

## NATION 5

4 CR PEOPLE PUSHED INTO  
POVERTY IN COUNTRY: RAHUL

## MONEY 8

MARKET SELLOFF: MCAP OF TOP-10 MOST  
VALUED COMPANIES ERODES

## SPORTS 12

SINDHU CLINCHES SYED MODI  
INTERNATIONAL TITLE

HYDERABAD, MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



## the pioneer

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'THE WAY RAJ  
& DK TREAT FEMALE  
CHARACTERS  
IS AMAZING'

Page 11

DOZENS OF TURTLES DIE IN SUSPECTED  
POISONING AT LAKE NEAR MUMBAI

Deliberate poisoning is likely to blame for the death of dozens of turtles at a lake near Mumbai, wildlife experts told AFP Sunday. Conservation workers were alerted to the incident after a local politician asked them to investigate a foul smell around the body of water in Kalyan, about 50 kilometres (30 miles) east of the country's entertainment capital. Suhas Pawar of the Wild Animal and Reptile Rescue conservation group said 57 flapshell turtles had been killed while another six were rescued. He told AFP that locals likely killed the reptiles to stop them from eating fish they were illegally breeding in the lake.

'MY 'MUSLIMNESS' MADE COLLEAGUES  
UNCOMFORTABLE': SACKED UK LAWMAKER

A British lawmaker has said she was fired from a ministerial job in Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government party because her Muslim faith was making colleagues uncomfortable, the Sunday Times reported. Nusrat Ghani, 49, who lost her job as a junior transport minister in February 2020, told the paper she was told by a "whip" - an enforcer of parliamentary discipline - that her "Muslimness" had been raised as an issue in her sacking. There was no immediate response to her comments from Johnson's Downing Street office, but Mark Spencer, the government's chief whip, said he was the person at the centre of Ghani's allegations.

BJP'S UP ALLY GIVES 1ST TICKET TO MUSLIM  
CANDIDATE IN RARE ALLIANCE MOVE

The BJP's ally Apna Dal (S) has announced its first candidate for the Uttar Pradesh assembly polls. The candidate, Haider Ali Khan, is from Suar in western Uttar Pradesh's Rampur district, from where Abdullah Azam, the son of jailed Samajwadi Party MP Azam Khan is expected to contest. The announcement came despite no official word on seat-sharing arrangement between the BJP and its alliance partners - Apna Dal (S) of Anupriya Patel and Nishad party of Sanjay Nishad. Haider Khan's candidature from a BJP ally is among the rare instances of the BJP alliance fielding a Muslim candidate for the UP election.

STONES HURLED AT BJP MP ARJUN SINGH  
IN BJP-TRINAMOL CLASH NEAR KOLKATA

Clashes broke out between BJP and Trinamool Congress supporters in Bhatpara near Kolkata on Sunday as stones were allegedly hurled at Barrackpore MP Arjun Singh when he was attending a programme to mark the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, police said. Two cars, including a police vehicle, were vandalised in the clashes in the hotbed of political unrest in North 24 Parganas district, they said. The BJP MP was rescued and sent to his residence safely, said Joint Commissioner of Police Dhruva Jyoti Dey. A large contingent of police along with senior officers was deputed at the spot, he said.

Modi, KCR to share  
dais on Feb 5 in HydSNCN ACHARYULU  
■ HYDERABAD

In the midst of the political slugfest between the TRS and the BJP, the people of Telangana are going to witness a rare scene.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao are going to share the dais in Hyderabad. The rare event is creating interest in political circles too.

After Modi became Prime Minister a second time this is the first time the PM and KCR are sharing a dais.

The opportunity was created by Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar Swamy. If everything goes well the event will happen on February 5 at Muchhital near Shamshabad.

A statue of Ramanujacharya made of gold, silver, copper, brass and tin will be unveiled in Hyderabad on that day under the auspices of Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar

Swamy. The statue stands 216 feet tall and is the second-largest seated statue in the world after the Buddha statue in Thailand. In addition, a 120 kg gold statue of Ramanujacharya will be unveiled inside the statue.

Meanwhile, Chinna Jeeyar Swamy went all the way to New Delhi and personality invited Prime Minister Modi to unveil the statue of Ramanujacharya.

Modi himself said that the statue of Ramanujacharya will be unveiled on Vasantha Panchami day on February 5 and will be dedicated to the nation.

