch opening norms for banks.

"Even today, there are very many districts in which even big panchayats don't have a physical bank...there are very



many districts in which not even one banking institution is physically present," Sitharaman said, speaking at the 74th annual general meeting (AGM) of the industry lobby group Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

She exhorted the IBA members to digitally map all the districts to see the areas having low coverage for themselves and accordingly make provisions for either a physical branch or an outpost.

"You should be able to see

the centres of economic activity. Be it a completely rural pocket but if the economic activity is strong there, wouldn't you think there should be some kind of presence?" she asked.

Making it clear that she is not against digitisation, which has paid tremendous cost benefits to lenders in terms of outreach, Sitharaman wondered how there can be parts of country which do not have even a single brick-and-mortar branch.

MONEY MATTERS

Mcap of top-10 valued firms jumps over Rs 1.56 lakh cr

The top 10 valued firms added a total Rs 1,56,317.17 crore to their market valuation last week, helped by across the board rally which catapulted the benchmark index Sensex to the record 60,000 mark for the first time. During the last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark rallied 1,032.58 points or 1.74 per cent. The BSE Sensex made history on Friday by reaching the 60,000-mark for the first time ever. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Reliance Industries zoomed Rs 58,671.55 crore to reach Rs 15,74,052.03 crore. The m-cap of RIL went past Rs 16 lakh crore mark in intra-day trade on Thursday following a rally in its share price. The valuation of Infosys jumped Rs 30,605.08 crore to Rs 7,48,032.17 crore. Bajaj Finance added Rs 22,173.04 crore to its market valuation to Rs 4,70,465.58 crore and Tata Consultancy Services Rs 15,110.63 crore to Rs 14,32,013.76 crore. HDFC Bank's market capitalisation rallied Rs 10,142 crore to Rs 8,86,739.86 crore.



Importer-exporter code not updated to be de-activated

The Commerce Ministry has decided to deactivate all importer-exporter codes (IECs) that have not been updated after January 2005 with effect from October 6 this year, a move which would help in knowing the actual number of real traders in the country. The Importer -Exporter Code (IEC) is a key business identification number that is mandatory for exports or imports. No person shall make any import or export except under an IEC number granted by the DGFT. On August 8 this year, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) was mandated all IEC holders to ensure that details in their IEC are updated electronically every year during the April-June period. "All IECs which have not been updated after January 1, 2005, shall be deactivated with effect from October 6, 2021," according to a trade notice of the DGFT. It stated that the concerned IEC holders are provided one final opportunity to update their IEC in this interim period till October 5, failing which the given code would be de-activated from October 6.



Inter-co managerial services to attract 18 per cent GST

Managerial and leadership services by corporate office to its group companies/construction sites registered in different states would attract 18 per cent GST, Maharashtra bench of AAR has ruled. B G Shirke Construction Technology Pvt Ltd had approached the Authority for Advance Ruling (AAR) seeking to know whether the managerial and leadership services provided by the registered/corporate office to its group companies would be considered as 'supply of service'. Also, whether the lump sum amount charged by the registered/corporate office on its group companies would be liable to Goods and Services Tax (GST). Passing its ruling, the Maharashtra AAR held that managerial and leadership services by corporate office to its group companies and other construction sites registered in different States is 'supply of service' and would be taxable under GST.



JSPL to start mining at Kasia mine within month, says MD

Jindal Steel and Power Limited (JSPL) aims to start mining at Kasia iron ore block within a month, its Managing Director V R Sharma said. The integrated steelmaker on Thursday announced bagging of the block, which has total reserves of 278 million tonnes (MT). Speaking with PTI, Sharma elaborated on the company's plans with respect to starting operations at the Kasia iron ore mine, located about 17 km from JSPL's pellet plant in Barbil. "It is already an operational mine, we can start mining within a month once all statutory approvals are there," the MD said. He said JSPL will also put up a slurry pipeline from the pithead to its steel plant in Angul. This will help the company with 5-6 million tonnes of iron ore per year. The e-auction for the Kasia iron and dolomite mineral block was held on September 18, 2021. It was earlier owned and operated by Essel Mining and Industries. JSPL has been declared as the preferred bidder for the mine at a premium of 118.10 per cent.



Stocks may face volatility amid rich valuations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets would track global cues for further direction this week and may face volatility amid monthly derivatives expiry and rich valuations, analysts said.

The BSE Sensex made history on Friday by reaching the 60,000-mark for the first time ever.

It took just eight months for the BSE benchmark to cover the journey from 50,000 in January this year to scale the unprecedented 60,000 mark for the first time on Friday. The Sensex has traversed more than 1,000 points to the historic 60,000 level in a little over 31 years.

"The roaring bull market is continued in the Indian market with climbing all walls of worries where Sensex has crossed the new milestone of 60,000. We are in a classical



bull market like the 2003-2007 phase where this bull run is likely to continue for the next 2-3 years," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investment.

However, he put a word of caution after a parabolic move in last few days because short-term correction cannot be ruled out in coming days.

Sharing similar sentiments, Motilal Oswal, the MD & CEO of Motilal Oswal Financial Services Limited said, "Given rich valuations, one cannot ignore intermittent volatility - however we expect the positive momentum to continue on the back of improving economic activity and recovery in corporate earnings."

