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'DIRECTORS FIND IT
DIFFICULT TO STICK TO
JUST ONE GENRE'

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PUTIN BLASTS US 'HEGEMONY', PREDICTS END TO 'UNIPOLAR' WORLD

Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the United States of trying to encourage extended hostilities in Ukraine as part of what he described Tuesday as Washington's alleged efforts to maintain its global hegemony. Addressing a security conference attended by military officials from Africa, Asia and Latin America, Putin reaffirmed his long-held claim that he sent troops into Ukraine in response to Washington turning the country into an anti-Russia bulwark. They need conflicts to retain their hegemony, Putin charged. That's why they have turned the Ukrainian people into cannon fodder.

'TIRANGA' HOISTED AT ASI MONUMENTS TO FLUTTER PERMANENTLY

The national flag hoisted on the premises of 150 ASI monuments on the 75th anniversary of India's independence will flutter permanently, except at sites where flagpoles are unit after dark, senior officials said on Tuesday. At such sites, where there is no provision to illuminate flagpoles, 'Tiranga' will be lowered in the evening and hoisted again in the morning, they said. "Our national flag was hoisted at 150 ASI sites across the country, from Sher Shah Suri's Tomb in Bihar to Chittorgarh Fort in Rajasthan, and Tissaru Stupa in Leh to Vellore Fort in south India. And, it has been decided that all these flagpoles will be there on site permanently.

HINDUS, MUSLIMS JOIN HANDS TO CELEBRATE I-DAY WITH 256-FT TRICOLOUR

In a joint initiative by a temple trust and some Muslim organisations, Hindus and Muslims together held a Tiranga rally on the Independence Day here holding a 256-foot-long tricolour over their heads. The air reverberated with shouts of 'Vande Mataram' and 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' as the people from the two communities assembled on a stretch of road which had a mosque and a temple facing each other. The rally was organised by All India Sufi Sajadanashin Council in association with Juna Khedapati Temple Trust, Chherghar Masjid Committee, and Marwar Muslim Education and Welfare Society.

NATIONAL FLAGS WORTH OVER RS 60 CR PROCURED VIA GEM PORTAL

More than 2.36 crore national flags worth over Rs 60 crore were procured by different government departments and states from public buying portal GeM from July 1 to August 15, according to an official data. These procurements were carried out for the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) was launched on August 9, 2016 by the commerce ministry to create an open and transparent procurement platform for government buyers. The platform is open for procurement by all government buyers -- central and state ministries, departments, public sector enterprises, autonomous institutions and local bodies.

KTR criticises Modi for releasing rape convicts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Industries Minister KT Rama Rao criticised the Modi government for releasing Bilkis Bano rape convicts.

In a Tweet, he said, "Bhashan: 'Respect Women'. Kaam: Release 11 rapists using Gujarat Govt's power of remission on the same day. The home state of PM leading by example." The 11 convicts sentenced to life imprisonment for the gang-rape and murder of seven members of Bilkis Bano's family walked out of Godhra sub-jail on Independence Day. The Gujarat Government had allowed their release under its remission policy.

Hyderabad parliamentarian Asaduddin Owaisi condemned the incident and said the country is watching how the BJP gives only lip service to women's empowerment and respect for women. But when it comes to Muslim women, they forget them.

In another Tweet KTR said, "New goals for 2047 is great. But what



The 11 convicts sentenced to life imprisonment for the gang-rape and murder of seven members of Bilkis Bano's family walked out of Godhra sub-jail on Independence Day.

about your past promises for August 15, 2022, Narendramodiji? The Nation wants to know. Where is accountability if you don't even acknowledge your own targets & subsequent failures in accomplishing the same? "Kya Hua Tera Wada."

'Modi has become our enemy'

■ He did not solve the Krishna water sharing issue: KCR

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy came down heavily on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday saying that the PM had said nothing worthwhile during his Independence Day speech except delivering "dialogues" and flashing a long turban tied around his head.

He also took strong exception to BJP workers waving the saffron flag in front of his convoy at Vikarabad.

Pointing it out many times in his speech at a public meeting in Vikarabad, KCR said, "Instead of coming in front of my bus with flags, BJP leaders talk to Modi about the Palamuru Ranga Reddy LIS and wave flags at my bus. Modi has become our enemy as he has not solved the Krishna water sharing issue."

KCR said the TRS will bring water from the Palamuru - Ranga Reddy area to Vikarabad and that the project got delayed due to the Central Government's indifference.



Modi has become our enemy as he has not solved the Krishna water sharing issue. TRS will bring water from the Palamuru - Ranga Reddy area to Vikarabad and that the project got delayed due to the Central Government's indifference.

He said the State had submitted hundreds of applications to the Centre in the last eight years but there was no response. "The government is ready to face hurdles and provide irrigation to Chevella and Parigi constituencies,"

"Why did BJP cadres block my

bus during my Vikarabad visit? Didn't KCR provide drinking water? Didn't KCR supply free power? Didn't land prices increase? Please visit the neighbouring state of Karnataka and study the conditions there. Didn't KCR establish medical colleges in the 33 districts of TS? If

MATERNITY LEAVE

Working woman's right cannot be taken away: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday held that a working woman cannot be denied her statutory right to maternity leave for her biological child only because her husband has two children from previous marriage and she had availed the leave to take care of one of them.

The top court said that the grant of maternity leave is intended to encourage women to join and continue in the workplace but it is a matter of harsh reality that despite such provisions, women are compelled to leave their place of work on the birth of a child since they are not granted leave and other facilitative measures.

According to rules, a female employee with less than two surviving children can seek maternity leave.

A bench of justices DY Chandrachud and AS Bopanna said that childbirth has to be construed in the context of employment as a natural aspect of the life of the working women and the provisions under the law must be construed in that perspective.

TODAY	
ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham:	Aug 16 08:17 PM to Aug 17 08:24 PM
Tithi: Shashthi:	Aug 17 08:24 PM to Aug 18 08:24 PM
Saptami:	Aug 18 08:24 PM to Aug 19 08:24 PM
Nakshatram:	
Ashwini:	Aug 16 09:07 PM to Aug 17 09:57 PM
Bharani:	Aug 17 09:57 PM to Aug 18 11:35 PM
Rahukalam:	12:20 PM to 1:54 PM
Yamagandam:	7:37 AM to 9:11 AM
Varjyam:	08:12 AM to 09:55 AM
Gulika:	10:45 AM to 12:20 PM
Amritakalam:	02:30 PM to 04:09 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	NIL

HYDERABAD WEATHER	
Forecast: Partly cloudy	
Temp: 29°C	
Humidity: 75%	
Sunrise: 5:59 AM	
Sunset: 6:41 PM	
Updated: AUGUST 16, 2022 5:00 PM	

IN RACE FOR PM'S POST

KCR, Mamata leading the pack

SNCH ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

After Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar ruled himself out of the race for the Prime Minister's post only two strong contenders remain in the fray.

One is TRS supremo Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy and the other is Trinamool Congress President West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

While KCR represents South India, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee represents North India. Both KCR and Mamata have a strong desire to



While KCR represents South India, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee represents North India. Both KCR and Mamata have a strong desire to become the Prime Minister to "set right" things in the country.

become the Prime Minister to "set right" things in the country.

For this, KCR has prepared an action plan, particularly in using river waters and to solve the power shortage in the country.

Senior opposition leaders like former Prime Minister HD

Devegowda, NCP Chief Sharad Pawar and now Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had declared that they are not interested in the Prime Minister's post.

'KCR frustrated as he knows that KTR can never become CM'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy criticised Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy on Tuesday saying that the KCR government has been insulting the Governor.

He said the people of the State are ready to bring down the TRS government.

KCR has been committing mistakes over mistakes fearing defeat in the Munugode by-poll, Kishan said



declaring that KCR has been violating conventions by not attending the Governor's 'At Home' programme.

The TRS government is not following the protocol for Governor's tours, he said. Kishan criticised the Chief Minister for attacking

Bandi Sanjay Kumar's Padayatra. KCR is frustrated as he has realised that his son KTR will never become a Chief Minister, he said.

TRS embraces Gandhi & Nehru for Munugode

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Not just the Congress, the TRS also is attacking the BJP for trying to malign leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

While earlier the TRS had confined itself to just saying that Modi is supporting the ideology of Godse, of late all TRS leaders are now openly declaring that they are followers of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru.

They are not only trying to send signals to the BJP which wants to erase Nehru's memory, but also to Munugode which is a strong Congress bastion.

As part of the State's two-week-long 'Swatantra Bharata Vajrotsavalu' campaign, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy paid a grand tribute to India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru at one of his statues at Abids in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

This move, although symbolic, will serve the purpose of making a statement in Telangana.

On Monday, Industries Minister KT Rama Rao said, "Gandhi's politics will run in this country. Not the dirty politics of Godse."

He also pinned this Tweet to his profile.

Coal stocks to last 17 days



PNS ■ NAGPUR

Union coal secretary Anil Kumar Jain on Tuesday said that thermal power stations have coal stocks that will last for the next 17 days and Mahagenco has stocks for eight to 10 days.

Jain addressed a press conference along with Coal India Ltd (CIL) chairman Pramod Agrawal at the Western Coalfields Limited

(WCL) during their visit to Nagpur.

A major decision has been taken with regards to the pension scheme of coal mine workers, Jain said.

The CIL gives Rs 10 per tonne of coal production towards pension scheme to coal mine workers, and likewise, the CIL gave approximately Rs 622 crore towards pension scheme out of the total production of 622 million tonnes last year, he said.

As private coal companies were not contributing this way, the coal ministry was planning to make a law wherein such firms will have to contribute around Rs 20 per tonne coal towards pension fund, Jain said.

CHOUTUPPAL TRS MPP, OTHERS LEADERS JOIN BJP

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

It's a big blow to the TRS before the Munugode by-poll. The happiness of Congress MPTCs and Sarpanches joining the party did not long last for the TRS as its Choutuppal MPP and many other TRS leaders joined the BJP on Tuesday in the presence of the BJP's Joining and Coordination Committee convener, Huzurabad MLA Eatala Rajender. Former ZPTC and former TRS Mandal president

Pedditi Buchi Reddy, former sarpanch Yedla Mahender Reddy and former TRS Mandal president Kandi Laxma Reddy joined the BJP along with Thaduri Venkat Reddy, who led the dissident TRS leaders who had demanded that the TRS ticket for the Munugode by-poll should not be given to former MLA Kusumkunti Prabhakar Reddy and had organised a meeting at the Andole Maisamma Temple.

TS stands out in mass rendering of national anthem

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Buzzing traffic in almost all parts of the state came to a standstill at 11-30 am on Tuesday, with people responding enthusiastically to the Telangana State government's call for a mass rendering of the national anthem at that precise moment.

Leading the State, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Reddy participated in the mass rendering of the national anthem at Abids GPO Circle. He garlanded the statue of Jawaharlal Nehru, along with Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi and other TRS leaders. As part of the Swatantra Bharat Vajrotsavalu, the state government had called for 'Telangana Rashtra Samoochika Jateeya Geeta Alapana' across the state on Tuesday.

In line with the call, mass rendering of the national anthem was organised spontaneously at 11.30 am sharp in all



gram panchayats, wards in urban local bodies, important traffic junctions and landmarks, educational institutions, jails, offices, and market places, among other places. Officials facilitated the programme.

During the mass rendering of the national anthem at the Secretariat,

Chief Secretary Ravi Gupta, Additional Secretary Champalal, and Secretariat employees were present. A large number of employees of the Transmission Corporation of Telangana conducted a mass singing of the national anthem.

Citizens, particularly school children, college students as well as two-

wheeler and four-wheeler riders, participated in Telangana Rashtra Samoochika Jateeya Geeta Alapana.

People in areas near the Police Commissionerates, commercial complexes, gated communities, apartment complexes, colleges, and schools also joined in the mass singing of the National Anthem.

Police and Army personnel, employees of IT companies and IT parks, consultant techies, construction crew, spiritual leaders, security personnel, house-keeping staff, construction companies, SCSC volunteer team, auto-rickshaw and cab drivers as well as hostel and apartment residents participated in the programme.

At Hayathnagar crossroads, 10,000 students, police personnel, citizens, and LB Nagar MLA Sudheer Reddy attended the programme.

Bandi: What does KCR know about federal spirit?

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP President Bandi Sanjay Kumar has rejected Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhara Reddy's charge that the BJP government at the Centre was undermining the federal spirit of the Constitution.

"What does KCR know about the federal spirit? All that he knows is about cloudburst and Jefferson's (a whiskey brand in the US). In fact, whatever development Telangana has witnessed in the last eight years is only due to the funds given by the Centre," Sanjay said while addressing a public meeting at Palakurthy in Jangaon district.

The BJP leader said that KCR had



pauperised Telangana. He is not paying salaries to government employees properly and has imposed a debt of Rs 1.20 lakh on every Telangana resident's head.

When netas and babus fail to uphold values

A strong system supported by disciplined people can correct things even if prominent people in public life fail to uphold values. In contrast, things are bound to deteriorate under a weak system. When people cooperate with the system, they expect those operating it to reciprocate. At the end of the day, the moral attitude of public representatives influences society much as well as decency and decorum of the Houses they represent. Legislators' behavior, both within and without the Houses they represent, is under watch. Likewise, police personnel bring disrespect to their department by distancing themselves from people by default or deceit.



ing to MLC Anantha Babu (East Godavari district) and MP Gorantla Madhav (Hindupur), both belonging to the ruling YSR Congress Party, are cases in point. Anantha Babu got involved in a murder case in which the body of a dalit car driver was laid at the door of his house at midnight, after which a cock and bull story was spread to hoodwink the family members. The reported reason for the murder was nonpayment of a loan of Rs 20,000 that the victim had taken from the MLC. Anantha Babu is a highly influential political figure at the district level. Although he is currently in jail and trying hard to obtain bail, no charge-sheet has been filed by the police in this murder case so far.

Legislators' behavior, both within and without the Houses they represent, is under watch. Likewise, police personnel bring disrespect to their department by distancing themselves from people by default or deceit.

The Police Department appears to be buying time, instead of filing a charge-sheet within the stipulated time frame of 90 days. This has created an impression among the public that the MLC might be granted bail due to non-filing of a charge-sheet against him within the stipulated three-month period. Strangely, the MLC attended the plenary session of his party, though he had been sus-

pended in connection with the murder case. The family members of the dalit who lost the breadwinner allegedly due to the cruelty of the MLC may lose confidence in system should the MLC get bail. In case of Madhav, he was purportedly found naked in a video while speaking to a woman. The clip negatively impacted the decency and decorum of the lower House of



Parliament. Formerly Inspector of Police in Two Town PS of Anantapur city, he had incensed the general public by resorting to a brutal lathi charge on people who had queued up at ATM centre during the agonising days following the demonetization of high value notes. He managed to

get ticket to contest from the Hindupur LS seat due to his social background, which has much influence on voters. The National Commission for Women has issued notices to police authorities, asking them to file a case in this regard. Women leaders of Telugu Desam Party are on a war path, demanding the resignation of the MP. In response, he has used filthy language against his detractors. The LS Speaker is yet to take a decision on him. The political scene has become ugly also due to the use of unprintable words by legislators like Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao @Nani who has always been in the forefront of attacking political opponents with unprintable words. Factional politics is also causing a lot of distress to people who prefer peace and tran-

quility for ensuring all-round development. Some of the leaders known to indulge in factional feuds want to become legislators, irrespective of the sentiments of voters. The backyard of the Police Department is not always clean. An Inspector of Police working in Hyderabad was accused of raping a woman at gunpoint. We can imagine the sense of disgust that people would have for such an inspector. Another Inspector had turned a cottage in the temple town of Tirumala into a retreat for his 'pleasure' trips while on duty. For this purpose he chose a woman who had come to the police station for justice. Will his transfer alone pacify people? Due to such instances people are bound to lose confidence in the system.

It may be mentioned here that, about a quarter century ago, two IPS trainees at Sardar Patel National Police Academy at Rajendra Nagar, made news for the wrong reasons. They picked a quarrel with a cigarette seller and thrashed him for no reason. The authorities of the Academy had tried to hush it up, but the trainees' misdeed appeared in the papers the next day. The IPS trainees were spared, but the black mark reportedly affected their professional growth. We do not know whether the trainees ultimately improved their behavior towards the public! If people are disciplined, together they can buttress the system so that it is aligned to serve the nation better, instead of providing cover for notorious netas and unscrupulous babus.