2

Omicron in community  
transmission stage

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Omicron variant of the coronavirus is in the community transmission stage in the country and has become dominant in several metros where new cases have been spiking exponentially, INSACOG said in its latest bulletin.

Short for Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium, INSACOG checks variations in coronavirus across the nation to help understand how it spreads and evolves, and to suggest the best possible public health response.

The centre's Covid research body also said BA.2 lineage, an infectious sub-variant of Omicron, has been detected in a considerable fraction in India.

While most Omicron cases so far have been asymptomatic or mild, hospitalisations and ICU cases have increased in the current wave

and the threat level remains unchanged, INSACOG said in its January 10 bulletin that was released on Sunday.

"Omicron is now in community transmission in India and has become dominant in multiple metros, where new cases have been rising exponentially. BA.2 lineage is in a substantial fraction in India and S gene dropout based screening is thus likely to give high false negatives," it said.

S-gene drop-out is a genetic variation like that of Omicron.

"The recently reported B.1.640.2 lineage is being monitored. There is no evidence of rapid spread and while it has features of immune escape, it is currently not a variant of concern. So far, no case has been detected in India," the INSACOG said.

2

1.28 lakh diagnosed with  
Covid symptoms in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

After two days of the Telangana household fever survey 1.28 lakh people were diagnosed with Covid-19 symptoms. Home isolation kits were given to everyone who had symptoms. Speaking at Sangra Reddy, Health Minister Harish Rao said, "The fever survey checked 29.28 lakh households in the last two days. We have distributed one lakh home isolation kits." He urged people to cooperate with the fever survey. "The government has made all arrangements. In another four to five days the fever survey will be over. We have provided 56,000 Covid beds across the State. People need not worry."

2

Allocation of funds for  
TS infra projects soughtKTR writes to Finance Minister Nirmala  
Setharaman listing out the state projects

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Industries Minister KT Rama Rao has requested the Centre to support Telangana's industrial infrastructure and other initiatives in the coming Central budget.

KTR wrote a letter to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman along with a Detailed Project Report (DPR) about the revised proposal for the National Design Centre (NDC) in Hyderabad.

KTR requested the Centre's support for the initial capital expenditure needed to fund the NDC's interior works, lab equipment and machinery, IT infrastructure, consultation expenses etc.

"Support will be required to meet operational expenditure for approximately eight years. After



that the NDC will become self-sustaining," he said.

Declaring that the State will be able to provide 25 per cent of the operational expenditure, he requested the Centre to provide the remaining 75 per cent during the first eight years of operation.

2

Criticism on English education  
frivolous: Harish chides parties

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government will implement the ambitious Mana Ooru-Mana Badi programme at a cost of Rs 7,280 crore, Finance Minister Harish Rao said here.

"We will provide quality English education to poor children. The BJP and the Congress are unhappy at this as they don't want the children of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward castes, and the poor who mostly go to government schools to learn English. Sanjay is making frivolous statements as he knows that the Telangana government will get a good name if these schemes are implemented," Harish said.



Addressing the media on Sunday he said, "Telangana is ahead of all BJP ruled states in welfare. Before the formation of Telangana, there were four medical colleges, but

today there are 17. Why doesn't the Centre give Telangana a tribal college, mining college and 21 Navodaya schools? Why are the BJP MPs silent regarding this?"

He asked if there is any BJP-ruled state with development on par with Telangana.

Stating that the BJP is a party that helps only private companies Harish said, "The Centre is selling all public sector undertakings. If these public sector companies are functional there would have been job reservations for Dalits."

Harish said the Dalit Bandhu programme should be implemented across the country.

2

Corona impact : DS  
postpones return  
to Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The re-joining of TRS Rajya Sabha MP D. Srinivas' in the Congress has been postponed again. He was scheduled to join the Congress on Monday but it was postponed due to the raging corona pandemic. Congress sources say that DS is likely to join the Congress during the parliamentary session. Congress leaders are not coming to AICC office these days due to corona. It is learnt that AICC chief Sonia Gandhi had asked DS to postpone his entry into the Congress.

2

TS may face cold  
wave up to Jan 30

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Due to strong chilly winds from central India, Telangana is likely to face a massive cold wave from January 24 to 30. The cold wave is likely to peak from January 26 to 29. Weather buff T. Balaji said, "The temperature will drop below 5°C in north Telangana from January 26 to 29 and will range between 9°C to 10°C in Hyderabad. Generally, the temperature increases gradually in Telangana from January-end, but due to strong chilly winds from central India, we will be having a massive cold wave soon."