FPIs net buyers at Rs 21,875 cr so far

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Remaining positive about the long-term outlook of Indian markets, foreign portfolio investors (FPI) were net buyers so far in September with an investment of Rs 21,875 crore.

According to data from depositories, FPIs pumped in Rs 13,536 crore into equities and Rs 8,339 crore into the debt segment during September 1-23, taking the total net investment to Rs 21,875 crore.

"Rally in the Indian equity markets, positive long-term outlook, the expectation of economic rebound and improvement in corporate earnings has led foreign investors to re-invest in Indian equities," said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director (research), Morningstar India.

Besides, he added that the turmoil in China has also benefited India, making it an attractive investment destination among foreign investors from a long-term perspective.

However, higher valuations and US Fed signalling revers-



ing of pandemic stimulus programmes in November did limit the flow of assets to some extent, he noted.

"The renewed FPI interest in India is partly because of Nifty's impressive outperformance vis-a-vis MSCI World Index and MSCI EM Index this year," said V K Vijayakumar, chief investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services. With respect to other emerging markets, Shrikant Chouhan, executive vice-president (equity technical research) at Kotak Securities, said Taiwan reported a total FPI inflow of USD 1,482 million. FPI inflows in South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines during the period under review stood at USD 1,223 million, USD 358 million, USD 268 million and USD 38 million, respectively, he added.

Govt has no interest in acquiring any telecom company: VIL CEO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has given an option to telcos to pay back interest on dues through equity and also conveyed that it has no interest in acquiring any telecom company, a top official of debt-ridden Vodafone Idea has said.

Vodafone Idea Ltd Managing Director Ravinder Takkar in an interview to PTI said it is clear that the government wants the company to compete in the market and there should be at least three private service providers in the telecom sector. "I have had many many

interactions across various parts of the government leading up to this announcement (telecom reforms). In all my conversations, it is absolutely clear that the government has no interest in owning or acquiring or running any other telecom company," Takkar said.

The government is already managing loss-making telecom firms BSNL and MTNL which are yet to post profit after a relief package of around Rs 69,000 crore granted to them in October 2019.

Some experts contended that the government may end up holding a "sizable" chunk

(estimates varied from 26 per cent to majority stake) in VIL at the end of moratorium period, if the telco opts to pay cumulative interest or annual instalments by way of equity.

"They (government) have absolutely made it clear that they want three private players to remain. They want us to compete in the market. They want us to operate in a competitive manner," Takkar said.

VIL had total gross debt of Rs 1.91 lakh crore, excluding lease liabilities and including interest accrued but not due, as of June 30, 2021.

Sugarmills in Muzaffarnagar asked to start ops by Oct-end

PNS ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR

Sugarmills here have been asked to start their crushing operations in time and complete their preparation up to the third week of October. He added that the sugarmills should complete their preparation up to the third week of October. Kanojiya, who is the nodal officer has visited the mills in Khatauli and Mansurpur in the Muzaffarnagar district and reviewed the preparation for starting crushing season.

Audi pitches for lower import duties on EVs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

German luxury carmaker Audi has termed high taxation on imported cars in India an impediment for growth of the electric segment while noting that even some relief in terms of duties could help it sell more vehicles and convince its head-

quarters to re-invest in the country for local manufacturing of such models.

The company, which now sells five electric cars in the country, noted that lower taxes would help in lowering the price tag of the imported models which would help it in achieving a certain minimum volumes in the market.

With a certain scale, the company can then try to convince its global headquarters to re-invest in the country for setting up local manufacturing for models which are currently being imported.

In an interaction with PTI, Audi India Head Balbir Singh Dhillion noted that the com-

pany has been able to sell the first set of electric vehicles it imported into the country for sale. "The first set of e-trons brought into the country are all sold off. It gives us confidence that people are ready, India is ready for electric mobility. All this is helping us to introduce more and more such cars," he noted.

NY court pauses tax suit to allow Cairn to settle dispute with India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A New York court has paused Cairn Energy's pursuit of US assets of Air India for the recovery of USD 1.2 billion arbitral award, so as to allow the British firm to reach a settlement with the Indian government on the long drawn dispute.

The New York district court delayed the tax suit to November 18, according to court documents reviewed by PTI. This follows Cairn Energy and Air India jointly asking the court to stay further proceedings in view of the fresh government enacting a fresh law to scrap retrospective taxation in the country.

The new law will result in withdrawal of the Rs 10,247 crore tax demand that the gov-



ernment had sought from Cairn.

Sources with direct knowledge of the matter said the finance ministry is framing rules that will lead to withdrawal of the retrospective tax demand on Cairn and 16 other companies, including Vodafone Group of UK. These rules require the companies to with-

draw all litigations against the government in return for being refunded any money that was collected to force the retrospective tax demand.

A format for the undertaking that the companies will have to furnish committing to withdraw litigations is under finalisation and should be released in coming days, they

said. Companies will have to use that format to give an undertaking, post which the money will be refunded.

In all the government has to return about Rs 8,100 crore, of which Rs 7,900 crore is due only to Cairn.

The British company had won an international arbitration award against levy of such taxes and sought to take over Air India assets when the government refused to honour the award and refund USD 1.2 billion-plus interest and penalty. Cairn has indicated that the refund, without interest and penalty, was acceptable to it - opening an avenue to settle the seven-year-old dispute.