Rajnath pitches for UN reforms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The potential geopolitical fault line in the maritime domain in East Asia could be "graver" than what is being witnessed, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday, amid escalating tensions in the Taiwan Strait. In a virtual address at the Moscow Conference on International Security, Singh also strongly pitched for reform of the United Nations (UN), saying the global body may progressively lose its effectiveness without democratisation in its decision-making. The defence minister said the refusal of major powers to change UN institutions in tune with time ignores the emerg-

ing geo-political realities and economic and technological progress that has happened since 1945. "Global security in the framework of multilateralism requires abiding by the UN charter and principles of international law, which act as a bulwark against anarchy, instability and higher chances of conflict," Singh said. He observed that the UN can deliver effective solutions only if it gives a voice to the entire world rather than "zealously guarding the status quo". "Conflicts could seriously jeopardise political and economic stability and development efforts. For example, the potential geopolitical fault line in the maritime domain -- particularly in East Asia --

could be graver than what we are witnessing today," Singh said. The maritime zones in East Asia have been witnessing rising unease largely because of China's aggressive military posturing. The Chinese military has been carrying out large-scale military drills around the Taiwan Strait following US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's recent visit to Taipei. "As a nation central to the Indian Ocean, India is committed to a free, open, secure and inclusive Indo-Pacific region that promotes sustainable maritime trade and economic practices, resilient infrastructure and adherence to global legal order," Singh said.

He said India's resolution of maritime border issues with neighbours as per international law and its focus on regional maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean bear testimony to the value that India places on multilateralism. "Multilaterally or through partnership with willing nations, India will continue contributing to a positive and constructive agenda that seeks to address contemporary global priorities," Singh said. The defence minister said India's active participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is manifest of one such priority in pursuit of peace, stability and prosperity in Eurasia, of which India is an "inalienable part".

TS tops in e-governance

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana recorded the highest number of e-transactions between 2014 and 2022. Telangana Mee Seva operators from across the state organised a meeting with Telangana State Technology Services (TSTS) Chairman Patimeedi Jagan Mohan Rao regarding this. "The Telangana government's initiative 'Mee Seva 2.0' had a revolutionary impact on e-governance services. Mee Seva 2.0 is providing services to over 1,00,000 people through 4,500 centres across the state. Telangana also tops the list in M-Governance (mobile governance). The T-app folio provides 260 different services of 32 government departments," he said. Addressing the retirement felicitation function of TSTS MD GT Venkateshwar Rao, Jagan said that he will be remembered by the staff for his dedication and admirable personality. Jagan Mohan Rao said the TSTS had a role in the prestigious programmes of the TS government launched under the leadership of KTR with the support of KTR, IT Principal Secretary Jayesh Ranjan and TSTS MD GT Venkateshwar Rao.



Vajpayee made pioneering efforts to transform India: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and a host of other dignitaries paid tributes to former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his fourth death anniversary on Tuesday. They were joined by several Union ministers and other leaders, including Home

Minister Amit Shah and BJP president J P Nadda, at 'Sadaiv Atal', Vajpayee's memorial, here. Modi later tweeted, "Today, on the Purnima Tithi of respected Atal Ji, visited Sadaiv Atal and paid tributes to him. We remain inspired by Atal Ji's efforts to serve India. He had pioneered efforts to transform India and prepare our nation for the challenges of the 21st century."

They also attended a prayer meeting in the memory of the BJP stalwart who was crucial to the party's rise to power in the second half of the 1990s as his amiable personality and cross-party relations brought it many allies and helped it form a winning coalition. A prime minister for six years between 1998-2004, Vajpayee, a Bharat Ratna awardee, died in 2018 at the age of 93.

Bandi: What does KCR know about federal spirit?

Continued from Page 1

"Can he reveal how many new ration cards and new pensions he has given to the people in the last eight years?" he asked. Sanjay said the Chief Minister was trying to cover up his failures and is hoodwinking the people by accusing the Centre of not doing anything for Telangana. "But the people know everything and they don't believe him. They are aware that KCR has not fulfilled his promises to unemployed youth, RTC workers and farmers, leading to suicides," he pointed out. Declaring that Modi had never opposed implementing welfare schemes for the poorest of the poor, Sanjay said the TRS government had extended Rythu Bandhu to rich farmers and has kept the really poor farmers out of it. "If KCR hailed from a rich family why did he sell his land in Chintamadaka village to the SC Corporation?" he asked. He said that KCR is interested only in coming to power by bribing voters. "In Dubbak, he paid Rs 10,000 per vote. In Huzurabad, he paid Rs 20,000 per vote. Even then the people voted against the TRS and taught him a lesson. Now, in Munugode, he is offering Rs 30,000 for a vote," Sanjay said. The BJP leader came down heavily on the police for forcibly closing shops in Palakurthy due to his Padayatra.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹202
Without Skin	₹229
Broiler at Farm	₹117

EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	400
HYDERABAD	405
VISAKHAPATNAM	404
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.05

Swatantra TV MD depllores falling values in journalism



Chairman of Aditya Educational Institutions N Sessa Reddy presenting a memento to Swatantra TV Managing Director B Krishna Prasad during the 'Swatantra Spoorthi' programme in Kakinada on Tuesday.

PNS ■ KAKINADA

Swatantra TV news channel Managing Director B Krishna Prasad has deplored the dwindling in journalism. The present situation is such that journalists are being asked which party they belong to. "I believe in truth. It is my belief that truth brings real success," he said. Krishna Prasad, who was the chief guest of the 'Swatantra Spoorthi' programme organised by the Swatantra TV news channel on the Aditya College campus on

Tuesday, expressed concern over declining values in journalism by the day. "There is a growing apathy among people towards newspapers and electronic media," he regretted. Krishna Prasad said that he believes that the people will welcome any channel if the truth is telecast. "The Swatantra TV news channel, launched by me, will be on the side of the common man," he asserted. Minister Ch Venugopal Krishna appreciated the naming of the news channel as 'Swatantra TV' and hoped that

the channel would telecast unbiased news. The Minister said that poverty is a major problem in the country and the youth should come forward to take part in eradicating the same. Chairman of the college and former MLA Nallamilli Sessa Reddy said that the news channels should take up social responsibility. He appreciated the Swatantra TV news channel for maintaining values in journalism. He wished that Swatantra TV would become the most popular news channel in Telugu states.

KCR, Mamata leading the pack

Continued from Page 1

Former AICC president Rahul Gandhi had declared that he will become the Prime Minister only when the Congress gets a majority on its own. So only KCR and Mamata are left in the PM race. In today's circumstances, it is impossible for the Congress to get a majority on its own. If the NDA led by the BJP fails to get a majority to form a government in the next general elections there is a chance that KCR or Mamata may become the PM. Once the opposition gets a chance to form the government senior opposition leaders may

enter the field to become the PM. It is a common opinion in political circles that North Indian leaders will not accept a PM from South India. The South and North controversy has existed for a long time in the country. In West Bengal, there are 42 Lok Sabha seats while Telangana has 17 Lok Sabha seats. At present, the TMC has 23 Lok Sabha MPs and 13 Rajya Sabha MPs. The TRS has nine Lok Sabha and seven Rajya Sabha MPs. It is the number of Lok Sabha MPs a party has that will play the key role in deciding the Prime Ministerial candidate. If the TMC retains its pre-

sent number of MPs in the next general elections, even if the TRS wins all the 17 Lok Sabha seats, the TMC will have more MPs than the TRS. In case opposition parties get a chance to form the government at the Centre, the Congress will not claim the Prime Minister's post, but it may play a key role in selecting the PM. Mamata exited the Congress in 1998 after a long relationship with the party. In his early days, KCR also was in the Congress and after the late NTR launched his TDP he exited the Congress and joined the TDP. Now both KCR and Mamata have become strong leaders in

their respective states after launching their own parties. Even though KCR opposed the Congress along with the BJP recently he changed his policy towards the Congress. But Mamata is still opposing the Congress. In the recent vice president election, KCR supported Congress leader Margaret Alva but Mamata kept away from the election. The Congress has some reservations about both KCR and Mamata. But ultimately the Congress will back either KCR or Mamata if the opposition gets a chance to form the government after the next general elections.

'Modi has become our..'

Continued from Page 1

We should be ready and dedicate ourselves to building a strong India in future," KCR said. He criticised the Prime Minister's remarks on freebies saying that no state in the country is implementing the welfare measures being implemented in Telangana. The CM inaugurated the new Vikaranad collectorate and the TRS office in the Vikarabad district. He also laid the foundation for a medical college here. Attacking Modi, KCR said the Centre is forcing states to fit meters on pump sets and import coal even when the

commodity is available at cheaper rates in India. Referring to the BJP activists who had tried to protest when the CM's convoy was passing, he said the people of Vikarabad should ask the saffron party workers as to what Modi did during the last eight years. "I am asking the Prime Minister what have you done in the last eight years for farmers, women, tribals, Muslims and Dalits. On top of that, when state governments implement welfare measures they are called freebies," KCR said. He said that some villages of Karnataka had wanted to get merged with Telangana as they wanted the welfare schemes being implemented here.

KCR said Telangana suffered a lot for 58 years when it was part of united Andhra Pradesh. According to him, although Telangana is growing it is also equally important that the Centre's growth should match that of the state. Otherwise, overall development will be impacted. "Even though the state is progressing if the Centre does not progress growth will not happen. So, a government which respects states should come to power at the Centre. Unemployment is growing, the rupee is depreciating. We will have to send this Central Government home," he said.

TRS embraces Gandhi &... CHOUTUPPAL TRS MPP...

Continued from Page 1

KCR constantly refers to Mahatma Gandhi and in his last press conference referred to how Nehru was a PM who used to take feedback from economists like SK Dey unlike Modi. Analysts say that this was the strategy used by KCR during the MLC elections too when he fielded P.V. Narasimha Rao's daughter, Surabhi Vani Devi, to appropriate the political legacy of the former Prime Minister who was also a veteran Congress leader. This drive may not end with garlanding statues, but will continue to find references in many situations. The TRS reportedly wants the Congress vote bank for itself in Munugode and wants to prevent it from going to the BJP. This becomes important as Munugode is a strong Congress and Communist bastion. Experts say that looking at the internal turmoil in the TPCC, the Congress has failed to own the legacy of its late leader. Now the TRS and the BJP are trying their luck at it. On August 14, Sanjay cleaned the statue of Mahatma Gandhi as part of a clean-up drive in the run up to Independence Day.

Continued from Page 1

The police tried to arrest Thaduri Venkat Reddy on Monday night creating a furore. The SOT and CCS went to Thaduri Venkat Reddy's apartment, Thangirilla, located at Vanasthalipuram in Hyderabad. The alerted Venkat Reddy did not open the door despite the attempts of the police to open it. The police returned without arresting him as Venkat Reddy alerted BJP leaders. BJP leaders including its Ranga Reddy urban district president Sama Ranga Reddy, local BJP leaders and BJP activists gathered at Thaduri Venkat Reddy's apartment en masse. Speaking to the media on Monday night, Venkat Reddy made it clear that he is not afraid of the false cases filed by the police as per the directions of Home Minister G. Jagadeesh Reddy. "I did not win elections on a TRS B-Form. The police threatened me when I asked why they were arresting me. The police did not have an arrest warrant either. I am joining the BJP as I don't like the policies of Minister Jagadeesh Reddy," he said. Welcoming the TRS leaders into the BJP, Eatala Rajender said the Congress and the TRS are one. The two parties will join hands either before or after elections, he added. He said that KCR has not become sensible even after the people of Huzurabad slapped him on his face. TRS leaders are coming out as they are unable to accept KCR's attitude. He said that the TRS has been trying to threaten leaders who are trying to quit.

'KCR frustrated...'

Continued from Page 1

He said that Prime Minister Modi and the Central Government do not need KCR's certificate. He exuded confidence that the saffron flag will fly in the State even if KCR's entire family spreads lies about Modi. Kishan said that the BJP is not just fighting the TRS but are fighting on behalf of the TS people. The people have already decided that the BJP's victory is certain whenever elections are held in Telangana. He said that family rule has been going on in Telangana since eight years. TRS MLAs have been indulging in dictatorial rule and are neck deep in corruption. There is a Chief Minister in Telangana who has not come to the Secretariat for the last eight years. The Chief Minister stays in his farmhouse for 15 days in a month. The people think that they don't want such a CM, Kishan said.

OVERALL HOUSING PRICES ROSE 8% YOY

Unsold inventory up in city due to spurt in launches

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Majority of the cities witnessed a dip in unsold inventory, except Hyderabad and Ahmedabad. As per CREDAI housing price tracker report, "Unsold inventory rose 55% YoY as the city saw a spurt in launches over the last few months. About 96% of the unsold units are under construction. Spike in unsold inventory is due to significant under construction projects in Hyderabad."

Bengaluru saw the highest dip of 21% on YoY basis. Overall housing prices in Hyderabad rose 8% YoY. All submarkets except Hyderabad central saw an increase in prices during the quarter. As per the report, despite the

unsold inventory, the city has seen a resilient demand during the pandemic led by employees in the technology sector. As a result of the demand and new launches, prices in Southwest grew the highest at 15% YoY. Delhi-NCR saw the highest increase in residential prices at 10% YoY, followed by Ahmedabad and Hyderabad with 9% and 8% YoY increase respectively.

Mr. Harsh Vardhan Patodia, President of CREDAI National stated, "The Central Bank continues to increase repo rates to offset the impact of inflation and banks are expected to increase loan interest rates, including that of home loans. As captured in this report, the housing prices have increased between 2 - 5% across cities,

as materials and labour costs continue to remain high. We may see a marginal dip in demand due to increasing interest rates, but I am confident that the sales will continue to grow across segments from September, as we enter the festive season." "Rising homeownership amongst millennials supported by higher disposable income and willingness to upgrade to larger spaces equipped with better amenities have sparked a sharp growth in housing demand in the last few quarters.

Demand for self-sustained properties replete with best-in-class amenities has also been increasing post-pandemic. These have led to strong growth in housing sales in the last few quarters. Prices have

also seen a 5% rise on YoY basis.

RBI has increased the repo rate amidst inflationary pressures and banks have already begun increasing the lending rates. However, the upcoming festive season is likely to keep the market sentiment high resulting in higher sales," said Ramesh Nair, Chief Executive Officer | India & Managing Director, Market Development | Asia, Colliers.

"Price to remain range bound. With discounted EMI schemes, we see early signs of developers absorbing the impact of increasing interest rates. Sales volumes are likely to improve as we see growing new supply with festive offers," said Pankaj Kapoor, Managing Director, Liasas Foras.



Telangana logs 406 new COVID-19 cases

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana on Tuesday recorded 406 new COVID-19 cases, pushing the tally to 8,29,873.

The highest number of cases was reported in Hyderabad district with 177.

A Health department bulletin said 494 people recuperated from the infection and the

cumulative number of recoveries till date was 8,22,667. The recovery rate rose to 99.13 per cent.

No fresh fatality occurred due to the infectious disease and the death toll continued to be 4,111. The bulletin said 27,348 samples were tested on Tuesday. The number of active cases was 3,095.

T-Hub, Atal Innovation Mission to nurture semiconductor startups

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

T-Hub, which leads India's pioneering innovation, on Tuesday announced the launch of semiconductor cohort of the Atal Innovation Centre T-Hub foundation programme to foster innovation and entrepreneurship across the semiconductor sector. The programme is designed to help entrepreneurs navigate the challenges of scaling the startup through expert-led workshops, specialised mentorship, market access, investor and industry connect.

This is a six-month-long intensive hybrid cohort-based programme which will mentor 20 startups with potentially disruptive technologies that could reshape semiconductor supply chains in the future.

Srinivas Rao Mahankali, CEO of T-Hub, said, "Indian



This is a six-month-long intensive hybrid cohort-based programme which will mentor 20 startups with potentially disruptive technologies that could reshape semiconductor supply chains in the future

strategically and economically essential to the world than ever, and we need to significantly scale up research, innovation, design and production facilities to support our industry's future growth. Our programme is a much needed initiative that will play a key role in helping startups accelerate their products and solutions, elevating India's global semiconductor market position."

The startups will be provided access to T-Hub's network of premium service providers and global investor pool, including HNIs and banks, for debt or equity financing to access capital needs and invest in the product. In addition, T-Hub will help them with government grants, funds, and incentives, like T-Fund, SISF (Startup India Seed Fund), Meity, and ISM for quick monetary gains.