2

Vice President  
Naidu tests positive  
for Covid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has tested positive for Covid. This is for the second time that Naidu has been infected with the virus. "Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, who is in Hyderabad, tested COVID positive today. He has decided to remain in self-isolation for a week. He has advised all those who came in contact with him to isolate themselves and get tested," the Vice President Secretariat tweeted. It seems unlikely that he will participate in Republic Day celebrations on Wednesday.

**TODAY**  
**ALMANAC**  
**Month & Paksham:**  
Pausa, Krishna Paksha  
**Tithi :** Shreshthi : Jan 23 09:12 AM to Jan 24 08:44 AM  
Saptami : Jan 24 08:44 AM to Jan 25 07:49 AM  
**Nakshatram :** Hasti : Jan 23 11:09 AM to Jan 24 11:15 AM  
Chitra : Jan 24 11:15 AM to Jan 25 10:54 AM  
**Rahukalam :** 8:16 AM to 9:40 AM  
**Yamagandam :** 11:04 AM to 12:28 PM  
**Varjyam :** 07:08 PM to 08:43 PM  
**Gulika :** 1:52 PM to 3:15 PM  
**Amritakalam :** 04:36 AM to 06:10 AM  
**Ahhijit Muhurtham :** 12:05 PM to 12:50 PM  
**HYDRABAD WEATHER**  
**Forecast:** SUNNY  
**Temp:** 31°C  
**Humidity:** 41%  
**Sunrise:** 6:53 AM  
**Sunset:** 6:02 PM  
Updated JANUARY 23, 2021 5:00 PM



'Hectic lobbying for  
hot seats' tickets'K VENKATESHWARLU  
■ HYDERABAD

With the political scenario changing in the State, four BJP leaders from each of the Assembly constituencies in erstwhile Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts have launched campaigns to win the hearts of the BJP leadership.

The Assembly constituencies have become hot seats for the ticket hunters and they are trying to get into the good books of the BJP leadership although elections are far away.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent statement that there could be early elections in Telangana has made the leaders launch campaigns to get into the leadership's good books.

2

## Oppn hunts for strong candidates

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Although the TRS has denied speculations about early Assembly elections, almost all opposition parties are busy hunting for strong candidates for the next Assembly elections and are concentrating on Operation Akarsh.

The opposition is concentrating on 'winning horses' with strong fiscals whatever their party may be or even if they are from a non-political background. Opposition parties like the Congress, the BJP, the YSRTP and the BSP are busy hunting for strong candidates. The Congress has its own candidates in all constituencies but it is also looking for strong candidates in some constituencies.



A senior Congress leader said the party may give several shocks in future due to developments at the national level. Some Congress leaders are hoping that the party would become strong if its leaders joined hands.

The BJP has been concentrating on its Operation Akarsh by setting up a Joining and Coordination Committee under the chairmanship of senior leader N. Indrasena

## Mistakes being rectified now: PM Modi after unveiling Netaji statue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an apparent swipe at previous Congress dispensations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that attempts were made after independence to erase contributions of many great people besides India's culture and values, and asserted that the country is now correcting mistakes of the past.

Addressing a gathering after unveiling a hologram statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at the India Gate on the 125th birth anniversary of the iconic freedom fighter, Modi also said no power in the world can prevent the country from achieving its goal of building a 'new India' before the hundredth year of inde-



pendence in 2047.

He also exhorted people to take inspiration from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's "can do" and "will do" spirit.

He said unfortunately, attempts were made to erase contributions of many great people besides the nation's culture after independence.

"India's freedom struggle involved

the sacrifices of lakhs of people, but attempts were made to limit their history. But today, decades after independence, the country is correcting those mistakes," he said.

The prime minister also conferred the 'Subhas Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar' for the years 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 in the investiture ceremony. A total of seven awards were presented during the ceremony.

Union government has instituted the annual award to recognise and honour the invaluable contribution and selfless service rendered by individuals and organisations in India in the field of disaster management.

Modi also asserted that his gov-

ernment prioritised disaster management.

"We have laid emphasis on reform along with relief, rescue and rehabilitation," he said.

"We strengthened, modernised, expanded the NDRF across the country. From space technology to planning and management, best possible practices have been adopted," he said.