Cairn and Air India in a joint request to US District Judge Paul Gardephe on September 13 stated that a stay

on proceedings would give them "additional time to evaluate the effects and implications" of legislation that repealed the retroactive tax.

In return for the Rs 7,900 crore, Cairn would drop lawsuits threatening court-ordered seizures of Indian government property abroad. One of those suits was filed in May against state-owned Air India Ltd, which Cairn has said should be considered the alter ego of the Indian government.

"The implementing regulations are in the rulemaking process and will take some time," the two had said in the petition seeking extension of the October 21 deadline for the presentation of case papers and initial pretrial conference on October 28. They had requested the court to "stay any

further proceedings in this matter through October 31, 2021, and reschedule the initial pretrial conference and, respectively, the deadline for the parties to submit their Joint Pretrial Letter and Proposed Case Management Plan, for new dates in November 2021."

"The Parties have conferred and agreed that the stay will facilitate the efficient resolution of the dispute, conserve the Court's and Parties' resources, and is not intended to obstruct or delay," they added. Cairn had on May 14 brought a lawsuit in the New York district court to hold Air India liable as the alter ego of the Republic of India for the obligations the government owes under a foreign arbitral award.

Shamshera, Jayeshbhai Jordaar, Prithviraj get release dates



The much-awaited films — *Shamshera*, *Jayeshbhai Jordaar*, *Prithviraj*, and *Bunt Aur Babli 2* — now have release dates. On Sunday, Yash Raj Films announced the theatrical release of their upcoming four films. *Bunt Aur Babli 2*, which brings back the superhit on-screen jodi of Saif Ali Khan, Rani Mukerji along with Siddhant Chaturvedi, and debutant Sharvari, will release on November 19 this year. The film, directed by Varun V Sharma, is touted to be a hilarious out and out family entertainer.

Next up for release is Akshay Kumar's *Prithviraj*. The YRF's big-budget film will have a worldwide release on January 21 next year. The film will see Akshay in the role of Prithviraj Chauhan. He will be seen sharing



the screen space with Manushi Chhillar, who marks her Bollywood debut with this magnum opus film. The Chandraprakash Dwivedi directorial will also star Sanjay Dutt and Sonu Sood in pivotal roles.

One of the most anticipated films, *Jayeshbhai Jordaar* is all

set to knock the doors of the theaters near you on February 25, 2022. The film stars superstar Ranveer Singh and marks the Bollywood debut of *Arjun Reddy* fame Shalini Pandey.

The Divyang Thakkar directorial is touted to be a family entertainer set in Gujarat in which Ranveer will be seen

playing a Gujarati man, who becomes an unlikely hero. Last but not the least is YRF's much-anticipated *Shamshera*. Starring Ranbir Kapoor, *Shamshera* is being called an "adrenaline-pumping entertainer", which is set to release on March 18, 2022. The film will also star Vaani Kapoor in the lead role, while Sanjay Dutt plays the merciless nemesis in this visual extravaganza, which has been directed by Karan Malhotra.

Meanwhile, the makers of '83, which is a biopic on cricketer Kapil Dev, announced that their film is all set to hit theatres for Christmas. Bollywood sure has a lot coming up!

During the weekend, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced the re-opening of cinema halls in the state. The theatres which had briefly resumed earlier this year with 50% capacity were shut down in April when the nation started facing the challenges brought on by the second wave of the pandemic. As soon as the government announced the reopening of theatres, filmmaker Rohit Shetty announced that his long-delayed film *Sooryavanshi* will hit the theatres on Diwali. The film stars Akshay Kumar and Katrina Kaif with cameo roles by Ajay Devgn and Ranveer Singh.

Akshay Kumar also took to his social media handles to announce the release of *Sooryavanshi*. He also shared a behind-the-scenes picture from the sets of the film.

In the film, he is seen



Akshay Kumar clarifies error pointed out by cop

engrossed in a conversation with Rohit Shetty, Ajay Devgn, and Ranveer Singh. The actors are seen dressed as police officers.

IPS officer RK Vij who has a verified account on Twitter made a comment on the photo.

He wrote in Hindi, "The Inspector is sitting while the SP is standing, this does not happen."

Responding to the observation made by DGP Vij, Akshay Kumar clarified, "*Janab ye toh Behind the Scenes photo hai. Hum Kalakaar logon ke liye jaise hi camera on hua, ekdum protocol waapas.* (Sir, this is Behind-the-

scenes photo. For us artists, as soon as the camera is turned on, protocol returns.) Regards forever to our great police forces. Hope you like the film when you watch it."

The officer thanked Akshay for his response and said that his comment was in a "lighter vein" and that he will definitely watch the film. *Sooryavanshi* belongs to the cop universe of Rohit Shetty which also comprises the characters of Singham (played by Ajay Devgn) and Simmba (played by Ranveer Singh).

Akshay Kumar will be essaying the role of Veer Sooryavanshi.



Shang-Chi becomes the highest-grossing film of 2021

As expected, Disney-Marvel's *Shang-Chi And The Legend Of Ten Rings* is raging through the box office, and is standing ground after minting 3.6 million dollars on Friday, which is a feat in itself, as it makes the Destin Daniel Cretton-directed film the highest grossing title during the pandemic ahead of *Black Widow* with a 186 million dollars. It doesn't end there, as *Shang-Chi* is expected to gross around 12.8 million through the next three days and a running total of 196 million dollars.