Monumental national flag hoisted at Jalna Rail Station

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A mammoth 100-ft-tall national flag was hoisted by Raosaheb Patil Danve, Minister of State of Railways, Coal and Mines, on Tuesday at Jalna Railway Station.

Narayan Kuche, MLA, Badnapur and Arjun Khotkar, former minister, Maharashtra state, participated. Sharat Chandrayan, Divisional Railway Manager, Hyderabad Division, and other senior railway officials also participated in the programme. The gigantic tricolour was hoisted

at the railway station to rekindle the spirit of nationalism and instill a sense of pride among rail passengers. The tricolour mast is 100 ft tall and the size of the flag is 30 x 20 ft and it is also motor operated.

Raosaheb Danve stated that the tri-colour flag is a symbol of pride which unites every Indian irrespective of caste, creed and religion. He stated that the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' is a noble initiative by the Government of India to reminiscence the freedom struggle and invoke the spirit of patriotism among all.



Specially abled students take a joyride in Metro

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A joy ride was organised for the specially-abled students of Swayamkrushi Orphanage and students of Twinkle Star School by the Hyderabad Metro Rail as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and Swatantra Bharatha Vajrotsavam to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence.

All trains of Hyderabad Metro Rail stopped on Tuesday in reverence for 58 seconds at 11.30 am on all three corridors along with the rendition of the national anthem inside metro trains and at stations with passengers and metro staff standing to attention in unison.

These schoolkids have travelled between Ameerpet and Miyapur, both ways and experienced the joy of travelling by Metro. Travelling with the children, NVS Reddy, Managing Director of Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited and KVB Reddy, MD and CEO, L&TMRHL, interacted



and engaged with them.

A drawing exhibition and a dance performance on the patriotic theme were also organised with the participation of the students of Twinkle Star School, and a specially abled child from Swayamkrushi at the con-

course level of Ameerpet Metro Station.

NVS Reddy, said, "In 75th year of Independence, as the world's largest and youngest democracy, our nation has come a long way. I congratulate every Indian on this

momentous occasion. Living the spirit of freedom, Hyderabad Metro Rail is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and Swatantra Bharatha Vajrotsavam, reverberating with the patriotic theme and committed to serving the nation by connecting Hyderabad in the journey of growth.

As the national and state asset, Hyderabad Metro Rail is a true embodiment of unity in diversity helping the city move with utmost safety, punctuality, and reliability."

Atithya service at Hyderabad airport

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With the goal of providing travellers a rich and memorable airport experience, Encalm Hospitality has introduced their Atithya, service at the Hyderabad, Rajiv Gandhi Airport. After receiving an overwhelming response for their services at the Delhi Airport, Atithya, the meet and greet service is all set to expand their best in class services for travellers at Hyderabad airport.

The Meet and Greet Service includes Welcome and Assist Service, Porter Service and Concierge Services. Atithya's Welcome and Assist service ensures that each of its guest traveller is treated like a VIP during their airport journey. Be it arrivals or departures to guiding with transfers, baggage and family travel, or even having your car pick you up at the kerbside arrival ramp, Atithya ensures a swift, smooth, and comfortable passage through the airport. One can be on a business trip or a leisure one, Atithya is there at every step to guide and accompany its valued customers.

Govt to distribute 6 lakh clay Ganesh idols: Talasani

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A total of 6 lakh clay Ganesh idols will be distributed by the Telangana government, said Animal Husbandry Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav on Tuesday, at a meeting held at MCRHRD Institute in Hyderabad.

Out of the 6 lakh idols made of clay, 4 lakh will be through Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), one lakh through the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) and another one lakh by the Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB), the minister added. Keeping in view the directions given by the Telangana High Court, the government has built 50 more artificial ponds across the city, in addition to the already existing 25

ponds.

Srinivas Yadav had a detailed interaction with various committee members on issues they faced last year and a few issues which needed clarification ahead of the festival. The committee members sought clarification from the minister on patchworks on the roads, streetlight availability and continuous supply of electricity. The minister, after hearing these issues, directed GHMC commissioner Lokesh Kumar, who was also present at the meeting, to make sure all the problems are solved. The minister further added that on September 9, the day of immersion, the GHMC will deploy 8,000 of its staff who will be working in three shifts. The traffic will be diverted to various routes in order to facilitate the immersion of idols.



New course on anti-caste philosophy for students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

To change the perspectives of anti-caste, a new free residential programme on anti-caste philosophy and socio-political concepts has been developed by Phule-Ambedkar Centre for Philosophical and English Training (PACPET). It is a 30-day course on full-fledged offline mode.

Manikanta, Academic Coordinator, Phule-Ambedkar Centre for Philosophical and English Training, explained that this programme is to bring anti-caste philosophy within the maximum reach of the marginal classes and to those people who are in rural areas because they are neglected in the field of higher education. People should be able to read about ideologies.



Students must have orientation on these philosophies because they must develop perspectives to understand the society that is so complex, like in India which is completely caste-ridden and gender-biased.

Other objectives include introducing various texts and perspectives of enriched intel-

lectual streams of anti-caste philosophy. Intake of this programme is 35 students to introduce universal socio-political concepts for a better conceptual understanding.

The free of cost facilities are that they provide food, accommodation, reading material and other related infrastructure in a healthy

The last date to apply is August 22. There will be online interviews on August 24 and 25. The final selection of students will be announced on August 26.

and safe environment. Candidates are expected to utilise this free and affordable facility which otherwise is not available in many educational institutions.

"Our aim is to enhance the hidden multifaceted skills among the students, primarily that further help them in pursuing higher education, Manikanta said.

Students from any Indian state and UT, any undergraduate student pursuing degree,

students who already completed graduation can apply for the course. Students pursuing post-graduation (PG), students who already completed PG, Degree or PG students who are preparing for civil services are also eligible for the course.

The last date to apply is August 22. There will be online interviews on August 24 and 25. The final selection of students will be announced on August 26.

Bonhomie at school alumni meet

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

It was a time for recollection and bonhomie for the 1979-80 batch students of Class VII of the Bapupet Government Upper Primary School in Kothapalli mandal who met on Tuesday. There was rejoicing all the way. The then teachers Jalapaathi Rao, Peruka Jalapaathi Rao, Thota Bhumaiah, Mulastham

Chandraiah, Dommati Lakshmi Narayana, Devisetti Rajamouli and, attender Ahmed Hussain were felicitated on the occasion. Covid frontline workers Sircilla ASI V Srinivasachari, Karimnagar Task Force constable Veeragoni Srinivas and RMP Dulam Mallesam were also felicitated.

The teachers recalled their experiences and the old students remembered their school

days. Old students, Information and Public Relations Department Joint Director Devisetti Srinivas, Muriki Suresh who settled in London, Konda Srinivas, M Gyaneswar, Juttu Ramesh, M Damodar, V Srinivas, D Mallesam, Nagaiyah, O Mallesam, G Ashok Rao, R Srinivas and Swargam Srinivas were among the alumni who spoke on the occasion.



TRS goons cannot stop BJP in Telangana: Chugh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP General Secretary holding charge of Telangana, Tarun Chugh, has strongly condemned the attack by TRS goons on the Praja Sangrama Yatra in the Devarupalla village of Jangaon district.

He said it was an attack on democracy and the right to free speech engineered by forces patronised by the KCR government. It is clear that KCR is nervous and is feeling jittery seeing the massive public response to the BJP's Praja Sangrama Yatra, Chugh added.

Perhaps KCR is thinking that by using his goons he will be able to intimidate BJP workers and stop the Yatra. Chugh said he want to make it clear



that the Yatra will go on no matter what KCR or his TRS goons will do and that the Yatra will complete its third phase soon, he said.

Speaking to the media in

New Delhi on Tuesday, Chugh said that in the next 200 days, the BJP wants to reach every village and all the nooks and corners of Telangana to expose the anti-democratic, corrupt,

dynastic rule of KCR and his TRS government.

It is unfortunate that the police who are expected to protect the democratic rights of the people are acting in a partisan manner. On August 15, when TRS goons were attacking the Praja Sangrama Yatra police not only remained not mute spectators but also attacked BJP workers.

"I strongly condemn the biased Telangana police and request them to stick to their mandate. Do not be a 'darbari' (employee of a court), but be an 'adhihari' (an officer who abides by the Constitution). The political atmosphere in Telangana is changing fast. KCR is holding on to power using force. But whatever KCR

might do power will slip away from him as the Telangana people have decided to say 'bye-bye' to KCR's sarkar. The BJP is gaining ground in Telangana and many from the TDP, the TRS and the Congress have joined the BJP," he said.

Chugh said that the TRS is committing Bengal-type vandalism in Telangana. TRS goons are trying to stop Sanjay's Yatra. He made it clear that regardless of conspiracies the struggle of the people for democracy will not stop.

Chugh said that on Wednesday he will clarify on Union Home Minister Amit Shah's public meeting in Munugode.

TRS LEADER'S MURDER

CPM leader's brother Koteswara Rao named as accused

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

The tension was palpable as the funeral rites of the murdered TRS leader Tammineni Krishanaiah were performed on Tuesday. The 55-year-old Krishnaiah was hacked to death at Teldarupalli village under Khammam rural mandal on Monday.

The police named Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) Tammineni Veerbhadram's brother Koteswara Rao as accused in the murder. A complaint was filed by Krishnaiah's son T Naveen and the police registered a case under Section 341, 120B and 302 read with Section 149. The police also named eight more persons as accused. Former minister and TRS leader Tummala Nageswara Rao, too, participated in the funeral procession. As tension was in the air, a large



The police named Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) Tammineni Veerbhadram's brother Koteswara Rao as accused in the murder.

police contingent was deployed. Though prohibitory orders under Section 144 CrPC banning the assembly of more than four persons in public are in force, a huge number of TRS activists took part in the procession. They raised slogans against the accused. There were emotional scenes at the funeral procession. It might be recalled that the assailants waylaid Krishnaiah at Maddulapalli double-bedroom house near

Teldarupalli village, and attacked him with sickles, axes and knives. Krishnaiah was a cousin of CPI-M State Secretary Tammineni Veerabhadram.

Ramzan Shaik, Jakkampudi Krishna, Gajji Krishnaswamy, Nukala Lingaiah, Banda Nageshwar Rao, Bodapatta Sreenu and Yallampally Nagaiah were named as accused.

District resonates with 'Jana Gana Mana'

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

District Collector P Uday Kumar on Tuesday expressed his happiness over the success of the mass singing of the national anthem in the district.

Exactly at 11.30 am, the government employees, businesspersons, students and people's representatives assembled and took part in the mass singing of the national anthem across the district.

The Nagarkurnool town, which always bustles with activity, came to a halt with people gathered at the District Collectorate. People from all walks of life took part in the mass singing of the national anthem. The Collector urged the youth to participate in a



People participating in mass singing of the national anthem in Nagarkurnool on Tuesday

blood donation programme to be held on Wednesday as part of diamond jubilee celebrations. MLA Marri Janardhan Reddy paid tributes to freedom fighters who sacrificed

their lives.

District Superintendent of Police K Manohar, Additional Collectors Manu Chowdary and Motilal, students, employees and others took part.

Man arrested on charge of fratricide

PNS ■ MEDAK

A shocking incident of a younger brother killing his elder brother in a fit of rage over the latter drinking alcohol and creating nuisance in the house was reported at Narsapur in Medak district on Tuesday.

The police arrested Chithari Sekhar on the charge of fratricide for murdering his elder brother Lakshman alias Omkar (38). Lakshman became addicted to alcohol after his wife abandoned him following a tiff with him.

He also allegedly started harassing his parents. Lakshman had even assaulted his parents, the police said. The parents, Narsimhulu and Bhuchamma, sought the protection of their younger son, Sekhar. After consuming alcohol, the brothers had a fight and in a fit of rage, Sekhar killed his elder brother, according to Narsapura sub-inspector of police Gangaraju.

Car parked in front of BJP office creates panic

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A car parked in front of the BJP office in Hyderabad created panic for some time as the car had a Maharashtra registration number. BJP activists also found a big suitcase in the car which had been parked at the spot for two days.

Worried BJP workers informed the police and the police rushed to the spot with the bomb squad thinking that there might be a bomb in the car. But the bomb squad found only clothes in the suitcase and BJP workers heaved a sigh of relief. Interestingly, the owner of the car also came to the spot as he stays in a gully on one side of the BJP office.

The police took the car and its owner to the police station to find out why he had parked the car in front

The police took the car and its owner to the police station to find out why he had parked the car in front of the BJP office.

of the BJP office. The police are interrogating the car owner to find out if there is any conspiracy behind parking the car in front of the BJP office.

BJP workers panicked as the BJP state president Bandi Sanjay Kumar's Padayatra was attacked by TRS activists.

A NEW HIGH OF PATRIOTISM



In a rousing display of patriotism, toddy-tappers took part in a novel mass rendering of the national anthem in Siddipet on Wednesday. As many as 20 toddy-tappers climbed a palm tree to give a message of 'unity in diversity.'

Police trace kidnapped girl, restores her to parents

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

The police in Karimnagar on Tuesday cracked the mystery behind the kidnap of a one-and-half-year old girl and restored the baby to her parents. The police arrested the alleged kidnapper.

According to police, an auto-rickshaw driver, identified as S Santhosh allegedly abducted the girl from the baby's house at Ashoknagar on Monday morning.

As girl's parents could not find here in the neighbourhood, they approached the police after their neighbours told them that the child was taken away by an auto-rickshaw driver.

Ineligible persons managing medical shops

PNS ■ MAHABUB NAGAR

The Telangana Pharmacy Society (TPS) and the Joint Action Commission of Pharmacists have demanded that Telangana State Pharmacy Council enforce the Pharmacy Act to protect the interest of consumers and pharmacists.

According to TPS and Joint Action Committee (JAC) leaders, a huge number of medical stores are being run by owners who rent pharmacy diplomas and degrees from graduates. The rules that make the presence of qualified pharmacists mandatory are disregarded with impunity.

Against this background, JAC convenor Vakita Ashok Kumar warned of agitation if the Telangana State Pharmacy



For representational purpose only

Council failed to take action against the medical stores which are being run by unqualified persons who rented diplomas and degrees from the unemployed pharmacists.

The government is blamed for turning a blind eye to unqualified persons managing

medical stores and dispensing drugs though it is posing a risk to patients.

Unqualified persons are masquerading as pharmacists with the Telangana Pharmacy Council failing to clamp down on the medical stores being run by those who rent the regis-

tered certificates of pharmacists.

The TPS and JAC alleged that the Telangana Chemists and Druggists Association colluded with the unqualified persons managing the medical shops and dispensing medicines to patients.

Ashok Kumar said the Association had failed to crack down on the nefarious practice of borrowing the registered certificates of pharmacists and establishing medical stores. There is a lot of behind-the-scenes wheeling and dealing going on, but the Association has failed to take action, the JAC representatives pointed out. The drug inspectors have been carrying out inspections of medical stores in name only, the representatives allege.

Youth electrocuted in Mancherial

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

A 25-year old student was electrocuted in Bellampalli on Tuesday.

According to police, the deceased was identified as Kodandla Rishikesh Reddy. He was studying Intermediate second year in a private college in Mancherial.

He died on the spot after coming in contact with the live wire his house. He was shifted to a hospital, but doctors declared him brought dead.



Congress seeks TJS' support in Munugode

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress has sought the support of the Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) in the Munugode by-poll.

Congress leaders B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, Mallu Ravi, Vem Narender Reddy, Eravarti Anil, and Vijaya Ramanarao met TJC Chief Prof. Kodandaram on Tuesday at the latter's party office.

Later, speaking to the media, TPCC Working President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said that they had sought the support of the TJS for the Congress in the Munugode by-poll.

Mahesh said Kodandaram had told them that the TJS will reveal its decision after discussing it. He said the Congress will seek the sup-

port of all political parties who are ready to sail with the Congress.

He said that the BJP and the TRS had planned a by-poll as part of their secret pact. He said the Congress will end eight years of TRS rule in the State and that the party will win the Munugode by-poll.

The Congress is seeking the support of everyone as it does not want to let go of an opportunity.

TPCC Senior Vice-President Mallu Ravi said that there is a historical need to ensure the victory of the Congress in Munugode.

"We will seek the support of all parties except the BJP and the TRS. Everyone has to join hands to ensure the victory of the Congress in the Munugode by-poll," Mallu Ravi said.