"The grand statue of our Netaji, who had established the first independent government on India's soil, is being installed in digital form near India Gate. Very soon this hologram statue will be replaced by a big granite statue," he said.

2





# Monday Mirchi

## Move to modify IAS cadre rules enthrone sidelined high performers

Although the Centre's move to modify IAS Cadre Rules 1954 has been widely criticised as yet another attempt to usurp the rights of States/UTs, the proposed amendments to the Rules have warmed the cockles of the hearts of performing IAS officers who have been sidelined or restricted to nominal roles by the state governments.

For, they will no longer be at the mercy of the state government. Such less-valued bureaucrats can elect for central deputation and head to Delhi or wherever they thing they will get their due. So, the number of disgruntled bureaucrats will reduce with what looks like opening of Pandora's Box. Although for such bureaucrats the new rules look conducive to career progression, instead of letting them stagnate at the state level, several senior bureaucrats, who had been enjoying good positions all along, have become the voice of the cadre and are opposing the new rules.

## 'Our' man not acting on expected lines

Apanan is good, though not in administration perhaps. State governments often pin their hopes on state cadre babus posted in Delhi, hoping they would be instrumental in securing approvals for various projects. During a recent meeting with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, TS Minister K T Rama Rao did not shy away from ruing that TS, despite having Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) Secretary from Telugu cadre, has been deprived of projects.

KTR said in a video conference: "Giridhar despite being ours, there has been no benefit". Giridhar Aramane is a 1988-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer. At times, apanan is felt. A few weeks ago Union Minister Jitendra Singh observed that V. Srinivas, Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, was keen on hosting the national e-governance conference in Hyderabad. The summit witnessed the likes of KTR expressing gratitude to V Srinivas.

## Are they friends of DGP in the first place?

TS DGP Mahender Reddy's self-proclaimed friends are talking ill of him. A mutual friend who happens to be a politician disclosed this. Offering him a political ticket, Dharmapuri Arvind said that they both have many common friends, who are speaking ill of him. IAS babus can perhaps afford to ignore what politicians say. Those in khaki, however, may have to sit up and take notice of those who are calling themselves their friends.

## In defence of the boss

Fortunate is the boss whose lieutenants bristle at false charges made against him and go all-out to defend him. The other day AP Chief Secretary Dr Sameer Sharma did not have to utter a word in self-defence when people threw mud at him. His junior colleagues, SS Rawat and Sashi Bhushan Kumar, who were present at a media conference called by the CS to allay fears of government employees about the revised pay scales, took over when a scribe brought to the notice of Sharma allegations leveled against him by an employees' union leader that he was 'misleading' the Chief Minister.

The counter came from Rawat and company in strongest possible terms. He was furious at the personal remarks made against the Chief Secretary. That is not all. In no time, a statement condemning such personal remarks against the CS was issued by the AP IAS Officers Association.

## Many a slip between the cup and the lip

When it comes to administrative reforms, there is always many a slip between the cup and the lip. At the Centre and in the States/UTs, panels are regularly appointed for ushering in administrative reforms. Things improve only if areas having room for improvement are fixed in right earnest. Few governments implement the recommendations of such panels in letter and spirit. TS Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has appointed a committee on administrative reforms headed by the Commissioner and Inspector-General Stamps and Registrations V Seshadri and comprising CM's secretary Smitha Sabharwal, GHMC Commissioner Lokesh Kumar and Commissioner of women and child welfare Divya as members. The panel will study the performance of government employees in various departments as well as active participation of government employees at all stages in the government programmes and advise the government in filing the vacancies in various departments. Hopefully, the panel will deliver, presuming its recommendations will be implemented by the government focused on 'Bangaru Telangana'.

The Union government had appointed four administrative reforms committees under the leadership of Morarji Desai, Veerappa Moily, Rajanannan and Sarkariya. In the combined Andhra Pradesh, former chief minister late NT Rama Rao had appointed Upendra Committee on administrative reforms. Former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, apart from constituting such committees, established the Centre for Good Governance. Former CM late YS Rajasekhara Reddy also appointed a committee on administrative reforms. Still, things cry for attention.