This is seen as a landmark for the movie theater business, as it was released solely in theaters with 45 days of exclusivity, as compared to *Black Widow* and

many other new releases, which have opted for a hybrid model, with ensuing controversies.

This weekend, *Shang-Chi* is predicted to top the domestic box office charts for the fourth weekend straight, adding an expected 12 million to 14 million dollars. In all probability, the film would end the weekend just shy of the 200 million dollar mark.

Shang-Chi's reign has left other films behind, including *Dear Evan Hansen*, which is struggling to come second with 7.3 million from 3,364 theatres, according to Variety.

The musical feature starring Ben Platt as an isolated teenage boy who is trying to find himself in the new digital era, took in 3.2 million on Friday. Ryan Reynolds' *Free Guy* is expected to move to the third spot, while Candyman and Clint Eastwood's *Cry Macho* are predicted to slide down to the fourth and fifth places respectively.

BTS opens Global Citizen's live with Permission To Dance

BTS opened Global Citizen's special 24-hour live event with a thrilling performance of their single, *Permission To Dance*, which raged through the Billboard's Top 100 this summer.

Starting on September 25, the philanthropic organisation Global Citizen began its 24-hour worldwide event Global Citizen Live, during which artists from all over the world take the stage in various cities across six continents. The event is intended to raise awareness and urge global unity in fighting against poverty, climate change, and international vaccine inequity.

Apart from BTS, the star-studded lineup for the mostly live broadcast included Ed Sheeran, the Weeknd, Lorde,



Billie Eilish, Shawn Mendes, Camila Cabello, Metallica, Doja Cat, Lizzo, Coldplay, Usher, Jennifer Lopez, the Black Eyed Peas, Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Demi Lovato,

Adam Lambert, Duran Duran, Keith Urban, Andrea Bocelli, Green Day, H.E.R., Alessia Cara, Ricky Martin, Kylie Minogue, DJ Snake, and more.

BTS, comprising RM, Jin, Jungkook, Suga, J-Hope, V, and Jimin, performed *Permission To Dance* at Seoul's Sungnyemun Gate. Clad in suave outfits and wearing their trademark smiles, they kicked off the live event with the song that was intended to reimagine the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. Recently, the septet released their collaboration *My Universe* with Coldplay, which is steadily climbing the charts. Bollywood actor Priyanka Chopra attended the event in Paris, and shared videos, photos on her Instagram account.

FUN

ARCHIE



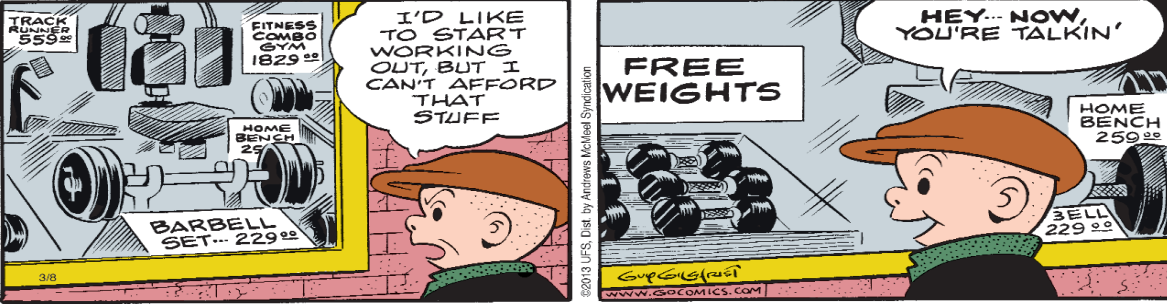
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



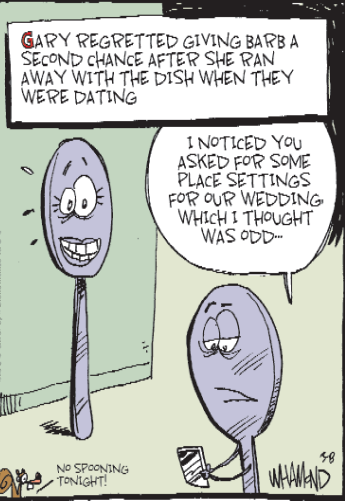
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GINGER MEGGS



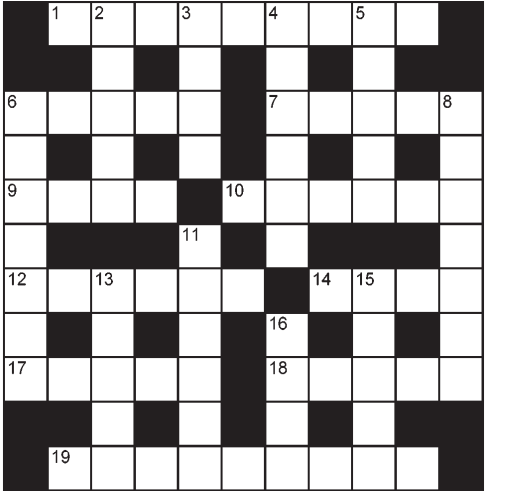
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- The largest land animals
- A small rock
- Move slowly and quietly
- A flower with thorns on its stem
- An extinct animal or plant that has turned to rock
- Film stars
- A sound bouncing back to you
- A cloth for drying yourself
- People who make meals
- The leader of the USA
- Large plants in a forest
- A housemaid or butler
- Headrests on beds
- Tools for making holes
- A tall, narrow building
- A circus funny person
- This liquid chemical will burn your skin