Outpouring of support for mass singing in Sangareddy

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Sangareddy town on Tuesday witnessed an outpouring of support for the mass singing of the national anthem. Traffic came to a crawl as a large number of people from all walks of life took part in the mass singing of the national anthem in response to a call given by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. Students,



employees and businesspersons sang the national anthem exactly at 11.30 am. In

Sangareddy town, Zilla Parishad Chairperson P Manjuri, Collector A Sharat, Andole

MLA Chanti Kranthi Kiran, Additional Collectors Veera Reddy and Rajaharshi Sha, DCMS Chairman Malkapuram Shiva Kumar along with a huge number of students, employees and citizens participated in the event at Pothireddypally Junction on NH-65 in Sangareddy. Speaking on the occasion, District Collector A Sharat recalled the sacrifices made by freedom fighters.

Police prevent Cong MLAs from visiting Dummugudem Project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The police prevented Congress MLAs from visiting the Dummugudem Project citing Maoists.

On Tuesday, Congress MLAs D Sridhar Babu, Podem Veeraiah, Seethakka, and MLC T Jeevan Reddy tried to visit the Dummugudem Project under CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka's leadership.

Sangareddy MLA T Jagga Reddy did not join the team visiting the Dummugudem Project.

The police blocked Congress MLAs eight km away from the project site in the Jojiguppa village of Dummugudem mandal. The police placed tractors and jeeps on the road and dug



CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, MLAs D Sridhar Babu and Podem Veeraiah and MLC T Jeevan Reddy staging a sit-in at Jojiguppa village in Bhadradi-Kothagudem district on Tuesday

up the road to ensure that vehicles could not go towards the Dummugudem Project.

Protesting against the police

action, the Congress MLAs staged a sit-in on the road. They also had a verbal duel with the police.

Former Minister Sridhar Babu criticised the police for blocking them. He asked why the police had failed to provide

protection as the CLP had informed the police about their plans a week ago. Preventing the Congress MLAs from visiting the Dummugudem Project in the name of the Maoist problem is clear evidence of the TRS government's incompetence, Sridhar Babu said. He said the TRS government forced the police to prevent them from visiting the Dummugudem Project fearing that the government's corruption will come out.

Speaking to the media, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said the TRS government was using the police to prevent Congress MLAs from visiting Dummugudem as an undemocratic act.

The government made the police prevent the Congress MLAs as the government's corruption in the construction of the Dummugudem Project will come out, he said.

"Why did the government celebrate the 75th anniversary of Independence on a grand note when there is no freedom and protection for MLAs? Trying to eliminate the opposition is nothing but monarchic dictatorship," he said.

Bhatti said that the CLP team would meet the President soon to regain the seven mandals which were merged with Andhra Pradesh. Earlier, the CLP team visited Subhash Nagar in Bhadrachalam town where floods had submerged houses.

INDIA CORNER

Six-year-old girl raped, murdered in Panipat; accused held

A 40-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly abducting, raping and murdering a girl child in Haryana's Panipat, police said on Tuesday. Police said the incident took place Monday when the girl, 6, was playing in a park near her home in Panipat's Sector 29, with her brother two years younger than her. She was abducted from the park by the accused who raped and later killed her, said police. The accused has been identified as one Ishwar from Uttarakhand who was currently living in Panipat and worked at a dhaba, police said. The girl's body was handed over to her relatives after a post mortem in Panipat. The post mortem report revealed that after the sexual assault the child was strangled to death, police said. Police said that after receiving a complaint from the girl's family they scanned the CCTV footage of nearby factories which showed accused carrying the child after abducting her. He was identified on the basis of these footage, police said.



History-sheeter shot dead outside court in UP's Hapur, constable hurt

A history-sheeter from Haryana was shot dead by three people and a police constable injured in the incident here outside the district and sessions court on Tuesday, an official said. Injured Constable Omprakash belonged to the Haryana Police. A spokesman of the Hapur police said the Kotwali Nagar police station SHO and the incharge of the police outpost at the court have been suspended. A senior police official said the Circle Officer (City) has been attached to the district police headquarters in Hapur. Lakhan, alias Yashpal (35), was brought from the Haryana's Faridabad jail in connection with a case registered against him at the Dhaulana police station in Hapur, Circle Officer (City) S N Vaibhav Pandey had earlier told PTL. Lakhan is a history-sheeter from Haryana and had a number of cases registered against him, he said. "The firing took place 25 to 30 metres outside the gate of the district and sessions court," Pandey added.



Seven killed, 32 injured as bus carrying security personnel falls into gorge in J-K

Seven ITBP jawans died and 32 security personnel were injured when the bus in which they were returning from Amarnath Yatra duty fell into a deep gorge in the Pahalgam area of Jammu and Kashmir, a police official said. The bus, carrying 37 Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) personnel and two policemen, was on its way to the police control room here from Chandanwari, he said. While two ITBP personnel died on the spot, five others succumbed to their injuries later, the officials said. The condition of eight of the injured is stated to be critical. They have been evacuated to Srinagar for specialised treatment. The remaining injured are being treated at the Anantnag district hospital. Earlier, the official had said that one of the seven deceased was a policeman. However, later he said, "It was a case of mistaken identity. The two policemen are undergoing treatment." President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar condoled the loss of lives in the accident.



BOOSTING HEALTH SERVICES

Ensure timely utilisation of funds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya appealed to states and Union territories on Tuesday for timely utilisation of central funds to strengthen the healthcare infrastructure and expedite the implementation of people-centric health services at the grassroots.

He also urged states and Union territories to accelerate the coverage of precaution dose of COVID-19 vaccines by organising camps at public places under the Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav, the Health Ministry said in a statement.

Mandaviya also advised them to widely publicise the availability of heterologous precaution dose of Corbevax vaccine and to organise vaccination camps at public places such as bus stands, railway stations, airports, schools/colleges, pilgrimage routes and religious places to increase the uptake of precaution dose



among the eligible beneficiaries.

As on date, 12.36 crore precaution doses have been administered, according to the statement.

"Government of India has been working in the spirit of cooperative and collaborative federalism with states and UTs for creating, expanding and strengthening a multi-tier health infrastructure network across the country," Mandaviya said.

He was interacting virtual-

ly with the health ministers of states to review the implementation of various flagship schemes of the government, including National Health Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, and various projects under the Emergency COVID Response Package-II.

Mandaviya also reviewed the progress of the national COVID-19 vaccination campaign with specific focus on administration of precaution dose under the Vaccination Amrit Mahotsav.

This was part of a series of meetings chaired by Mandaviya to review progress and expedite utilisation of central funds allocated to states under various schemes and packages for upgrading and strengthening of critical care infrastructure, according to the statement.

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister Manish Sisodia attended the meeting.

States asked to hold camps for booster vax dose at stations, religious sites

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With just 17 per cent of eligible people receiving the precaution dose of COVID-19 vaccines till August 15, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya appealed to states on Tuesday to organise vaccination camps at public places such as railway stations, airports and religious sites to boost the coverage.

Mandaviya, who interacted with the health ministers of states and Union territories virtually, advised them to widely publicise the availability of heterologous precaution dose of Corbevax vaccine. He also urged them to organise vaccination camps at public places such as bus stands, railway stations, airports, schools/colleges, pilgrimage routes and religious sites to increase the uptake of precaution dose among the eligible beneficiaries. The precaution

dose coverage among the 64,89,99,721 eligible population was eight per cent till July 14. On July 15, the government launched a 75-day special drive to administer precaution doses to all aged 18 years and above at government vaccination centres free of cost. Only 17 per cent -- 12,36,03,060 -- of the nearly 74.5 crore eligible individuals have been administered precaution dose of COVID-19 vaccines till August 15. The COVID Vaccination Amrit Mahotsava, aimed at boosting the uptake of precaution doses among the eligible population, is being held as part of the government's Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence. States and Union territories were also advised to ensure that all vaccine doses are utilised on the basis of FEFO (first expiry, first out) principle to avoid expiry of the vaccines.

FOCUS ON FIRST TWO YEARS OF A CHILD'S LIFE

Union Minister launches mobile app on parenting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar on Tuesday launched a mobile application on parenting which focuses on cognitive developments of children in the first two years.

The first 1000 days establish a solid platform for a child's physical, mental, emotional, cognitive and social health, Pawar said.

India has taken rapid strides in reducing child mortality since 2014 from 45 per 1000 live births to 35 per 1000 live births in 2019, Pawar said after launching the Paalan 1000 National Campaign and Parenting App in Mumbai, according to a Health Ministry statement.

The app, which will provide caregivers with practical advice on what they can do in their everyday routine and will help resolving various doubts of



parents, was launched at the Early Childhood Development Conclave.

Accentuating the importance of the early phases of a child's life as its impact can last a lifetime, Pawar said, The process of a baby's brain development begins during pregnancy and is influenced by a pregnant woman's health, nutrition and environment. After birth, apart from the physical growth, a human baby's brain development paves the way for its future level of intelligence and quality of life."

"We need to understand that the child survival cannot be addressed in isolation as it is intricately linked to the health of the mother. Therefore, the concept of 'Continuum of Care', that emphasises on care during critical life stages in order to improve child survival, is being followed under the national programme.

She said the child health programme under the National Health Mission (NHM) comprehensively integrated interventions which improved child survival and addressed factors contributing to infant and under-five mortality. "Hence, our National Health Mission ensures that critical services are made available at home, through community outreach and through health facilities at various levels like primary, first referral units, tertiary health care facilities," she said.

Lumpy skin disease: Union Minister Rupala assures help to Punjab

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala on Tuesday reviewed the vaccination of cattle in Punjab in the wake of lumpy skin disease affecting a large number of animals and assured help from the Centre.

Rupala held a meeting with Punjab Animal Husbandry Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar here to review the situation in the state.



Rupala held another meeting with Haryana Animal Husbandry Minister J P Dalal over the issue.

During Punjab visit took a review of the vaccination

process along with the available facilities for cows. Assured them the complete help from the Centre for the eradication of the disease, also encouraged them towards larger number of vaccinations," said Rupala here.

Punjab minister Bhullar raised the demand for arranging goat pox vaccine in adequate quantity for over 25 lakh livestock.

Bhullar said the state government has administered 2.05 lakh doses of vaccine to cattle till Monday evening.

Maha Minister says not mandatory for govt officials

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Cultural Affairs Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar on Tuesday said it was not mandatory for state government officials to say "Vande Mataram while receiving phone calls.

Any equivalent words reflecting nationalism can be used during phone calls, he said after facing criticism from the opposition parties over the directive.

Mungantiwar had on Sunday said the country was celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav (75th anniversary of Independence) and hence all officials of the state government will have to say Vande Mataram instead of hello while receiving phone calls in offices till January 26 next year.

He had also said a formal government order will be out by August 18. However, the minister on

Tuesday told a TV channel that, Saying Vande Mataram is not mandatory. Any word or words equivalent to Vande Mataram which infuse nationalism can be used while receiving phone call.

An organisation or individual has the right to oppose it. Saying Vande Mataram is a campaign of the state cultural ministry which started on the Independence Day (August 15) and will continue till January 26, he added.

Education Minister urges people to participate in NCF

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday appealed the public to participate in a citizen survey being conducted by NCERT for development of a new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for school education.

The NCF serves as a guideline for designing syllabus and textbooks and for teaching practices in the country.

There are total 10 questions in the digital survey with each of them having five options.

The queries include how to make education futuristic and skill oriented and improve the dignity of teachers in the country.

The minister said that "development of a vibrant, dynamic, inclusive and futuristic National Curriculum Framework is essential for integrating cultural-rootedness along with global outlook, freeing education from colonial hangover and instilling a deeper sense of pride in our next generations".

"I appeal to all citizens to participate in the Citizen Survey for NCF for develop-

ing #NayeBharatKa NayaCurriculum. A dynamic National Curriculum Framework in line with the NEP 2020 will play a major role in achieving the goal of Viksit Bharat," Pradhan said in a series of tweets.

The Digital Survey for National Curriculum (DiSaNC) is being conducted by the education ministry and the National Council of Education and Research Training (NCERT) as part of the public consultation process for the formulation of NCF.

The other questions in the survey are pertaining to the people's opinion on values that need to be imbibed in children in the course of school education, languages they should learn from class 1

onwards and parents' envision of teachers' role in the holistic development of children.

It has also sought the stakeholders' opinion on subject areas children need to study in classes 6 to 8 (secondary stage) and classes 3 to 5 (preparatory stage) besides their take on the focus of learning by children in the age group of 3-8 years (Foundational Stage).

4th phase of CUET today; nearly 3.6L to appear

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The fourth phase of Central University Entrance Test (CUET)-UG 2022 will begin from Wednesday with nearly 3.6 lakh candidates expected to appear in the exam.

The exam for additional 11,000 candidates, who were to appear in the fourth phase from August 17-20, has been postponed to August 30 to accommodate their choice of city for centre, officials said. According to the initial plan, all phases of the CUET-UG were scheduled to conclude on August 20. The National Testing Agency (NTA), which is responsible for conducting the exam, had later announced that all phases of the exam will conclude on August 28.

DALIT BOY'S DEATH

Twelve Baran Congress councillors put in papers

PNS ■ KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Twelve Congress councillors in the Rajasthan's Baran Municipal Council on Tuesday sent their resignation letters to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, expressing anguish over atrocities against the Dalits and backing party MLA Pana Chand Meghwal.

The Baran-Atru MLA on Monday had sent his resignation letter to Gehlot, two days after the death of a nine-year-old Dalit boy who was allegedly beaten up by his school-teacher for touching a drinking water pot in Jalore.

Congress leader and former state deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot on Tuesday headed to Jalore to meet the victim's

family and said a strong message needs to be given to win the Dalit community's trust.

Meanwhile, backing the MLA's move, 12 of the 25 Congress councillors in the Baran civic body expressed anguish over atrocities against the Dalits and deprived sections. Ward No.29 councillor Yogendra Mehta said they sent their resignation letters in support of the MLA and against the government's failure to protect the Dalits. The other councillors who sent their resignation letters are Rohitashva Saxena, Rajaram Meena, Rekha Meena, Leeladhar Nagar, Hariaraj Erwal, Piyush Soni, Urvashi Meghwal, Yashwant Yadav, Anwar Ali, Jyoti Jatav and Mayank Mathodia, he said.

Taj Exp vacated, searched for 2 hrs after false bomb scare

PNS ■ AGRA

Passengers were asked to get off the Delhi-bound Taj Express at Mathura and the train was searched for two hours after a false bomb scare on Independence Day, officials said on Tuesday.

The train was coming from Jhansi Junction Railway Station and was heading to Nizamuddin Railway Station in Delhi. Rajeev Kumar Sub Inspector at Agra Cantt GRP Police Station said, on Monday, a man made a hoax call to a passenger regarding a bomb in Taj Express' D2 coach. He further said it will explode when the train will reach Delhi.

IIT-Delhi's Public Systems Lab to bring efficiency in PDS: Goyal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Public Systems Lab, inaugurated in IIT campus here, can contribute significantly in bringing efficiency in public food procurement and distribution, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday. He also said the lab is a perfect example of innovation that will contribute towards the development and rid the country of corruption by ushering efficiency in the public distribution system(PDS).

Goyal, who also holds consumer affairs, food and public distribution ministry portfolio, said through the government initiatives like PMGKAY (Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana), India has been a role model for the world in dealing with food security in the wake of the pandemic.

Tiranga March for employment policy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Representatives of several civil society organisations under the banner of Sanyukt Rojgar Andolan Samiti on Tuesday took out a Tiranga March from Nand Nagri in northeast Delhi demanding a national policy on employment.

The march, which started from near Gagan Cinema in Nand Nagri, was led by Delhi Cabinet minister and founder of Desh Ki Baat Foundation Gopal Rai. It was stopped by the police near Gokulpuri before it could reach Jantar Mantar, the planned site for the



agitation.

"This movement for implementation of National Employment Policy would continue in Nand Nagri till August 22. We appeal to all the citizen of the country to join

the movement," Delhi minister Rai said after the police stopped the Tiranga March.

The Rojgar Andolan was slated to be held at Jantar Mantar from August 16 to 22. Rai further said the march

was supposed to culminate at Jantar Mantar, but it was stopped by the police.

"Tiranga Yatra is being taken out all over the country, but if we are raising the issue of employment in our Tiranga padyatra (march), we are being stopped. It is not acceptable to us at all and this movement will continue," a statement issued by Sanyukt Rojgar Andolan Samiti said on Tuesday.