## Thunder during rain of promotions

When it is raining promotions, flashes of thunder and lightning are normal. During the recent administrative transfers and postings, there were some goof-ups resulting in heartburn among some bureaucratic circles. For instance, the transfer and posting of Anita Rajendra, Secretary, Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development, as Director-General of MCR Human Resources Development Institute became a point of heated discussion in bureaucratic circles. For, she was expected to relieve senior IAS officer Harpreet Singh from the full additional charge of the post. Surprisingly, though B M D Ekka of Principal Secretary cadre is the Additional Director-General, Anita Rajendra, four years junior to him, had been posted as D-G. The grave mistake was fixed by another order post haste posting her as the Joint Director-General.

## Thin attendance, remote working

The level of attendance in TS government offices, put at less than 40%, amidst the rising Delta- and Omicron-driven cases of Covid-19, leaves a lot to be desired. For, things are worse than was the case during the first two waves of the pandemic. Today every other senior IAS officer is "in home isolation" or "just recovered after testing positive" for Covid. Media persons are bearing the brunt with one-way communication from the government becoming de rigueur. The scattering of the departments of the Secretariat previously housed in the old complex has complicated matters; forget about Covid-induced curbs. One must be fair to a section of senior bureaucrats, especially in the Stamps and Registration Department and the Chief Minister's Office, since they are working remotely despite the fatigue and discomfort associated with Covid-19 positive patients. This has come as a blessing in disguise for those trying to make the most of the transactions in Sub Registrar offices before the soon-to-be revised market values take effect.

—Yours truly

# 875 results positive: Sources

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Results of 875 people, who were tested for Covid in Parliament, have returned positive, sources said on Sunday, days before the start of its Winter Session. The data, they said, is of tests conducted since the beginning of the third wave of the pandemic till January 20. The session is scheduled to start from January 31 and its first part will conclude on February 11.

As many as 2,847 tests have been conducted in Parliament since the starting of the third

OF 2,847 TESTS DONE IN PARL DURING THIRD COVID WAVE

wave, and out of these results of 875 returned positive, the sources said. Out of the total tests, 915 were conducted by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat and 271 samples were found to be positive for the infection, they said.

According to the sources, the session will be held following Covid-related protocols.

In the wake of a spike in Covid cases, a call has to be taken whether Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha will sit simultaneously or in different shifts, they said. Rajya Sabha Chairman and Vice President M

Venkaiah Naidu has also tested positive for Covid. This is for the second time that Naidu has been infected with the virus. "Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, who is in Hyderabad, tested COVID positive today. He has decided to remain in self-isolation for a week. He has advised all those who came in contact with him to isolate themselves and get tested," the Vice President Secretariat tweeted. It seems unlikely that he will participate in Republic Day celebrations on Wednesday.



# Ex-Japan PM Shinzo Abe honoured with Netaji Award

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Netaji Research Bureau on Sunday conferred the Netaji Award 2022 on former Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe on the 125th birth anniversary of the legendary freedom fighter.

Consul general of Japan in Kolkata, Nakamura Yutaka, received the honour on behalf of Abe at a function organised by the bureau at the Elgin Road residence here of the national icon.

Abe expressed his gratitude in a message read out by the consul general.

"As former Prime Minister of Japan and in my capacity as a member of the House of Representatives, I am determined to do my utmost to continue contributing to the development of bilateral relations," he



said. Abe said he sincerely hoped that Japan and India's friendship and global partnership will be further strengthened in wide-ranging areas including political, economic and cultural fields.

Prof Sugata Bose, the grandnephew of Subhas Chandra Bose, and Director of the Netaji Research Bureau,

described Abe as a great admirer of the freedom icon.

Japan's ambassador to India Satoshi Suzuki addressed the function virtually from Delhi.

Sugata Bose later told reporters that he wants the new generation of the country to take lessons from the great patriot's ideals.

"Several beautiful programmes have been held since morning on the occasion of Netaji's birth anniversary, including the one at the Netaji Bhavan here," he said.

Sugata Bose, who also attended a ceremony where West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee garlanded the statue of the freedom fighter, said Netaji's 125th birth anniversary celebrations have gained international prominence.

## 'Hectic lobbying for hot seats' tickets'....

Continued from page 1

The leaders, who didn't show any interest in contesting elections on BJP tickets during the last elections, have now launched campaigns seriously to secure tickets for the next Assembly elections in these two districts. The demand for BJP tickets has increased after the party's victory in Huzurabad even though the BJP had a bitter experience during the last elections in these two districts as it lost the four sitting seats of Amberpet, Uppal, Musheerabad and Khairathabad and could retain only Goshamahall.