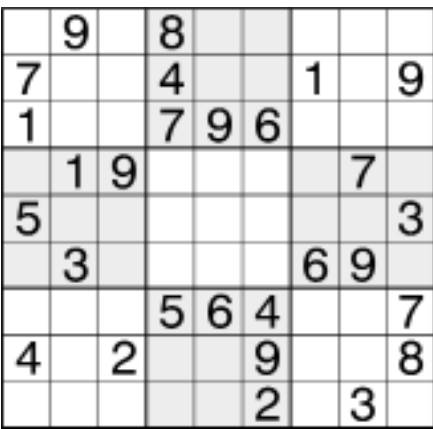
DOWN

- Large wild cats
- A writer of verse
- A ship's heavy metal hook

SOLUTION :



SUDOKU



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.

RCB post 165 against MI



Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli at the toss during match between Royal Challengers Bangalore and Mumbai Indians

Dubai: Glenn Maxwell finally came good with an attacking 56 after skipper Virat Kohli's second consecutive half-century, taking Royal Challengers Bangalore to a par-score of 165/6 against Mumbai Indians in the IPL here on Sunday.

Kohli, who completed 10,000 runs in T20 cricket,

scored 51 off 42 balls with three fours and three sixes but it was Maxwell who justified his expensive price tag with a 37-ball blitzkrieg before Jasprit Bumrah brought MI back in the game. Maxwell's innings had six fours and three sixes as he showed true destructive potential with switch hits, lap shots



Jasprit Bumrah of Mumbai Indians celebrates the wicket of Devdutt Padikkal of RCB

and flicks during the final overs when he launched into MI pacers Adam Milne (1/48 in 4 overs) and Bumrah (3/26 in 4 overs) with utter disdain. Such was the ferocity of Maxwell's hits that even the normally calm MI skipper Rohit Sharma looked helpless before Bumrah removed both Maxwell and AB de Villiers (11 off successive deliveries which at least helped them save 20 to 25 runs in the final two overs. At the onset, Kohli hit the very second ball of the match from Trent Boult (1/17 in 4 overs) for a six. It was an inswinger which the RCB skip-

per flicked and Rahul Chahar at deep mid-wicket got his palms but couldn't latch on to it. The normally dependable Devdutt Padikkal (0) had an off-day as Bumrah bowled a beauty which pitched on length and moved away taking the outside edge into Quinton de Kock's gloves. Kohli found a confident partner in Bharat (32 off 24 balls) as they quickly added 68 runs for the second wicket. Bharath for good measure swept Rahul Chahar against the turn for two sixes while Kohli also imperiously pulled Bumrah for a six over deep mid-wicket.

PTI

Dubai: India captain Virat Kohli on Sunday reached a coveted milestone of 10,000-run mark in all forms of T20 cricket (international, domestic and franchise) during his side Royal Challengers Bangalore's IPL match against

Mumbai Indians here. Playing in his 314 T20 match, Kohli pulled his India team-mate Jasprit Bumrah for a six to get the milestone in the fourth over after RCB were

sent in to bat. Kohli, who is set to step down from RCB captaincy at the end of this season, had come into the match with 13 short of 10,000 runs.

The 32-year-old has played 298 innings before Sunday's match and has scored runs at an average of 41.61 with the help of five hundreds and 73 fifties. **PTI**

Jadeja cameo helps CSK beat KKR by 2-wickets

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Ravindra Jadeja won a close match for as his back-end pyrotechnics ensured a two-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders in an Indian Premier League thriller here on Sunday.

Jadeja (22 off 8 balls) launched into pacer Prasidh Krishna, who bowled the 19th over, where the pacer lost his length completely under the Saurashtra all-rounder's onslaught with CSK reaching the target of 172 in exactly 20 overs.

Instead of bowling yorkers, Krishna repeatedly bowled length balls as Jadeja hit two sixes and two boundaries to make it a cakewalk in the final over. Krishna conceded 22 runs in the penultimate over to leave CSK with four runs to get in the final over.

But there was more drama in store as Sam Curran and Jadeja were snuffed out by Sunil Narine before Deepak Chahar ended the match with a single.

However, KKR skipper Eoin Morgan's captaincy left a lot to be desired as the decision to bring in Krishna in the 19th over would be debated. Morgan in his defence could sight Anre Russell's injury being the reason but Narine in the 19th over could have posed more challenge for a rampaging Jadeja.

The win also meant that CSK remained unbeaten after the IPL resumed and once again were back at the top in the pecking order, with 16 points. In pursuit of a challenging 172, CSK were down and out at 142/6 before Jadeja took the onus on himself.

KKR had posted 171/6, as they rode on late flourish by former skipper Dinesh Karthik and Nitish Rana after the foundation was laid by Rahul Tripathi (45).

CSK wasn't able to capitalise on the aggressive 74-run opening start given by Ruturaj Gaikwad (40 off 28 balls; 2 fours and 3 sixes) and South African Faf du Plessis (43; seven fours).

KKR pegged CSK by sending both the openers back in quick succession. CSK then suffered a middle-order collapse. Spinner Varun Chakravarthy had got KKR back into the game by dismissing Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Earlier, former skipper Dinesh Karthik's late cameo and Nitish Rana's steady long handle took Kolkata Knight Riders to a par-score of 171 against Chennai Super Kings in an Indian Premier League encounter on Sunday.