The statement said more than 2,000 representatives from 200 groups across the nation took part in the Tiranga March and after being stopped they sat on a fast.

Test run of rlys' longest freight train

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Railways conducted a test run of the 3.5-km-long freight train, Super Vasuki, with 295 loaded wagons carrying over 27,000 tonnes of coal between Korba in Chhattisgarh and Rajnandgaon in Nagpur on August 15, as part of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations.

The train run by the South East Central Railway left Korba at 13:50 and took 11.20 hours to cover the distance of 267 km.

This is the longest and heaviest freight train ever run



by the Railways, the national transporter said, adding the train takes about four minutes to cross a station.

The amount of coal carried by Super Vasuki is enough to fire 3000 MW of power plant for one full day, officials said.

This is three times the capacity of existing railway rakes (90 cars with 100 tonnes in each) which carries about 9,000 tonnes of coal in one journey.

The train was formed by amalgamating five rakes of goods trains as one unit.

The Railways plans to use this arrangement (longer freight trains) more frequently, especially to transport coal in peak demand season to prevent fuel shortages of power stations, the officials said.

Earlier this year, coal shortages had pushed the country into a severe power crisis.

Complacent MEA

The arrival of a Chinese spy ship in Sri Lanka is part of its anti-India activities, but Jaishankar downplays it

Yuan Wang 5, a tracking and satellite support vessel, reaching Sri Lanka's Hambantota port should not surprise anyone. India had objected to such a ship in its proximity but if someone thought that such objections would sensitise the Chinese Communist Party to our concerns, they were living in a fool's paradise. On the face of it, there is nothing illegal about the trip, for it is to a port that the Chinese own; and it is in a country that is sovereign. It can be argued that if Sri Lanka is okay with the trip, we can't oppose it. But we can, because it is a hostile vessel with capabilities which are inimical to our interests. Expert opinion is that Yuan Wang 5 at the Hambantota port, which is strategically located in the Indian Ocean, can seriously compromise our missile and satellite programmes. That is the intention; this seems to be part of the encirclement of India. The exercise is also in tune with the multipronged action by



China to emerge as a, and then the, global hegemon. It believes that the world should begin adapting itself to the emerging reality, so on Saturday it asked India to reiterate its support for the One-China Policy against the backdrop of the crisis in the Taiwan Strait which was triggered by US House of Representatives Speaker Pelosi's trip to Taiwan. That is, New Delhi should assuage Beijing's bruised sensitivities, but expect no reciprocity. Hence the arrival of Yuan Wang 5. The arrival also underlines the incompetence of our foreign office; if we couldn't pressure Colombo even at this point of time, in the wake of billions of dollars of aid to the crisis-hit nation, to do something that suits us, then we will never be able to that in future. The Ministry of External Affairs' incompetence seems monumental when viewed against the backdrop of the resistance that Yuan Wang 5 faced from several Sri Lankan politicians. Sri Lanka's Tamil Progressive Alliance leader and Colombo's Member of Parliament Mano Ganesan said in a statement the coming of the Chinese spy vessel to Lankan waters was "simply wrong." He went on to highlight India's concerns, pointing out that India is the country which has "provided near \$4 billion to us in our time of crisis." To be fair to the Sri Lanka Government, it did request China to defer the arrival of Yuan Wang 5 at the Hambantota port "until further consultations" on the matter. In typical diplomatese, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar downplayed the incident. In an interview to a newspaper, he said, "We need to take care of our national interests but can't claim exclusivity in the region. To say that this [the permission to allow the Chinese vessel to dock at the Sri Lankan port] is a flashpoint between India and China would be inappropriate." An echo of the infamous statement by Nehru, "Not a blade of grass grows there..."?



People from Parsi community greet one another on 'Navroz', the Parsi New Year, in Mumbai

Pariwarvaad vs dostvaad !

The Prime Minister once again took a jibe at the Gandhis with pariwarvaad. But is there a party free from it, the BJP included

The Prime Minister once again from the ramparts of Red Fort reminded the nation to root out dynasty and colonial mindset. The 'pariwarvaad' which the Prime Minister has talked about several times in his speeches once again figured in his speech on the 76th Independence Day. It was indeed a brilliant speech that hit all the right notes; from corruption to nepotism and doing away with the colonial mindset. While other messages were loud and clear for the people, his mentioning of the dynasty in his speech was indeed a veiled attack on the Nehru-Gandhi family. The Red Fort speech conventionally has been about what the Government has done and plans to do for the betterment of the people. The political messages have not been part of it and attacking the opponents from the ramparts of Red Fort does not augur well for a healthy democracy. For attacking the



Opposition, there are numerous platforms available to the Prime Minister including Parliament. But since the Prime Minister chose to speak about it the reaction also came from the Opposition, surprisingly not from the Congress (Rahul Gandhi refused to comment on it) but from Aam Aadmi Party. Manish Sisodia was quick to retort and remind the Prime Minister about his defaulter friends. Manish Sisodia did not mince words in saying if 'pariwarvaad' is bad so is 'dostvaad'. Sisodia was categorical in pointing out how the Prime Minister waved off millions of loans his friends owed to Indian banks. 'Dostvaad' is the new word coined by him. Kejriwal also insisted that loans and taxes to the tune of ₹10 lakh crore of corporate friends are being written off. As they say, we choose our friends while family chooses us. We don't live in a perfect world. Dynasty and nepotism is bad for democracy, it is the way things are in India and outside. The Kennedys and Bush family in America, Yadavs and Reddys in India are a case in point. Even numerous instances of 'pariwarvaad' can be cited in the BJP itself. Piyush Goel, Anurag Thakur, Parvesh Verma would have a very different take. No matter how hard you try but still you cannot win elections in India on merit; caste and religion often are a better bet in elections merit. At the end of the day, what matters is how democratic a person is and how much he cares for the people who vote for him. Despots like Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin did not have a lineage. They weren't democratic either.

New Panchsheel for India @ 75

PM Modi's thrust for five tenets is not only bold but timely as unshackling us from the colonial mindset is of utmost import

Of the five pledges that Prime Minister Modi set out for the country in his ninth Independence Day address to the nation, two stood out particularly, for their relative newness. The rest of the speech was on expected lines – his customary denunciation of corruption and the corrupt, nepotism, dynasticism and calls for development, self-reliance, pride in our legacy, unity, and cooperation, and equality for all across ethnic, regional, and religious diversities. As always, there were subtle nuances that hinted at things to come. But before that, the two standout points.

First, he alluded to the hundreds of years of servitude and dependence, Ghulami, that has distorted our mentality and emphasised forcefully that the last vestiges thereof must be removed from the recesses of our minds. India no longer needed, he said, certificates of validation from the world. It was a bold, unvarnished statement, one that no previous Indian PM had articulated, more so on such an occasion and venue. It was as if, the soul of a nation long suppressed was finding utterance, to borrow Nehru's mellifluous phrase, in Modi's compelling oratory. With the spare, somber ramparts of the Red Fort in the background and the forgettable, poignant medieval past of the country that it evokes in a majority of Indians, the moment was rich in historical irony.

It was testimony to India's newfound confidence and the Narendra Modi government's resolute will to not play to the gallery, both foreign and domestic. It is this single-minded pursuit of India's national interest, oblivious to international bouquets or internal brickbats that have enabled the revocation of article 370, as also our balanced, nonpartisan approach to the Ukraine-Russia conflict. No more is India prepared to cave into international pressure as it did in July 1972 when it signed the Shimla agreement without settling the Kashmir dispute



even when our Army had brought Pakistan to its knees and 93,000 POWs were barricaded in our cantonments.

Secondly, the PM was categorical that everyone, including Chief ministers and even the Prime Minister himself, must follow the duties of citizenship. That his focus was on politicians is borne out by his mentioning "CMs and PM" to illustrate his point. This has wide ramifications for the Indian polity. Thus, it cautions the politician to be honest and law-abiding; to keep national interests paramount instead of compromising them in the pursuit of short-term electoral gains; to avoid the Revadi or freebies culture that he had spoken of recently and that had drawn adverse comments from the Supreme Court also; to rein in the hubris that makes for a wanton disregard of propriety, probity, and ethics in public life. It was a statesman's admonition to a delinquent lot known more for financial scams, mafia links, criminal background, nativist demagoguery, casteist manipulation, nepotism, and dynastic

THE PRIME MINISTER WAS CATEGORICAL THAT EVERYONE, INCLUDING CHIEF MINISTERS AND EVEN THE PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF, MUST FOLLOW THE DUTIES OF CITIZENSHIP

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TALIBAN FAILED TO WIN HEARTS

Sir — The occupation of Afghanistan by the Taliban with Lightning speed triggered a political and humanitarian crisis. The Taliban made soothing statements about not victimizing women so long as their lifestyle is within the purview of Sharia Law inter alia men's slaves. They regard the Sharia as Divine Law but most are unaware it's a document imposed by Khalifas for selfish reasons replacing the Holy Quran.

The Quran decrees no earthly punishment for blasphemy or apostasy, nor does it anywhere command stoning for any crime, condone female circumcision, or support banning art and music. It does not endorse treating women as inferior or preventing them from going for higher education and even joining any profession. Taliban's misinterpretation of Sharia has become a synonym with a draconian and inhuman Islamic legal system. Even after one year of rule, the Taliban remains brutally subtle.

Seetharam B | Telangana

LONG ROAD TO 'DEVELOPED' INDIA

Sir — It refers to "India, a developed nation". It is good to have an ambitious target to become a developed nation in the next 25 years. But there is a huge gulf that is to be bridged in this span of time. While India's per capita income is around \$ 2000 while our neighbour China has \$ 8700. Though the Prime Minister has outlined five pledges which need to be abided by one and all in letter and spirit but for that to happen a drastic shift in mindset is required. This pandemic has exposed the vulnerabilities of a developed nation like the USA, so we Indians must take pride in being Indian. It is not to suggest that we should not become a developed nation but we need to be mindful of our trajectory.

Besides that, there is a huge disparity between rich and poor and men and women which needs to be bridged systematically. And gradually we will have to reduce our dependence on imported items and start manufacturing them in India. Though we

Takeaways from PM's I-Day speech



In his third longest 83 minutes speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the ramparts of the Red Fort, clearly showed that he was not in a mood like the previous eight years to have painted castles in the air for Indian voters. Hence, he was not making any new announcements and even did not speak a word about his promises for 2022, and now next deadline is 2027... keep counting the years. Instead, PM Modi launched the political campaign for 2024 on these twin challenges of "corruption" and "nepotism" — something that he has used in the run-up to the 2014 general elections, and knows that it still has resonance among the electorate.

Is there bigger nepotism than a greenhorn like Anil Ambani, who has no prior experience

attract a lot of medical tourism, in terms of Doctor to the Patient ratio we lack far behind WHO norms, so we need to seriously overhaul our healthcare infrastructure along with the education sector.

Bal Govind | Noida

UNWORKABLE MARRIAGES

Sir — The Kerala High Court has held that the preservation of unworkable marriage causes great misery. The Court has observed that nothing is gained by trying to keep the parties tied forever to a marriage that in fact has ceased to exist. If the married couples cannot function as a cohesive unit, the dissolution of marriage becomes inevitable. Love and adjustability in married life should come from within and be spontaneous. Likewise, courts cannot make stub-

born couples mentally unite. Break-up in the marriage occurs more due to the lack of adjustability of a married girl with her in-laws, perpetration of the cruelty by in-laws and husband on the woman, greed for dowry, illicit relationships, etc. Courts must dispose of cases expeditiously when there is a unanimous decision between the husband and wife to avoid uncertainty in the future. The judgment of the Kerala High Court has come in the case 13 years after the marriage was consummated. It would have an adverse effect when both are hell-bent on securing a divorce. In any case, delayed disposal of cases is no better though it has both merits and demerits.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

entitlement. The common man must have been touched to the core, tired and weary as he is of the shenanigans of the political brats.

These two pledges apart, he exhorted the states towards healthy, cooperative, and competitive federalism, a far cry from some leaders playing off one against the other. His call against nepotism included fields other than politics – sports, for instance; his stress on meritocracy was refreshing in a country long riven by caste-based reservations in education and jobs. He paid homage to the leading lights of our freedom struggle cutting across party and ideological lines including, inter alia, Nehru, JP, and Lohia. He repeatedly spoke of "my 130 crore countrymen", "unity and integration", "collective conscience", "no one mine, no one other" and India's diversity is its biggest asset. Clearly, no group is left out in Modi's scheme for India 2047. For a leader who was branded "India's Divider-in-Chief" in a hallowed international magazine not so long ago, his unifying personality and speech were telling

reminders to the audience of the actual contrary reality. As in previous years, the PM mixed freely and joyfully with children from all regions who responded spontaneously with "pure delight on their faces" as one TV commentator put it. Folk artists, from different states, broke into their traditional dances rapturously when Modi reached them through the throng. The enthusiastic hoisting of the tricolor at Lal Chowk, Srinagar by a motley bunch of different ethnic and religious backgrounds was a welcome surprise. It was Modi's favourite slogan – sabka saath, sab ka vishwaas or everyone's support, everyone's trust – writ large on the TV screen. India, it seemed, was truly on its way.

Blurb: The PM was categorical that everyone, including Chief ministers and even the Prime Minister himself, must follow the duties of citizenship

(The writer, a former banker, has turned in his mellow years to column-writing out of his love for nonviolence, social harmony and universal brotherhood.)

SOUND BITE

I offer Central Govt to use our services. Keep politics aside. Use our services- you, we & 130 cr Indians will together improve all schools. All Govts (States) will do it together. And stop calling this a freebie.

Delhi CM —Arvind Kejriwal

Rushdie stood for universal rights of freedom of expression.

US Secretary of State —Tony Blinken

Our India stands tall with the strength of our relentless defense forces. There's so much and more to love, be proud of and celebrate. Here's to our Independence!! Jai Hind.

Actor —Hrithik Roshan

Anshu Jain was a friend and an avid cricket lover. Used to speak non-stop cricket on phone calls for hours.

Cricketer —Virender Sehwag

Tiranga is foremost a symbol of our independence from British rule and freedom from monarchy and feudalism. Deplorable that Scindia doesn't mention the British as 'foreign aggressors'.

AIMIM leader —Asaduddin Owaisi

FIRST COLUMN

DON'T RELY ON RATINGS FOR GOOD MF RETURNS

Mutual fund ratings are dynamic; opt for basket of investments



S KALYANASUNDARAM

Mr Anand works for a company and to reduce his income tax liability, he wanted to invest in the Equity Linked Savings Scheme (ELSS). Instead of investing through a Mutual Fund advisor, he did his own ground work based on the ratings available. During the beginning of this year he invested in Axis Long Term Equity Fund (G) and DSP Tax saver fund (G), as these had five star ratings from a reputed financial newspaper research team. But to his surprise now he has found out that the same research team has now reassigned three star rating to Axis Long Term Equity Fund (G) and four star rating to DSP Tax saver fund. As the schemes have a lock-in period of three years, there is no way that he can change his investment. Every mutual fund comes in two versions – direct version and regular version. One of the key distinctions between them is that regular mutual funds have a distribution commission unlike direct mutual funds. This makes the expense ratio higher for regular funds. Hence, the return to the investor on direct investment may be more.



Generally, many investors go by the rating provided to different mutual fund schemes and invest under direct schemes. While making investment under direct equity, it is possible for any individual to depend on the fundamental factors of the company and also technical analysis available and one can select the company based on risk perception and return expectation. But coming to mutual fund schemes, though broad investment philosophy and benchmarking are available, there is no definite way to know the contour of investment in future. Hence, individual investors depend on the ratings provided by different rating agencies. From the past experience, it seems that one can't decide solely based on the ratings available. Rating organisations like CRISIL, ICRA, CARE, and Value Research generally provide ratings for mutual fund schemes in India. There are business newspapers like the Hindu Business Line, which provide their own ratings based on their in-house research. Rating methodology Mutual funds are rated mostly on the performance of the funds over different periods. The ratings also take into account the fundamentals of the fund houses, asset allocation of a scheme, the experience and credentials of a fund manager, returns based on inflation, besides several other parameters. For example, CRISIL considers the following in its ranking methodology: Portfolio Concentration Analysis, Liquidity Analysis, Mean Return and Volatility Active Returns (the active returns are the percentage of loss or profits made by an investment portfolio as a result of active investment decisions by the fund manager). Scales of one to five stars are decided on the basis of percentile in which the funds are placed in the order. Generally, five-star is assigned to top 10 per cent funds and the bottom 10 per cent is given one-star rating. Any investment should be based on one's risk bearing capacity. Higher the risk, higher will be the potential return on investment. In turn, mutual fund schemes can have different investment philosophies and different asset allocation based on the investors' risk perception and return expectation. As the mutual fund investment spreads to different stocks and debt instruments, there is no easy way to predict future performance. Rating is not an impediment for any fund to perform and it is always possible that poor-rated funds may perform better. However, a poor rating may disturb the mobilisation for a particular Mutual fund scheme, and indirectly affect its working, as the mutual fund scheme may not have the advantage of size of investment and diversification.