But the BJP won the four LS seats of Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Secunderabad. Later, the party also won 47 seats in the GHMC elections giving a tough fight to the TRS. The party also won Dubbaka and Huzurabad and that gave a mighty boost to the leaders.

Some leaders, who have no chance of getting tickets from their present parties, are also eyeing BJP tickets in Hyderabad city. They have already made their intentions clear to the BJP.

## I still believe that Shiv Sena wasted 25 years in alliance with BJP: Uddhav

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday said he still believes that the Sena wasted 25 years in alliance with BJP. Addressing Shiv Sainiks virtually on the 96th birth anniversary of the party founder and his father Bal

Thackeray, Uddhav said BJP's Hindutva is for power. He said the Sena has left the BJP and not Hindutva. "I believe that BJP's opportunistic Hindutva is for power," he said. The Sena fell out with BJP after the 2019 Maharashtra polls and tied up with NCP and Congress to form Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

## Omicron in community transmission stage...

Continued from page 1

The INSACOG, in its bulletin of January 3 which was also released on Sunday, also said Omicron is now in community transmission in India and has become dominant in Delhi and Mumbai where new cases have been rising rapidly. "Further spread of Omicron in India is now expected to be through internal transmission,

not foreign travellers, and a revised sampling and sequencing strategy of INSACOG is being worked out to address genomic surveillance objectives in the wake of dynamic changing scenario of virus infection," the INSACOG said. "COVID appropriate behaviour and vaccination are main shields against all form mutations of SARS-CoV-2 virus," it said.

# Criticism on English...

Continued from page 1

Harish said that if the four BJP MPs of the State are sincere the Dalit Bandhu scheme should be implemented across the country. He said that Union Minister Nirmala Sitaraman should allocate funds for the scheme in the

Union budget. "We are going to implement Dalit Bandhu across the State. The BJP leaders are blindly criticising it without seeing the reality. Before the formation of Telangana, Rs 6,098 crore was spent on Dalits in 10 years but in the last seven years, the TRS government has spent Rs

## Active Covid-19 cases in AP up to 83,610 with 14,440 fresh additions

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh reported 14,440 fresh coronavirus cases in 24 hours ending 9 am on Sunday, reminding the pandemic's peak days during the second wave in May-June last year. Consequently, the number of active cases climbed further up to 83,610. The daily positivity rate was about 32 per cent from 46,650 sample tests in 24 hours.

According to the latest bulletin, 3,969 infected people got cured while four more succumbed in the state.

The state Covid-19 chart

showed 21,80,634 total positives, 20,82,482 recoveries and 14,542 deaths till date.

Visakhapatnam district reported the highest 2,258 fresh cases, followed by Anantapuram with 1,534, Guntur 1,458, Prakasam 1,399, Kurnool 1,238, Chittoor 1,198, SPS Nellore 1,103 and East Godavari 1,012. Srikakulam registered 921, Kadapa 788, Vizianagaram 614, West Godavari 613 and Krishna 304 new cases.

East Godavari, Guntur, Prakasam and Visakhapatnam districts reported one fresh fatality each in a day.

# Maoists blow up Rs 13-cr bridge in Jharkhand

PNS ■ JHARKHAND

Maoists on Sunday blew up a Rs 13-crore bridge on Barakar River in Jharkhand's Giridih district, just a month after its inauguration, police said.

The blast took place on the bridge between Baragada and Lurango in Dumri police station area around 2.30 AM on Sunday, Giridih Sub-divisional Police Officer Anil Kumar Singh said. The foundation for the bridge was laid in 2018 under the Mukhyamantri Gram

Setu Yojana and it was inaugurated a month ago. The CPI (Maoist) is observing a "resistance week" in protest against the arrest of their top leader Prashant Bose. The outfit blew up a mobile tower and torched another in Giridih district on Saturday. It has called for a shutdown in Bihar and Jharkhand on January 27. Jharkhand Police arrested Prashant Bose alias Kishan Da, carrying a bounty of Rs 1 crore, along with his wife Sheela Marandi in November last year.

## 1.28 lakh diagnosed with Covid symptoms in TS...

Continued from page 1

The government has done everything to control Covid," Harish said. Nearly 45,567 people were found to have fever symptoms when 12.68 lakh households were surveyed on Friday. "Pregnant women with corona infection need not worry. We have made special arrangements across the State for the treatment of pregnant women," he added.