Seamer Shardul Thakur (2/20 in 4 overs) and Ravindra Jadeja (1/21 in 4 overs) performed impressively to keep KKR under leash till the 13th over when they were 93 for 4.

However, the last seven overs yielded 78 runs and KKR were able to put on a more than fighting score largely due to Sam Curran (0/56 in 4overs) leaking runs at the back end. Even Josh Hazlewood (2/40 in 4 overs) got a bit of stick helping KKR's cause.

The platform was laid by Rahul Tripathi (45 off 33), who hit four boundaries and one six but it was the CSK bowlers, who kept making inroads and did not allow the KKR batsmen to either free their arms or settle down.

Opting to bat, Kolkata lost opener Shubman Gill (9) in the first over after a horrible mix-up with Venkatesh Iyer.

One-down Tripathi and in-form Venkatesh Iyer (18) tried to resurrect the innings but the southpaw was unable to convert his start after he nicked one to Mahendra Singh Dhoni off Thakur. Tripathi, who fetched his first boundary, an imperious pull shot over mid-wicket, also got a 'life' after the ball on which he had nicked, was adjudged as a 'no-ball'. Off the very next one, he smashed his first maximum over deep extra cover.

Skipper Eoin Morgan (8) also fell cheaply as he holed to Du Plessis off Josh Hazlewood as KKR was in spot of bother at 70/3. Tripathi also fell in the 13th over, as he was cleaned up by left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja as KKR slipped to 89/4.

Then Andre Russell (20) took on Sam Curran in the 15th over, smacking two fours and a monstrous six, as KKR fetched 14 runs. But Shardul Thakur forced Russell to drag one back onto his stumps. Then it was the Rana and Karthik show that took them past 170.

	TEAM	PLD	NET RR	PTS
1	CSK	10	+1.069	16
2	DC	10	+0.711	16
3	RCB	9	-0.720	10
4	KKR	10	+0.322	8
5	PBKS	10	-0.271	8
6	MI	9	-0.310	8
7	RR	9	-0.319	8
8	SRH	9	-0.637	2

IAN S ■ MACKAY

India finished the ODI leg of the multi-format series on a high with a brilliant two-wicket win — fashioned by a collective team effort — which ended Australia's unbeaten ODI streak of 26 matches on Sunday. However, Australia won the ODI series 2-1, with the multi-format series' scoreline reading 4-2.

The third and final ODI in Mackay went down to the wire

India finish ODI series on a high

but this time India held their nerves as they sealed a thrilling two-wicket win with just three balls to spare. Tall India pacer Jhulan Goswami hit the winning runs, lofting it straight for a four.

Chasing a target of 265, India showed poise and power in their response, with the opening pair of Shafali Verma and



injured Mitchell Marsh — should get a look-in ahead of Warner to turn the fortunes of SRH, and Baylis said that it is something "that will be discussed in the team meeting". "Yes. Obviously, he (Jason Roy) is our spare overseas batter. I'm sure the management will get together and discuss to pick a team. So, I'm not going to select a team right now. We'll sleep on that and think about it and have a selection meeting on Sunday," Bayliss said.

Bayliss also said his batters were low on confidence. "Yeah, look I do not think that our batters are playing with confidence obviously. We have lost five games under 10 runs and most of them batting second. So, yeah, we made a lot of mistakes.

only after a diving catch from substitute fielder Molly Strano. Sutherland doubled her tally by rattling Vastrakar's (3) stumps, leaving Mithali and No.7 Deepti Sharma needing a run a ball from the last 10 overs. Sutherland struck once again, in her next over, snaring the India skipper, who was bowled for 16. Rana got a lifeline when she was dropped by Nicola Carey on 11 on the last ball of the 44th over. The equation came down to India requiring 33 runs from the last five overs, with four wickets in hand.

Sharma made her presence felt in the ODI match described as one of the most thrilling played in Australia, with a knock of 23 runs and by capturing Tahlia McGrath's wicket.



Sania wins first title of 2021 season in Ostrava

PTI ■ OSTRAVA

Star Indian tennis player Sania Mirza won her first title of the season as she and her Chinese partner Shuai Zhang beat the pair of Kaitlyn Christian and Erin Routliffe in the women's doubles final of the Ostrava Open here on Sunday.

The second seeded Indo-Chinese duo defeated the third seeded pair of American

Christian and New Zealander Routliffe 6-3 6-2 in the summit clash in one hour and four minutes.

The 34-year-old Sania and Zhang had defeated the Japanese pair 6-2 7-5 in the semifinals of the WTA 500 event.

It was Sania's second final of the season, following a runner-up finish at the WTA 250 Cleveland event in the USA last month with Chirstina Mchale.

Anand hopes one of talented Indian youngsters will become world champ in future

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Chess legend Viswanathan Anand on Sunday said the country has many immensely talented players at the junior level and one of them can "hopefully" become a world champion in future.

"There are many people with a lot of promise at junior level. R Praggnanandhaa, Nihal Sarin, D Gukesh, they're very good and motivated.



They have been travelling around playing tournaments, they have the

determination. Hopefully one of them cracks the code," Anand said.

He was responding to a question on who among the young Indians could go on to become a world champion in future.

The five-time world champion was participating in an online interaction 'Chat with Vishy - Viswanathan Anand' with the participants of the training programme he conducts.