(The author is a financial analyst.)

Impart knowledge with holistic education

Re-organisation of teachers' training is a must for the success of National Education Policy 2020



BKP SINHA

Nelson Mandela has rightly said that "education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world". It is a stairway to the growth and development of humankind. The right to education must be universal so that everyone can pursue prospects of a better future. However, the right to education is not only the right to access education. It's also about receiving a quality education.

Quality education is of paramount importance in today's complex and fast-changing environment. It fosters the knowledge, skills and values required to create a fairer and more sustainable world. According to 'Education International and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development', quality education "is one that focuses on the child's overall development - social, emotional, mental, physical and cognitive, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or geographic location". Its goal is to prepare students for the challenges they are likely to face later in their lives.

We now realize that education alone will not lead to a sustainable future, therefore, learning about sustainable development (SD) is necessary. Target 4.7 in the 2030 Agenda for SD emphasizes the importance of transformative education that promotes global citizenship, sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace and cultural diversity.

The Brundtland Report coined the term "Sustainable Development" and defined it as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs".

It is a holistic approach and is often depicted as three overlapping circles: ecological, social and economic. It demonstrates the interplay of all parts of life and the need for their equal consideration to find lasting prosperity. But we generally have a unidirectional approach towards sustainability based on our predisposition, for example from an ecological, economic or social viewpoint, which often results in trade-offs.

The interconnected nature of the challenges the world faces today cannot be understood in isolation. For instance, every year, climate change like extreme weather events and rising sea levels force millions of people to flee their homes. This results in climate refugees and a rise in poverty. As climate change and poverty are inextricably linked, one cannot be solved without addressing the other.

To comprehend basic principles of ecology, one must think holistically about relationships, connectedness and context to realize the intricate interdependence and often unpredictable dynamics of ecological, social, and economic systems. This shift of focus from analytical thinking (parts) to contextual thinking (whole) is a prerequisite for building a more resilient world, ensuring systemic decision and policy



SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF NEP 2020 LARGELY DEPENDS ON THE GOOD SPIRIT AND RIGHT INTENTIONS OF THE POLICY MAKERS WHICH WILL NOT ONLY DIVERSIFY INDIA'S GLOBAL IMAGE BUT ALSO MAKE THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AT PAR WITH THE BEST IN THE WORLD

(The author is a retired IFS officer.)



making. It is regarded as a critical ability in education, as it enables students to untangle and work within the complexities of life on Earth.

Integration of education for sustainable development (ESD) into teaching and learning can help in the realization of quality education, which is critical to fulfilling many of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) such as breaking the cycle of poverty, reducing inequalities, achieving gender equality and improving agricultural productivity. It is also essential for addressing other key issues, including wasteful consumption, biodiversity conservation, natural resource use, climate change, energy, freshwater, health, sanitation and waste management.

ESD is an interdisciplinary field that integrates concepts from multiple disciplines to understand how natural and man-made processes interact with each other and ultimately affect the various biomes on the planet. Its goal is to discover novel and sustainable ways of living and managing natural resources to protect vital ecological systems and enhance long-term prospects for human prosperity.

Adopting a wide range of participatory methodologies in education, such as problem-based and project-based learning are essential to change the behaviours and equip the current and future generations with the knowledge and skills they need to shape a sustainable future. These methodologies will allow them to develop problem-solving, interdisciplinary and systemic thinking skills, which will help them learn 'how to think' rather than 'what to think' within the context of sustainability.

Our sustainable future requires societies and countries to work

together, hence, it advocates the use of collaborative learning at all stages of education. In collaborative learning, students in small groups work together on a common goal to seek understanding and solutions. It fulfills the primary purpose of education – nurturing responsible citizens who can work together to solve complex ecological, social and economic issues.

Thus, working on collaborative learning projects at an early age can boost confidence and help in developing critical thinking, positive interdependence, diverse understanding along with various other social skills such as leadership, decision-making, communication, trust-building, conflict management and a sense of ownership.

Educational institutions also need to partner with multiple stakeholders and various other sectors such as economics, environment, etc., to take up co-learning. It will facilitate students to engage with real-life issues and gain the practical knowledge and skills needed to build long-term sustainable solutions.

Conventionally, ESD has been considered a separate component within the educational systems. However, over the past few years, it has been argued that it should be integrated into mainstream disciplines at all levels, settings, and types (informal, formal, non-formal) of education. This requires a systemic change in all kinds of textbooks, including science, math, social sciences, humanities, etc. It also requires significant reforms in the educational system, including strengthening curricula, cognitive and non-cognitive elements, transforming learning environments, establishing diverse part-

nerships, providing teacher training, creating local learning opportunities, and implementing innovative pedagogies.

Teaching ESD requires knowledge of several disciplines that is generally beyond teachers' expertise. Reforms of this magnitude, however, will not be possible without effective policies, operational frameworks, political will, financial assistance and stakeholders' cooperation.

National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century, which aims to align the education system with SDGs and make education holistic, inclusive, multidisciplinary, learner-centric, inquiry-driven and experiential which can transform India into a vibrant knowledge-based society and global knowledge superpower.

Our collective responsibility to improve the quality of education is essential for achieving the ambitions of 'Agenda 2030' and ensuring continuity in the quality of human life. Governments, teachers, educational institutions and stakeholders have a vanguard role to play, along with parents and students themselves. However, we stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost's familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth super-highway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road – the one less traveled by – offers the last and our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of the earth.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

WE FACE THE CHALLENGES OF CORRUPTION AND 'PARIWARVAAD'... WE NEED TO RAISE AWARENESS AGAINST 'PARIVAARWAAD'
—PRIME MINISTER
NARENDRA MODI



I WON'T MAKE A COMMENT ON THESE THINGS. (CORRUPTION & PARIWARVAAD OR NEPOTISM'), TODAY.
—CONGRESS LEADER
RAHUL GANDHI

E-two wheelers can cut carbon emissions in a big way

Two-wheelers, which are prominent polluters, need to go electric to cut down on emissions substantially

Air pollution is harming the health of around 1.3 billion people in the vulnerable areas of India where an average particulate matter concentration was 73ug/m3, far-exceeding the WHO's standard prescribed limit of 5ug/m3, catalysing the levels of carbonization. India is witnessing rapid rise of two-wheelers, representing about 76 per cent of the total, which is over 210 million. Nearly 60,000 two-wheelers per day are being registered in India, consuming 61 per cent of total sale of petrol.

The two-wheelers account for almost 20 per cent of the total carbon dioxide emissions and 30 per cent of the particulate emissions in urban areas. The worst sufferers are the vulnerable sections of society such as growing children, expectant-



PRITHAM SINGH

(The author is a policy analyst.)

mothers, elderly people and patients having lung problems.

The latest research studies of Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago observed that "at the current pollution levels about 510 million people who live in northern India, representing nearly 40 per cent of India's population, are on-track to lose 7.6 years of their lives on an average".

However, by all out efforts like two wheelers e-mobility and gradual phasing out of 'Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) based tail pipe emitters' for mitigating the pollution levels to the WHO's prescribed levels would mean that an estimated 240 million people in the north Indian state - Uttar Pradesh - would gain about 10 years in life-expectancy.

Two wheelers pollute more,

having cascading impact in urban areas to an overall particulate matter concentration, observed to be the highest in the world.

On an average, each two-wheeler enriches greenhouse gases by adding around 300 gms/km of carbon dioxide, besides (as per Bharat Stage-IV standard prescribed limits under standardized conditions) remarkable quantities of pollutants like (1.50 gm/km) carbon monoxide (known as silent killer) and (1.50 gm/km) hydrocarbons plus oxide of nitrogen, etc.

These standard limits normally exceeded because of factors like driving in frequent traffic jams, road conditions, fuel quality, local environmental conditions, etc.

Assuming broadly, around

75 million two-wheelers, having an average of about 250 km/month pacing on the road, will collectively translate around 75m tonnes/year of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, entailing emission of dreaded particulate matter.

The world's fourth largest energy hungry India (yet behind China, US and the European Union), will according to IEA's forecast will become the third largest consumer, overlapping European Union by 2030. Though indeed it is a Herculean task to achieve the set goal of IPCC by 2030, it is certainly not impossible.

Realizing impending threat to economies, India's vehicular transportation scenario is set to have a 'sea change' as the Government's think tank – National Institute for

Transforming India – NITI Aayog is chalking out a slew of progressive set targets to mitigate and eliminate pollution by pushing the ambitious plans of electrifying two-wheelers and gradually phasing out the sale of 'ICE-based tail pipe emitters'.

The government's well set delineations with full support of corporates will undergo a sea change by 2030 with e-mobility as preferred mode of transport by having an ambitious plan of electrifying around 80 per cent, say close to 54.4 million two-wheelers with eco-friendly alluring all segments of e-two wheelers and setting up gigantic chain of about 6K-charging stations in the nook and corner, will certainly enable to get rid of routinely lining-up at petrol pumps.

Currently, to fill the gasoline

tank of a bike of 11 litre, it costs about Rs 1100. So, this means that a e-two wheeler owner can get a full charge for less than that of the cost of one-litre of gasoline, with no tail-pipe emission, no tormenting exhaust noise, i.e., noise pollution, comparatively at much less maintenance cost to govern mere 20-25 moving parts in the vehicle's assembly in comparison to about 2000 parts in the ICV gasoline based two-wheelers..

In the race of new technologies, India is not lagging behind and gradually unveiling its plans on the befitting occasions for widespread application of fuel-cell technology as 'new medium of energy', replacing fossil fuels in public and private transport systems, railways, power generation, data processing stations, etc.

It is high time not to miss an opportunity to preserve the environment and warrants more initiatives with individual approach too. An earlier census had reported that mere 30 per cent of the trips to work are made on foot and 17 per cent by bicycle. Besides the government initiatives, here the powerful media must shoulder its responsibility to play its more constructive role for mitigating vehicular pollution in cities and make aware the public about the grim picture of vehicular pollution in the years to come. Spreading the mission of greenery all around and prefer trips to work on foot in urban areas on the lines of smartly populated cities like Surat and Bangalore, will bear fruits for tomorrow-generations.

MONEY MATTERS

Adani Logistics to acquire ICD Tumb from Navkar Corp for Rs 835 cr

Adani Logistics, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd, on Tuesday said it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire ICD Tumb (Vapi) from Navkar Corporation for Rs 835 crore. Adani Logistics Ltd (ALL) in a statement said the deal comprises the acquisition of the operational ICD (inland container depot) with a capacity to handle 0.5 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent unit). Associated 129 acres of land provides an additional expansion path to increase capacity and cargo in near future, as additional industrial corridors and logistic parks get added along these DFC (Dedicated Freight Corridor) routes, it noted. The company said the acquisition is in line with its strategy to build integrated transport utility and pan India logistics infrastructure, and Tumb adds to the existing seven multi-modal logistics parks in the Adani Logistics portfolio. According to the statement, ICD Tumb has a private freight terminal with four rail handling lines connected with Western DFC, custom notified land and bonded warehouse facilities.



Payoda eyes over 1,000 employee base by 2025

Software development and technology firm Payoda has drawn up plans to double employee base across various verticals to over 1,000 during the next three years, a top company official said on Tuesday. The Coimbatore-headquartered firm has offices in Chennai, Hyderabad and also offshore workplace in Texas, United States, Dubai and Romania. "Technological advancements over the past couple of years have triggered a pertinent need for stakeholders to expand their horizon through robust infrastructure and skilled human resources," company co-founder Karunya Sampath said in a company statement here. "To keep pace with time, we have put in place a strategic hiring plan wherein the strength at all our centres would improve. Even as we would continue to have most team members from India, we foresee expansion in our global teams in the near future," she said.



Rare Enterprises-backed Concord Biotech files IPO papers with Sebi

Rare Enterprises-backed Concord Biotech has filed draft papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to mop up funds through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO is entirely an offer for sale of (OFS) of 2,09,25,652 equity shares by Helix Investment Holdings Pte Limited, which is backed by private equity firm Quadria Capital, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). The offer also includes a reservation for subscriptions by eligible employees. Concord is among the leading manufacturers of fermentation-based biopharmaceutical APIs, focused on niche segments such as immunosuppressant, oncology, anti-fungal and anti-bacterial. It has three manufacturing facilities -- Valthera, Dholka, and Limbasi -- in Gujarat. The company is backed by Quadria Capital Fund and Rare Enterprises, which was set up by billionaire investor Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, along with his wife Rekha. The veteran stock market investor passed away on Sunday.



Centre unveils platform for industry-R&D linkages

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Government on Tuesday unveiled a platform to drive collaboration between the industry and research institutes to implement technology-based social impact innovations and solutions in the country. The launch of Manthan, a platform that promises to augment our efforts to build and nurture industry participation in R&D, is also a testimony of our commitment to the UN's SDG goals, the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the government, Ajay Kumar Sood, said in a statement here.



Anantharaman Sreenivasan, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NSEIT, said it will help new concepts, science-led ideas, and new technology outcomes find swifter adoption across the country.

interventions, including those that make a social impact, an official statement said. The platform will provide the necessary fulcrum for transforming the nation through innovative ideas, inventive minds, and public-private-academia collaboration to achieve the country's sustainability goals, said Parvinder Maini, Scientific Secretary, Office of PSA. Led by the Office of PSA, Manthan will facilitate knowledge transfers and interactions through information exchange sessions, exhibitions, and events to develop a framework for future science, innovation, and technology-led growth, the official statement said. Anantharaman Sreenivasan, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of NSEIT, said it will help new concepts, science-led ideas, and new technology outcomes find swifter adoption across the country.

State Bank of India's (SBI) Chairman Dinesh Khara on Tuesday said that things might get "better" on the inflation front towards the end of September. He said the supply side constraints getting addressed and crude oil prices trending low will help ease the situation. "Inflation...the recent numbers which came out was 6.7. Going forward the way things are - the supply side constraints which are there are getting addressed, so the situation should be improving going forward," he said in response to a question. Speaking to reporters here, he said one of the important factors of inflation is crude oil prices, and with them also trending lower, it will also support the inflation to be further tapered down.

Inflation: Things might get 'better' towards Sept-end, says SBI Chairman
PNS ■ BENGALURU

Govt seeks to amend PMKKKY for effective use of DMF funds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government plans to amend the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana to ensure effective use of funds under the District Mineral Foundation for the welfare of people affected by mining-related operations. The government has invited suggestions until August 27 from the stakeholders on the amendment to policy guidelines. The government in 2015 launched the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) scheme to provide for the welfare of areas and people affected by mining-related operations using the funds generated by District Mineral Foundation (DMF). The Centre has formed a panel, to be chaired by Mines Additional Secretary Sanjay Lohiya, "to revisit/amend the PMKKKY guidelines for effective utilisation of DMF funds



in the districts affected by mining-related operations," according to a government notice. The committee was also tasked with finding the gaps in the policy, monitoring and implementation of the scheme and making suggestions in the changes in PMKKKY Guidelines. A section of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 specifies setting up of District Mineral Foundation in any district affected by mining-related operations. DMFs work for the interest and benefit of people, and areas affected by mining-related operations. The purpose of PMKKKY scheme also includes implementation of different developmental and welfare programmes in mining affected areas, minimising the adverse impacts, during and after mining, on the environment, health and socio-economics of people in mining districts and to ensure long-term sustainable livelihoods for the affected people in mining areas.