24,114 crore," Harish said. He said that earlier there were 134 SC Welfare Residential Schools but now there are 268 such schools. He added that after Inter girls are dropping out. We have therefore set up women's residential degree colleges which never existed earlier.

# Highest January rainfall in Delhi in 122 years

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A spell of rain late Saturday night brought Delhi's cumulative precipitation this January to 88.2 mm, which is the highest in the month since 1901, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Before this, the capital recorded 79.7 mm of rainfall in 1989 and 73.7 mm in 1953, the IMD data showed. The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, has recorded six rainy

days and 88.2 mm of rainfall this month so far. It got 19.7 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending 8.30 am on Sunday. The Palam Observatory also received a record 110 mm of precipitation this month, according to the data available on the IMD's website. On Sunday, the national capital recorded a minimum temperature of 10.5 degrees Celsius, three notches above the normal while the maximum temperature was at 14.9 degrees Celsius, six notches below the normal.

Mistakes being....

Continued from page 1

It will remind democratic institutions, current and coming generations of their duties and inspire them, he said. The hologram statue will be powered by a 30,000 lumens 4K projector. An invisible, high gain, 90 percent transparent holographic screen has been erected in such a way that it is not visible to visitors.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹191
Without Skin	₹211
Broiler at Farm	₹102
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	415
VIJAYAWADA	437
VISAKHAPATNAM	435
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.15

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# HMDA out to demolish 203 illegal structures

The ongoing drive to demolish illegal structures is part of the Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department's broader agenda to demolish all kinds of illegal structures - villas, warehouses and big buildings raised in violation of permits. This time, breaking the convention of not acting on bigwigs, HMDA is acting in tandem with the district-level task forces to raze all identified illegal structures in phases. Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar, in a conversation with *The Pioneer's Naveena Ghanate*, gave the lowdown on the demolition plan..

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

**How many illegal structures have been identified in HMDA limits?**

In HMDA jurisdiction, a total of 203 structures in more than 600 sq yards have been identified as unauthorised/illegal. Out of these, action has already been taken on 82 - while 66 are demolished, another 16 are seized and sealed off as of Sunday. This is a continuous drive. HMDA is taking the lead, while acting with the district task forces of Ranga Reddy and Medchal Malkajgiri.

**What about illegal structures in other districts?**

This activity is not confined to HMDA alone, but is being implemented in the remaining 32 districts, where the Additional Collector local bodies are responsible. In all the districts (other than HMDA), another 145 unauthorised structures and eight illegal layouts have been demolished in the last one week and all district task forces have been fully activated. In GHMC, at the zonal level, there are six task forces which are doing it. A

similar drive is now on in Khammam, Warangal, Karminagar, Nizamabad, Nalgonda and Mahabubnagar.

**What types of illegal encroachments have been identified?**

All the constructions being demolished are the ones which do not have documents, or on government lands or on FTL or buffer zone. In cases where people took building permission for G+2, some have gone up to building G+6 and G+7; we are acting on that as well. Some of these

include villas, houses and warehouses, among others.

**How do you intend to handle the legal issues that might come up?**

As per the Telangana State Municipality Act 2019, district task force should take action on illegal encroachments. We have started the drive in a phased manner. In Phase 1, now all the illegal encroachments which are greater than 500 sq yards are being demolished. We wanted to start with bigger ones first, so that our officials do not end up running down on the smaller ones less than 100 sq yards, while letting go of the big ones. The activity we are taking up is well within our rights. We have a panchnama of 2017 and the illegal structures from this will be demolished without issues from judiciary or public.

**What action is being taken on Town Planning officials who should have acted in the first place?**

We are also issuing notices to Town Planning officials as to why they are failing to do their duty. Based on their responses, the action will range from disciplinary action, suspension, or sometimes dismissal from municipal services. We suspended a Municipal Commissioner recently for issuing a TS-bPASS permit without doing mandatory checks. So, nobody will be spared and there will be accountability. We will also be holding the district task force responsible in case they fail to identify and take timely action, apart from action on the concerned Municipal Commissioner, Town Planning officer or Panchayat secretary in case of rural areas.

**How can people complain about illegal structures?**

This is an ongoing process. Anyone can complain to the district task force committee, which is headed by Additional Collector local bodies. People can send an email or write a letter to additional collector - local bodies at the district level. We have two personnel deployed to act on encroachments mentioned in Twitter posts.