Post knee surgery, Federer hoping to return at 'next year'

IAN S ■ BOSTON

Swiss tennis ace Roger Federer, who is recovering from a right-knee surgery he underwent last month, said on Sunday that it was a difficult process to decide whether to undergo a third right-knee surgery after having two last year. But following Wimbledon, where he was "really unhappy" with his performance in reaching the quarterfinals, Federer opted to go through with it.

Federer, who made a late decision to attend this year's Laver Cup in Boston -- a tournament held between teams from Europe

and the rest of the world — said on the sidelines of the event that the recovery and rehabilitation are "going to take me a few more months and then we'll see how things are at some point next year."

"The reception I've received, everybody is so upbeat that I'm here. They wish me all the best and they don't even see the crutches. They just want me to be good again and enjoy the weekend," Federer said in an interview for the event with former world No. 1 Jim Courier.

"I've seen some incredible tennis, some great matches and it's

been wonderful. I'm really happy I made the trip," the winner of 20 majors was quoted as saying by aptour.com.

On why he opted for a third surgery, the tennis ace said, "I was just nowhere near where I wanted to be to play at the top, top level. But I tried my best and at the end... too much is too much. Now I've just got to take it step by step," Federer said.



Sports Minister announces month-long nationwide Clean India Drive from Oct 1

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur on Sunday announced a month-long nationwide Clean India Drive from October 1 to get rid of single use plastic and other waste.

Announcing this in a tweet, Thakur said: "Cleanliness is next to Godliness! As we celebrate AmritMahotsav of 75 years of Independence, I urge everybody to join Clean India Drive from 1st-31st October to realize dream of plastic free India."

Thakur said it will be the largest cleanliness drive in the world in which more than 75 lakh tonnes of waste, primarily plastic waste, from different parts of the country will be collected and further processed in a 'Waste to Wealth' model.

Gold eludes India yet again at world c'ships



PTI ■ YANKTON

Indian archer Jyothi Surekha Vennam lost a nerve-wracking final to Colombian heavyweight Sara Lopez to clinch a silver in the compound women's individual section at the World Championships here on Saturday.

The 25-year-old Indian was at her best and shot a perfect final end but the five-time World Cup champion Sara was superior to clinch the issue by two points (146-144).

For Jyothi, this was her second silver medal at the World Championships as she became the only Indian archer to have four podium finishes at the showpiece biennial competition.

Jyothi had bagged a silver (Mexico 2017) and a bronze (Den Bosch 2019) in the team events at previous World Championships.

Earlier on Friday, Jyothi was a member of the Indian women's and mixed pair compound archery teams which

signed off with silver medals after lop-sided losses to Colombia here.

India were in pursuit of their first ever gold medal at the world event.

For a country that doesn't have a gold yet, India have climbed the most podiums at the event — 11 —, appearing in nine finals and leaving with silver each time.

Jyothi dished out a consistent display shooting 28, 29 and 29 in her first three ends, but the Colombian top seed opened up a two-point lead at the halfway mark, drilling in seven perfect 10s with two X (closest to the centre) from nine arrows.

The sixth seeded Indian shot three 10s from three arrows in the final end but that was not enough as Sara wrapped up the gold medal match by two points.

Jyothi, however, upgraded the bronze medal she had won two years ago, as the Andhra archer concluded her campaign with three silver medals.



NANI THANKS PK, APPEALS TO AP GOVERNMENT



Natural star Nani responded to Pawan Kalyan's fiery speech on the issues faced by the film industry on Saturday. On Sunday, he thanked Pawan and requested Jagan to resolve the issues. For the uninitiated, Pawan Kalyan attended the pre-release function of Sai Dharam Tej's *Republic* movie and spoke a few words in support of Nani. Nani has recently released his *Tuck Jagadish* movie on an OTT platform and faced ire from the theatre owners for this decision. Pawan came to the support of Nani and told that there is nothing wrong with Nani's decision and if theatre owners have guts, they should go and

ask YSRCP leaders for stopping theatres from functioning normally. Nani responded to Pawan comments through Twitter saying, "Keeping aside the political differences between Pawan Kalyan sir and AP Government. The film industry issues addressed are genuine and needs immediate attention. Thank you @PawanKalyan sir. As a member of film fraternity I humbly request @ysjagan gaaru and concerned Ministers to look in to it before it gets too late for the cinema to revive." Pawan Kalyan took a dig at the YSRCP government describing how the latter had been playing at its whims and fancies by procrastinating talks with the delegation of the industry. "When the investment is being poured by private players to produce a

movie, how can the government dictate terms? It's an Indian Republic, people will revolt if it's "YSRCP republic". Cinema doesn't have caste and religion, the industry has numerous problems. Stop screening my movies in AP, if you have a problem with me," he said, adding that all celebrity families would unite to fight against the injustice. He further urged yesteryear star and YSRCP leader Mohan Babu to hold talks with the AP state government over the prevailing problems in the film industry. "The State government is trying to make money from selling tickets. It would seek loans from banks by showing the revenue that is obtained from selling tickets," he alleged. With Nani's tweet and the support the cause has been garnering, only time will tell if the Jagan-led government will resolve the issues of the film industry.