India's fuel demand continues to fall as monsoon advances

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diesel demand in India fell for the second month in a row as the onset of monsoon chipped away consumption in key sectors like agriculture, preliminary industry data showed Tuesday. Petrol and diesel demand had fallen month-on-month in July. While petrol consumption is almost flat in the first half of August, diesel - the most widely used fuel in the country - saw demand drop 11.2 per cent during August 1-15 to 2.82 million tonnes from 3.17 million tonnes in the same period of the previous month. The arrival and intensity of monsoon weigh heavily on diesel demand in the country and consumption traditionally is lower in July-September than in April-June. Monsoon restricts mobility and demand from the farm sector, which



uses diesel in irrigation pumps and trucking, also drops with the onset of rains. Diesel demand was, however, 32.8 per cent higher year-on-year, supported by strong economic growth and a relatively low baseline for the same period in 2021 when the second wave of COVID-19 had impacted the economy. Consumption of diesel was 58.2 per cent higher than the 1.78 million tonnes demand during August 1-15 in 2020. It was 23 per cent more than pre-COVID August 2019, the data showed. Petrol sales inched up 0.8 per cent to 1.29 million tonnes in the first half of August when compared to 1.28 million tonnes of consumption in the same period of the previous month.

Gold falls by Rs 764, silver tumbles Rs 1,592

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices declined by Rs 764 to Rs 52,347 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday following weak global cues, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had closed at Rs 53,111 per 10 grams in the previous trade. Silver also tumbled by Rs 1,592 to Rs 58,277 per kg from Rs 59,869 per kg in the previous trade. "Gold prices at MCX witnessed lower openings reflecting overnight fall in COMEX prices," said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities. In the international market, gold was lower at USD 1,775 per ounce while silver was flat at USD 20.13 per ounce.

WPI inflation eases to 5-month low of 13.93 %

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The wholesale price-based inflation eased to a five-month low of 13.93 per cent in July on easing prices of food articles and manufactured products. The WPI-based inflation softened for the second consecutive month in July, raising hopes of further decline in wholesale prices in the months to come. The Wholesale Price Index-based inflation, after scaling a record high of 15.88 per cent in May, declined to 15.18 per cent in June. It was 13.43 per cent in February. It was 11.57 per cent in July last year. The WPI inflation continued its declining trend for the second month in July but remained in double-digits for the 16th consecutive month beginning April last year. Inflation in food articles in July eased to 10.77 per cent from 14.39 per cent in June. The rate of price rise in vegetables declined substantially

The Wholesale Price Index-based inflation, after scaling a record high of 15.88 per cent in May, declined to 15.18 per cent in June. It was 13.43 per cent in February.



to 18.25 per cent in July against 56.75 per cent in the previous month. In the fuel and power basket, inflation was 43.75 per cent in July compared to 40.38 per cent in the last month. Inflation in manufactured products and oil seeds was 8.16 per cent and (-) 4.06 per cent, respectively. CRCL LLP CEO and

Managing Partner DRE Reddy said higher crude oil prices and input costs still weigh on the producers and pass-through has resulted in pushing the retail inflation higher. "The global economy is recovering as we witness an increase in demand for metals, oils, crude and fertilisers. Moving forward, as the crude prices soften in the summer season and supply issues getting resolved will help ease WPI inflation in the next few months," Reddy added. The Reserve Bank of India mainly looks at retail inflation to frame monetary policy. Retail inflation remained above the Reserve Bank's comfort level for the seventh month in a row and was 6.71 per cent in July.

Sensex rises 379 pts, Nifty closes above 17,800

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex rose by over 379 points while Nifty closed above the 17,800 level following gains in oil & gas, banking and auto shares on easing inflation concerns. The 30-share BSE benchmark index advanced 379.43 points or 0.64 per cent to settle at 59,842.21, logging its third straight day of gains. During the day, it jumped 460.25 points or 0.77 per cent to 59,923.03.

Extending its gaining streak to a sixth session in a row, the broader NSE Nifty climbed 127.10 points or 0.72 per cent to close at 17,825.25 as 42 of its constituents advanced. Easing inflation concerns after the wholesale price-based inflation slowed down to a five-month low of 13.93 per cent in July and buying in index majors Reliance Industries and HDFC twins added to the momentum. "The easing of inflationary

pressures has encouraged domestic investors to remain optimistic about the pace of economic recovery. Better-than-expected CPI numbers, aided by slower increase in food and fuel prices, may limit the pace of rate hikes by the RBI," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. From the Sensex pack, Mahindra & Mahindra rose the most by 2.28 per cent. Mahindra Group on Monday

announced that it would launch five new electric sports utility vehicles for both domestic and international markets, with the first four expected to hit the road between 2024 and 2026. Maruti gained 2.19 per cent, Asian Paints by 2.09 per cent, and Hindustan Unilever by 1.9 per cent. UltraTech Cement, HDFC and HDFC Bank, Tech Mahindra and Reliance Industries were among the lead gainers.

SpiceJet shares climb nearly 2 %

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of SpiceJet on Tuesday climbed nearly 2 per cent after the company entered into a settlement with aircraft lessor Goshawk Aviation and its affiliated entities. The stock advanced 1.96 per cent to settle at Rs 46.75 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it climbed 4.14 per cent to Rs 47.75. On Tuesday, SpiceJet announced that it has entered into a settlement with aircraft lessor Goshawk Aviation and

its affiliated entities related to two Boeing 737 Max aircraft and one Boeing 737-800 NG aircraft. oshawk Aviation Limited is one of the main lessors of Max aircraft of SpiceJet, the airline's statement noted. "The settlement with Goshawk follows SpiceJet's successful settlements with De Havilland Aircraft of Canada Limited, Credit Suisse, Boeing, CDB Aviation, BOC Aviation and Avolon," it mentioned.

Companies in India expected to give 10 % hike in 2023

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Companies in India are expected to give a salary hike of 10 per cent in 2023 as they struggle with rising attrition in the tight labour market, according to a report. Global advisory, broking and solutions company Willis Towers Watson's Salary Budget Planning report found that companies in India are budgeting an overall increase of 10 per cent for 2022-23, compared with the actual 9.5 per cent growth in the previous year. According to the report, more than half (58 per cent) of the employers in India have budgeted for higher salary increases for the ongoing fiscal year compared to last year, while a quarter of them (24.4 per cent) made no change in the budget. Only 5.4 per cent have reduced the budget as compared to 2021-22, it added. The report



revealed that at 10 per cent, salary increases in India continue to be the highest in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region. China is projected to see an increase of 6 per cent, Hong Kong at 4 per cent and Singapore at 4 per cent for next year, it added. The report was based on a survey across 168 countries in April and May 2022, which includes 590 organisations in India. It further said around 42 per cent of companies in India have also projected a positive business revenue outlook for the next 12 months, while only 7.2 per cent have projected a negative outlook.

Ratan invests in startup offering Sr citizen companionship as a service

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Industry leader Ratan Tata on Tuesday announced an undisclosed investment into startup Goodfellows that offers companionship to senior citizens as a service. The octogenarian industrialist has been an active backer of startups ever since retiring from the helm of the salt-to-software Tata Group and has invested in over 50 companies till now. The latest investee company is founded by Shantanu Naidu. Thirty-year-old Naidu, a Cornell University alumnus, is a general manager in Tata's office and has been assisting

him since 2018. He shares Tata's love for dogs and strays and this is his fourth outing as an entrepreneur, which includes a venture around pets. "You do not know what it is like to be lonely until you spend time alone wishing for companionship," the 84-year Tata, a bachelor, said, appreciating Naidu's ideation and also forgiving his mentee for the time he spends away from the office. Tata said no one minds getting old till you actually get old, and also added that getting good-natured companionship, which we take for granted, is a challenge.



Addressing the Tata Sons' Chairman Emeritus as a boss, a mentor and also a friend, Naidu said there are 15 million elders who are by themselves

right now, which represents the opportunity for his newest venture. The startup hires young graduates having the right

skills of empathy and emotional intelligence to 'work' as the senior citizen clients' companions, and ease the day for them with any tasks or just talk with them. Typically, a companion would visit a client three times a week, spending up to four hours per visit. The company charges Rs 5,000 as the base subscription fees for a month, after a month's free service. The company has been working with 20 elders for the last six months in its beta phase in the financial capital and is planning to offer services in Pune, Chennai and Bengaluru next.

Naidu told PTI that he has developed a model with the help of psychologists to select the right candidate to act as a companion for a senior citizen. He said it wants to scale up across the country but would prefer to go slow without compromising on the quality of the companions it hires. In a year's time, the company plans to have 100 registered companions serving about 350-400 senior citizens across the country, he said, stressing that unlike a conventional startup, which has milestones, Goodfellows will not be chasing business targets as hard till it is able to make the desired social impact.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
NOTIFICATION
No.161 & 162/UBD/CRZ/GHMC/2022-23
Name of the work: Tenders calling: Manual 2 No.s (Box) Raising of Nurseries in Ward Level in UBD, Channarayana Zone of GHMC applicants invited from SHGs/NGOs/RAAs and others ECV Ranging Rs.15,79,400/-, Date & Time for issue of tender applications: From Dt.18.08.2022 @ 11.00 AM onwards to Dt.24.08.2022 Up to 03.00 PM. Last Date & Time for submission of tender applications: From Dt.18.08.2022 @ 11.00 AM onwards to Dt.24.08.2022 Up to 04.00 PM. Venue of submission of tender applications: C/o. Zonal Office, Channarayana Zone, GHMC, 2nd floor, Pootbagh, Hyderabad. Name & Address of the Officer: C/o Dy. Director, Urban Biodiversity, Channarayana Zone, GHMC, Pootbagh, Chandrayangutta, Hyderabad. Cell No. 9808554993. Sd/- Deputy Director. R.O.No: 9854-PP/CLAD/NT/2022-23, Dt. 18.08.2022 Urban Biodiversity Channarayana Zone, GHMC.



Saakini Daakini Releasing On September 16

After delivering a smashing hit *Oh Baby!*, Suresh Productions, Guru Films and Kross Pictures have joined forces for the official remake of South Korean action-comedy film *Midnight Runners*. D. Suresh Babu, Sunitha Tati and Hyunwoo Thomas Kim are producing the movie. Regina Cassandra and Nivetha Thomas have played the lead roles in the movie helmed by the top talented director Sudheer Varma.

The makers came up with a release date of the movie. *Saakini Daakini* will be released in theaters on September 16.

The release date poster sees the

daredevil ladies Regina and Nivetha giving serious gaze. Like the pink tinge to the middle letters of the title, the pink light on the ladies enhances intensity. The dressing and the getup of the actresses are very analogous.

The story of *Midnight Runners* has global appeal and the content will connect to Telugu audiences. Richard Prasad cranks the camera, while Mikey McCleary scores music and Viplav Nyshadam is the editor.

Ajith to shoot in Arakku Valley for #AK61?

Recently, we had reported that a new schedule of Vijay's *Varisu* kicked off in Vizag amid Telugu Film Producers Guild announcing a strike. Now, Ajith, too, has traveled to the industrial city to complete a few portions of his ongoing project *AK 61*. We hear that the makers will be shooting the climax sequence here.

Most of the film crews which head to Vizag for shooting plan their schedules in the popular Visakhapatnam Port for stunt scenes or dance sequences. But team *AK 61* will be shooting in Araku Valley, a hill station which is more than 100 kms away from Vizag. A few pictures of the star from the airport have started doing the rounds on social media.

Film buffs are wondering about the connection between a small village and the movie's genre. Billed as a heist drama, the film being directed by H Vinoh, is expected to release in theatres in December. The untitled project marks the third collaboration between Ajith, Vinoh and producer Boney Kapoor.

AK 61 was initially announced as a Deepavali release, but Karthi's *Sardar*



and Sivakarthikeyan's *Prince* will be hitting screens for the festival. Needless to say, Ajith fans are eagerly awaiting an update on the movie's title and release date.

Manju Warrier, Veera and Kavin among others play pivotal roles in the film which has music composed by Ghibran. The movie, which went on floors earlier this year, was prominently shot in

Hyderabad. A huge set was erected in the city which is a replica of the popular State Bank of India building located at Mount Road in Chennai recently.

The makers have been tight-lipped about the project ever since the film took off and fans are now looking forward to the first look poster which is expected to be unveiled as soon as the shooting is wrapped up.

Vikram completes 75 days in theatres

The dream run of director Lokesh Kanakaraj's action entertainer *Vikram*, featuring actors Kamal Haasan, Vijay Sethupathi and Fahadh Faasil in the lead, continues, with the film now having completed 75 days in theatres.

Taking to Twitter to make the announcement, Raj Kamal Films International, the production house of actor Kamal Haasan that produced the film, said, "Juggernaut of Indian cinema. #75DaysOfVikram and counting!"

The film has already blazed its way into the record books, smashing all existing box-office records in Tamil Nadu. It grossed Rs 155 crore in just 17 days in the state. Overall box office collections



of the film crossed the Rs 400-crore mark in June itself. Now, the film still continues to have a strong run in theatres.

Interestingly, the dream run in theatres continues despite the film having been released on the OTT platform Disney + Hotstar on July 8.

Vikram, which has been showered with praises from people, hasn't just impressed Indian trade circles alone, but has left even International markets awestruck as well.

Written and directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj, the Kamal Haasan-Vijay Sethupathi-Fahadh Faasil-Suriya-starrer had its world-wide theatrical release on June 3.

'Found it difficult to stick to just one genre'

K. RAMYA SREE

Director Suku Purvaj, who rose to fame with the suspense thriller film *Shukra*, is coming up with his next big film, *Maataraani Mounamidi*, produced by Rudra Pictures and Pisir Group Banners.

The film will see Mahesh Dutta, Srihari Udayagiri, and Soni Srivastava in the lead roles. *Maataraani Mounamidi*, a romantic-thriller film, will open in theaters on August 19.

Ahead of the release, the director interacted with the media and said that it was *Shukra* that landed him this project. He said, "While I was shooting my first film, *Shukra*, the pro-

ducers saw the making and rushes of that film and came forward to produce this project. Every film has elements like fiction, thrillers, horrors, etc. We have combined such elements in this film and made it a multi-genre movie. It consists of two haunted love stories and has some fun elements that make you laugh. We have already done some preview shows. Everyone who saw it said it was very good. We have good faith in the film."

Making multi-genre films needs enough expertise. Suku says he has required experience in making multi genre films as he has done many short films in the past which were screened at the Bombay and New York Film Festivals. The reason for choosing multi-genre, he says, is that the director finds it difficult to stick to just one genre. If the characters are not right or if there is a lag, they will judge the movie in 10 minutes. But in movies like this, the genres change, so the interest continues. Ever since the film was launched, the makers of it have been coming up with

unique posters, and all this is solely to grab the attention of the audience. Suku says he took inspiration from director Ravi Babu to come up with such interesting posters to promote the film.

While this film was initially meant to be made as a Mooky film, it was the producers decision to add dialogues in the film. "Earlier we thought to do this story in a silent format. It has been a long time since *Pushpaka Vimaran* movie came out in Mooky. We thought it would be new if we did it now. The producers said it would be good if the characters in this story talk. So we changed that thought. The two major characters have no dialogue. It is interesting to see how they convey the situation to others when an unexpected situation occurs," said the director, adding the heroine's character in this film carries many emotions.

"Her character is set in both 1986 and the present day. Words don't come in flashbacks, they come in the present. The story has five or six turns. All these are related to a scientific aspect. Soni Srivastava is pleasing in the lead role. She is a Vizag girl and lives in Bangalore. Hero Mahesh Dutta is a student of Annapurna Film School. These two made it as the main pair. Except for Archana Ananth and Sunil Shetty, all the other actors are newcomers," added the director.

The film has background music by Ashir Luke and Ashirwad, who also gave mesmerizing music for *Shukra*. They worked for films like *Om Shanti Om* in Bollywood, *Baahubali Om* in Bollywood, *Baahubali* and *Zombie Reddy* in Telugu.

Director
Suku Purvaj,
who is all set for his
upcoming
*Maataraani
Mounamidi* talks
about the project,
making multi-
genre and much
more.

'Every murder has a flaw', says Vijay Antony in *Kolai*

The unit of director Balaji K Kumar's upcoming investigative thriller, *Kolai*, featuring actor Vijay Antony in the lead, has released the film's much-awaited official trailer.

The trailer shows that the film is about the investigation of the murder of a model called Leila (played by actress Meenakshi Chaudhary), who is found dead inside her locked apartment.

Assisted by a character called Sandhya (played by Ritika Singh), Vijay, who believes that there is nothing called a perfect murder, begins to look for flaws committed by the criminal.

"Every murder will definitely have a flaw," the trailer shows Vijaysaying and shows him following a simple modus operandi to crack crime cases.

He says, "Look for the flaw.

Recognise the passion. Understand the motive. Identify the killer."

The gripping investigative thriller, which has actor Vijay Antony playing the lead, also features actors Murali Sharma and Radhika among others. While Murali Sharma plays an agent called Aditya, Radhika plays the boss, Rekha.

John Vijay plays a cop called Mansoor Ali Khan in the film, which has Siddhartha Shankar playing Sathish, the boyfriend of the central character Leila.

Sources say that the story of the film, which has triggered huge expectations, was finalised after the director wrote over 40 drafts of it in five years.

Cinematography for the film is by Sivakumar Vijayan and music is by Girish Gopalakrishnan.



CHIRANJEEVI STARTS DUBBING FOR GODFATHER

All eyes are on Mega Star Chiranjeevi's upcoming action entertainer *Godfather*. The film which is the remake of Malayalam hit *Lucifer* is progressing at a brisk pace under the direction of Mohan Raja of *Thani Oruvan* fame. According to the latest, it is coming out that Chiranjeevi already started dubbing for his role in the film. This is exciting for all

movie lovers and mega fans as Chiranjeevi's birthday falls on August 22 and they are expecting a powerful treat from the makers.

The film stars Bollywood superstar Salman Khan in a powerful cameo. Apart from it, Chiranjeevi and Salman also dance to a peppy tune for which movements are choreographed by dancing sensation Prabhu Deva. The

film stars Nayanathara, Satyadev, Biju Menon, Anasuya, Gaddar, Murali Mohan, Gangavva, Puri Jagannath in crucial roles.

Music for the film is scored by Thaman and Nirav Shah is the cinematographer and Marthand K Venkatesh is the editor. The film is bankrolled by Konidela Production Company and Super Good Films in a lavish manner.

Dhawan always ready to help youngsters

PTI ■ HARARE

He might have been relegated to vice-captaincy after KL Rahul's late inclusion but team's senior-most player is always ready to lend a helping hand to the youngsters who seek out for him.

Dhawan was all set to lead the team in a three-match ODI series here but now that he will be performing the duties of a deputy, he is ready to to put his best foot forward.

"I quite enjoy sharing my experience with the youngsters in the team. I first came here in 2014 (actually 2013), when Duncan Fletcher was the Indian coach. If they (youngsters) reach out to me for any suggestions, I am (always) there to answer them," Dhawan told reporters at a media conference here.

The 36-year-old southpaw is rather happy that skipper Rahul will get the much-needed game time ahead of the all-important Asia Cup.

"It is a very good news that KL (Rahul) is back and will be leading the side as well. He is one of the main players of this Indian team. It will be a good outing for him before the Asia Cup gets underway. I am sure he will gain a lot from this tour," Dhawan said.

All-rounder Washington Sundar who was a sure-shot starter against Zimbabwe was ruled out after he injured his left shoulder in the Royal London One Day Cup.

The 22-year-old Chennai lad last donned the Indian colours during the West Indies series in February 2021.

"It's sad that Washington is out. He is quite an important player for the side. But it's part and parcel...Injuries happen. Hope, he will recover soon. He will be missed him as a spinner but we have got a good back-up through Kuldeep Yadav and Deepak Hooda, who also bowls off-spin," the Indian vice captain said.

While India is back in the southern African nation for the first time since 2016 and haven't played much against them in the last few years, Dhawan was of the opinion that should not take Zimbabwe, especially after their recent series win against Bangladesh.

"They have won against Bangladesh. They are playing good cricket. It's good for us and we cannot take anything for granted. It's about the process.

"Regardless of the team we are facing, we always make sure we do things right so that we end up getting the right results. That will once again be our focus



Shahbaz Ahmed gets maiden India call-up

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

All-rounder Shahbaz Ahmed on Tuesday received his maiden India call-up as he replaced an injured Washington Sundar for the three-match ODI series against Zimbabwe starting this week.

The 27-year-old Shahbaz has been rewarded for his stellar performance in the 2022 IPL season,

where he turned out for Royal Challengers Bangalore.

The Bengal left-arm spinner collected 219 runs and four wickets in 16 matches, leaving a mark.

The Southpaw has a batting average of 41.64 and a bowling average of 19.47 from 18 first class games.

"The All-India Senior Selection Committee named Shahbaz Ahmed

as the replacement for Washington Sundar for the three-match ODI series against Zimbabwe," the BCCI said in a statement.

Washington had injured his shoulder while playing a County game in England, ruling him out of the Zimbabwe tour.

India are scheduled to play three ODIs starting in Harare on Thursday.

as a team," Dhawan said.

Dhawan praised senior Zimbabwean batter Sikandar Raza and said that the Indian bowlers will have to bowl smart against the latter to contain him in the right time.

"He is a very good player. He has been playing for Zimbabwe for a long time. He is a quality player. I am sure our bowlers with come up with nice plans against him," he said.

Dhawan went on to add that the series against Zimbabwe will be

crucial for a number of youngsters in the squad like Shubman Gill, Avesh Khan, Ishan Kishan, and the exposure they are getting will be extremely beneficial to them in the coming days.

"The youngsters, these days,

New Zealand A to tour India in August & Sept, Oz likely in Nov

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The India 'A' side is set to get its first assignment in over eight months with New Zealand and, in all likelihood, Australia touring the country.

The India A program will be "helmed by VVS Laxman and his NCA support staff group of Sairaj Bahutule and Sitanshu Kotak," according to a report in 'ESPNcricinfo'.

India A was previously in action in November-December last year, when it played three unofficial Tests in Bloemfontein, South Africa.

The New Zealand 'A' side is slated to arrive in India by the end of this month. It will play three four-day games and as many List A matches with all fixtures expected to be held in Bengaluru.

A pink-ball fixture is also being mulled upon by the BCCI, but final approval is pending.

Even in their previous tour in 2017-18, the New Zealand 'A' side had played a pink-ball match at Vijayawada, although it was a day game.

The tour of New Zealand is likely to coincide with the Duleep Trophy, scheduled from September 8 to 25. The BCCI is also in talks with Cricket Australia for a possible tour.

"The BCCI is also understood to be in negotiations with Cricket Australia for a tour towards the end of the year - most likely in November - prior to the start of the Ranji Trophy and India's next Test assignment, which will be in Bangladesh," the report said.

have got more exposure. They are confident and they have got good technique. Their confidence level is quite high because of domestic and IPL. We feel that we have got so many options. It is a healthy sign for the team," Dhawan said.



India Women's to play 2 Tests in next 3 years

Women's in Blue to play 2 Tests, 27 ODIs and 36 T20Is in FTP 2022-2025

PTI ■ DUBAI

The Indian women's team will play as many as 65 international games in the inaugural Future Tours & Programmes (FTP) set by the ICC during the three-year-cycle between May, 2022 to April, 2025.

The ICC on Tuesday announced the the structured calender that includes a total of 301 matches (seven Tests, 135 ODIs and 159 T20Is) over a period of three years.

India's share of matches will be two Tests against England and Australia along with 27 ODIs and 36 T20 Internationals during the said duration.

Since the FTP has started from May, 2022, India have already played 3 WODIs and 3 WT20Is against Sri Lanka.

As per the list, India hosts New Zealand, South Africa, West Indies and Ireland at home, the away series are against Australia, England, Sri Lanka (already played) and Bangladesh.

One of the marquee events in this phase will be India's five-match T20I series against the 'Southern Stars' later this year.

While the Australians will be visiting India once again during the summer of 2023-24

for a multi-format series (one Test, three ODIs, and three T20Is), the Indians will return the favour when they tour Down Under in the winter of 2025-26 (one Test, three ODIs, and three T20Is).

Of the seven Tests inked during the phase, England will play the most Tests - five, followed by Australia (four), South Africa (three) and India (two).

"This is a huge moment for the women's game," ICC general manager of cricket, Wasim Khan, said in a statement.

"This FTP not only lends certainty to future cricket tours but also sets the base for a structure that is sure to grow in the coming years," Khan added.

According to ICC, the 2022-25 Women's Championship, teams will generally play three-match bilateral ODI series before the 2025 World Cup.

Many of these series will also be accompanied by T20 international matches, with some teams also giving its consent for five-match WT20I series.

"All bilateral T20I matches count towards respective team rankings, which in turn serves as a primary mechanism for determining the teams that qualify for ICC global events," ICC said in its statement.

Praggnanandhaa beats Firouzja in FTX Crypto Cup chess

PTI ■ MIAMI

Teenage Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa on Tuesday opened his campaign in the FTX Crypto Cup, the American finale of Champions Chess Tour, with a 2.5-1.5 win over the world's top junior player Alireza Firouzja.

The 17-year old, who was part of the Bronze medal-winning India 'B' team at the recent chess Olympiad in Mamallapuram near Chennai, opened with a win in the first of the four-game match.

He lost the second game before winning the third and drawing the fourth to beat Firouzja in the first round match on Tuesday.

The Indian GM picked up three points for beating the highly-rated Firouzja and faces Dutch No.1 Anish Giri in the second round.

Meanwhile, world No.1 Magnus Carlsen of Norway stormed to a 3-1 win over Giri. In other matches in the first round, Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda beat Hans Nieman 3-0 while Lev Aronian defeated China's Le Liem 2.5-1.5.

The eight-player all-play-all tournament is the American finale of Champions Chess Tour. There is \$7,500 at stake for each match win at the event.

Ireland great Kevin O'Brien bids goodbye to int'l cricket



AP ■ DUBLIN

Ireland all-rounder Kevin O'Brien on Tuesday announced his retirement from international cricket after falling out of contention for this year's T20 World Cup in Australia.

O'Brien played three Tests, 153 ODIs and 110 T20Is during a 16-year international career and had spells with a number of English county clubs and T20 franchise sides around the world.

The 38-year-old famously blasted the Irish to victory over England in a 2011 World Cup group match in India with a 50-ball century — still the tournament's quickest.

The Dubliner scored 9,048 runs in total for Ireland, including the country's first Test

hundred, a second-innings knock of 118 against Pakistan in 2018, and took 276 wickets.

In a statement on Twitter, O'Brien, who for many years played alongside older brother Niall, said: "Today I announce my retirement from international cricket after 16 years and 389 caps for my country.

"I had hoped to finish my career at the T20 World Cup in Australia, but having not been picked for the Irish squad since last year's World Cup, I feel the selectors and management are looking elsewhere.

"I have enjoyed every minute playing for Ireland, have made many friends off the pitch and I have so many happy memories to remember from my time playing for the national side." Ireland captain Andrew Balbirnie said he was "lucky" to

Ex- BCCI secretary Amitabh no more

RANCHI: Amitabh Chaudhary, the former BCCI secretary and president of Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) died of heart attack on Tuesday morning. He was 62. An IIT Kharagpur alumnus, Chaudhary was instrumental in getting the first-class status for Jharkhand after BCCI disbanded the Bihar Cricket Association during the late Jagmohan Dalmiya's tenure in the early part of the new millennium.

Chaudhary also played a major role in building one of the finest cricket stadiums in Ranchi and should be considered instrumental in bringing international cricket and IPL to the industrial town.

He had also served as a BCCI joint secretary and was an administrative manager with the Indian team on a few occasions. **PTI**

have played with O'Brien.

"Cricket in this country owes a lot to what Kev achieved on and off the field and he has left the game in a better place," he said.



Sultan Azlan Shah Cup to return after two years in Nov

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Sultan Azlan Shah Cup, an annual invitational international men's hockey tournament, is set to make a comeback after a two-year break in November this year.

The prestigious tournament didn't take place in the last two years due to COVID-19. The last time it was held in 2019, South Korea had emerged champions by beating India in the summit clash.

"We are all set to host the Premier Azlan Shah Cup in November this year. We have invited six teams including India and Australia and we hope our invitation will be accepted," an AHF official said.

India has been invited alongside Australia, Germany and England for the tournament scheduled to be held from November 16 to 25 in Ipoh, Malaysia.

While Australia are the most successful team in the tournament with 10 titles, India have won it five times.

Suryakumar is a bit like ABD, No. 4 is his best spot: Ponting

PTI ■ DUBAI

Suryakumar Yadav has received high praise from the great Ricky Ponting, who compared the batter with AB de Villiers, saying the Indian possesses a 360 degree game like the South African genius.

Ponting suggested that Yadav should bat at number four in the Indian line-up.

"Surya (Yadav) scores 360 degrees around the ground, a bit like an AB de Villiers did when he was in his actual prime. The lap shots, the late cuts, you know, the ramps over the keeper's head. He can hit down the ground," Ponting said on the latest episode of The ICC Review.

"He hits really well over the leg side, flicks to deep backward square particularly well, and he's a good player of fast bowling and is a good player of spin bowling."

Yadav, 31, has scored 672 runs at an average of 37.33 and a strike rate of 175.45 in 23 T20 matches and now sits at No.2 in the ICC T20 Batter Ranking.

"He's a very, very exciting player and I'm sure someone that's going to find himself in their team, not just their squad," Ponting, who has seen Yadav up close in his early years at Mumbai Indians, said.

"I think you'd find him in their team for the T20 World



Cup. And if he's in that team, then I think all the fans in Australia are going to see a very, very good player.

"He's quite a confident person. He backs himself and he's never going to step down from a challenge or any situation that arises in a game. I feel he thinks he can win that situation and therefore go on and win the game for his team."

Asked whether Yadav would make India's best XI, the former Australian skipper said he has "played better than anybody else in the Indian team for the last couple of series" and should be slotted at the top order.

"It's got to be in the top four,

I think. I said stick with him (Virat Kohli) in his traditional spot, which has been number three," Ponting, a two-time World Cup-winning captain, said.

"For Surya, it's one, two or four. I think he can open, but I think he's probably, you know, if you could probably just keep him away from the new ball, let him control the middle part of the game outside the Powerplay, through in the middle, and if he's in at the end, you know what can happen."

Ponting said: "I think in the top four is, well, actually I'll go out on a limb: I don't want him to open. I think number four is his best spot."

South Africa keen to wreck England's 'Bazball' party

AP ■ LONDON

South Africa captain Dean Elgar says he does not fear "Bazball" as the Proteas seek to inflict England's first Test defeat of their swashbuckling new era under the leadership of Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum.

After a dismal run of just one victory in 17 Tests, England have won four from four under new skipper Stokes and coach McCullum heading into their series opener against South Africa at Lord's on Wednesday.

That includes a 3-0 series win over world champions New Zealand, with England hunting down challenging targets on each occasion.

Stokes's men then made light of a seemingly stiff target of 378 in the Covid-delayed fifth Test against India at Edgbaston, romping to victory by seven wickets.

"Bazball" -- a reference to



McCullum's nickname -- has revitalised England's red-ball fortunes at a time of renewed debate about the future of the five-day game.

But there are questions over whether the ultra-aggressive approach can work in all circumstances, particularly against a strong

South Africa pace attack.

"I've got absolutely no interest in the style that they've played," Elgar told the Guardian. "I think it can go

Poms recall fit-again Foakes

AP ■ LONDON

England have recalled fit-again wicketkeeper Ben Foakes for the first Test against South Africa at Lord's starting on Wednesday.

Ben Stokes, the England captain, announced the return of Surrey wicketkeeper Foakes to the

XI during a media conference on Tuesday.

Foakes is the only change from the team that defeated India in the postponed fifth Test at Edgbaston last month after missing the match following a case of coronavirus. Foakes reclaims the gloves from Kent's Sam Billings.

one of two ways for them and it can go south very quickly...I'd like to see them do it against our seamers."

But England bowling great James Anderson, speaking at Lord's on Monday, is confident that sticking with a positive mindset will prove the right thing for the team.

"I don't think it has to come unstuck at all," he said. "We now know we've got the ability to chase

anything down and we've got the ability to take wickets in any conditions.

"If we keep playing with that entertaining sort of mindset and also be smart with it as well... there may be times when we can't go hell for leather with the bat and maybe we have to soak up a bit of pressure at times and just be smart about when we put pressure back on

the opposition.

Both teams appear to be stronger in bowling rather than batting although, with resilient opener Elgar leading from the front, the Proteas have won seven out of nine Tests under his captaincy, while the form of Keegan Petersen has helped compensate for the red-ball retirement of gifted shotmaker Quinton de Kock.

England will hope in-form batsmen Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow maintain their eye-catching form of earlier in the season.

South Africa spearhead bowler Kagiso Rabada is doubtful for the first game of the three-Test series with an ankle injury.

"I'm hoping that he pulls through," said Proteas coach Mark Boucher. "Rabada is a massive player for us as we all know so for him to be part of the final XI would be very special for us."