MOST ELIGIBLE BACHELOR'S release postponed by a week

Pooja Hegde and Akhil Akkineni's upcoming film *Most Eligible Bachelor* has been postponed again. According to the latest update, *Most Eligible Bachelor* will be released in theatres on October 15. Directed by Bommarillu Baskar, *Most Eligible Bachelor* is a romantic drama. Akhil Akkineni took to Twitter to share a new poster of *Most Eligible Bachelor* to announce the new release date. Sharing the poster, he wrote, "In theatres from 15th October. See you soon everyone. #AlluAravind @hegdepooja @GopiSundarOffl #PradeeshMVarma #BunnyVas

#VasuVarma @GA2Official @adityamusic (sic)" *Most Eligible Bachelor* is Akhil Akkineni's fifth film as a hero. While his four films were average-grossers, Akhil is waiting to score a massive hit. He is banking on *Most Eligible Bachelor* to give him the much-needed break. Director Bommarillu Bhaskar is making a comeback after a long time with this film. The ensemble cast of *Most Eligible Bachelor* includes Eesha Rebba, Aamani, Murali Sharma, Vennela Kishore, Jayaprakash, Pragathi, and Amit Tiwari. Cinematographer Pradeesh Varma, editor Marthand K Venkatesh, and composer Gopi Sundar form the technical crew.

PRABHAS SENDS KAREENA BIRYANI, ACTRESS ENJOYS 'INSANE' MEAL

Bollywood actress Kareena Kapoor Khan binged on some biryani, which was sent over by Prabhas. Bebo took to Instagram and shared a photo of her dinner.



"When Bahubali sends you biryani it's gotta be the best. Thank you Prabhas for this insane meal," she wrote and added the *Adipurush* hashtag. Prabhas and Kareena's husband, actor Saif Ali Khan are working together in *Adipurush*, an adaptation of Hindu epic, Ramayana. In *Adipurush*, *Baahubali* star Prabhas plays a character inspired by Lord Ram, Kriti Sanon plays Sita while Sunny Singh essays the role of Laxman. Saif plays the antagonist Lankesh, which is expected to be inspired by the demon king of Lanka, Ravana.

About working with Saif for the first time, Prabhas had said in a statement, "I am excited about working with a talented actor like Saif Ali Khan. To be featuring alongside such a great actor on the big screen is a matter of pride for me." The release date of the movie is yet to be announced.



Keerthy Suresh's mom to play a cameo?

In a lovely coincidence, popular actress Keerthy Suresh, spotted her mother Menaka Suresh in the teaser of *Bhramam* that was launched by Amazon Prime Video yesterday. Keerthy pointed out the fact with a screenshot of her mother in one of the scenes from the *Bhramam* teaser. She tagged her mother Menaka Suresh asking her how did she end up in the movie! For those not in the know, *Bhramam* highlights the life of a pianist who pretends to be blind. His musical journey gets interlaced

with suspense, inspiration, confusion and drama as he gets embroiled in a murder mystery. As the plot thickens and a set of bizarre events unfold, wit and survival create the fabric of the film coupled with the stellar background score composed by Jakes Bejoy. Directed by Ravi K Chandran, who is also the cinematographer for the film, the Malayalam rendition/remake is produced under the banner of AP International and Viacom18 Studios. *Bhramam* will premiere exclusively on Amazon Prime Video in India on October 7.



Mahesh lauds *Love Story*, calls it a 'game changer' for Chay

Superstar Mahesh Babu is all praise for Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi's latest release *Love Story*, which is conquering theaters in south Indian states ever since its release. The film, directed by Sekhar Kammula, released on September 24 and has been doing great over the weekend. Mahesh Babu took to Twitter and shared his review of the film. In a series

of tweets, Mahesh Babu mentioned how Sekhar Kammula has delivered a "knockout film", how the film will be a game-changer for Naga Chaitanya. He seemed blown away by Sai Pallavi's performance. "#LoveStory @sekharkammula pulls all the right strings... delivers a knockout film! @chay_akkineni comes of age as an actor, a game-changer for him... What a performance!" Mahesh wrote.

"Sai Pallavi - Sensational as always... does the lady have any bones??? Haven't seen anyone dance like this ever on screen!!! Moves like a dream," he continued. Mahesh also showered praise on music composer Pawan and said AR Rahman will be proud of him. "You'll be hearing a lot more of him... what a music score... Just sensational! Heard he's a disciple of @arrahman... Rahman sir, you'll be proud of him," the tweet read. And finally, Mahesh congratulated the producers for "delivering a much needed blockbuster in these testing times."

Love Story is being received well at the theaters. On the release day, Sai Pallavi tweeted a video showing how the audience was celebrating the film at the theater. "Today has been quite an emotional one for me and my #LoveStory team. Artists, Directors, Producers n Technicians from various industries prayed for the success of the film n just like that it wasn't 'our' film anymore. Here's proof that art n it's audience are inseparable," she wrote. At a recent media interaction, Naga Chaitanya shared about *Love Story*, "Director Sekhar Kammula has touched

upon two important layers - caste discrimination and gender issues. People are wary about addressing these elements openly in society. When we address these issues through cinema, the reach is much more. The film is a realistic love drama, and it revolves around a lower caste boy who comes to a city from a village." The actor will be making his Bollywood debut with Aamir Khan's *Laal Singh Chaddha*. He will also be seen in *Thank You and Bangaraju*. In both films, Chaitanya will share screen space with his father and actor Nagarjuna.