Minister T Harish Rao inspecting fever survey in Patancheru on Sunday

## 56,000 beds kept ready for Covid

**PNS ■ PATANCHERU**

Finance, Medical & Health Minister T Harish Rao said that the state government is ready to counter the third wave of Covid-19. The Minister inspected the fever survey being organised at Icrisat Fencing area in Bharati Nagar division of Patancheru Assembly constituency on Sunday. He said that all eligible people have to take booster dose of vaccination compulsorily. Addressing a media conference on the occasion, the Minister said that the survey to identify persons suffering from fever was done in 29,20,000 houses in the last two days in the state.

More than one lakh people with Covid-19 symptoms were

identified in Telangana in the first two days and home isolation kits were distributed to them. The medicines provided in the kit have to be taken for five-days. The government has one crore kits ready for distribution.

The survey entered third day on Sunday. He sought the cooperation of people for successful conduct of the survey. The state government has kept ready 56,000 beds in the state for Covid patients, he said. Special arrangements have been made at hospitals for pregnant women suffering from Covid-19. The health minister said fever survey will be completed in three-four days. Patancheru MLA Gudem Mahipal Reddy, corporator Sindhu Adarsh Reddy and others were present.

## Two killed in separate road accidents

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Two persons were killed in separate road accidents in the city on Saturday night.

At Humayunnagar, a student Ch. Vishwa Kalyan, (25) died after coming under the wheels of a truck. According to the police, Kalyan was going on a motorcycle when a truck hit him on the Masab Tank Road. The victim fell down from the bike on the road and came under the front wheel of the truck resulting in his death. A case is booked against the driver of the truck. In another case, a car driver, E Nagesh (26) a



resident of Filmnagar in Banjara Hills died after his motorcycle skidded. The man was traveling on his motorcycle when the vehicle skidded

### Nurse found hanging in her flat

K Rajini (27) who was working as a nurse at a corporate hospital in Gachibowli died by suicide, sources said. She was found hanging in her flat late on Saturday night. Police suspect the victim took the extreme step due to a troubled love affair. A detailed investigation is in progress, said G Suresh, Police Inspector, Gachibowli. The victim belonged to Kakinada in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh and was working as a nurse and residing in a flat with her sister and brother.

near the Filmnagar cross roads. Nagesh fell from the motorcycle and sustained head injuries leading to his death, said the police. A case was booked and investigation

is in progress. The bodies were shifted to Osmania General Hospital mortuary where postmortem was conducted and bodies handed over to the families.

## Three held for stabbing man

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Chilka police arrested three persons for allegedly attacking a man with a knife on Saturday night. The arrested persons are identified as Mohammed Nawaz (22), Shaik Saber (23) and Shareef Khan (24), all residents of Warasiguda in Secunderabad.

Additional Commissioner of Police, DS Chauhan said, the victim Manipadi Santosh Kumar (25) was a resident of Keesara mandal and was standing near a medical store at Ambernagar in Chilka police station on Saturday night. One of the suspects



Nawaz came to the spot then. Santosh previously stayed at Warasiguda, and shifted the house a few years ago, while Nawaz still stays at the same neighbourhood in Warasiguda. Three years ago, when Nawaz was beating children, Santosh questioned his behaviour following which

an argument took place between them. Since the incident, both of them quarrelled with each other whenever they meet.

"On Saturday, on spotting Santosh in Ambernagar, Nawaz along with his two associates confronted him again and had an argument. Using a knife, he stabbed the victim resulting in bleeding injuries," said the official.

On a complaint, police booked a case under Section 307 (murder attempt) r/w 34 of IPC and arrested the three persons. Nawaz was previously arrested for his involvement in property offences.

## UoH students asked to go home

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The University of Hyderabad has advised its students to go to their homes to minimise the risk of exposure to Covid-19 on the campus. UoH has urged students staying in the hostels and other campus residences that it will be in their best interest to go home.

Though the university has isolated students who tested for Covid positive, it has limited resources. Classes will continue online for all semesters. The end-semester evaluation will also be conducted in online/open book/take-home mode as was done during the second wave.



## GHMC intensifies measures to curb Covid-19

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has been taking several measures to prevent the spread of omicron variant of Covid-19 in the third wave in the city. The GHMC, in coordination with State government departments, initiated a series of measures. Presently, to break the transmission chain, the door-to-door fever survey, distribution of isolation kits and spraying of disinfectants are underway in different parts of Hyderabad.

As a part of the fever survey, the teams comprising Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM), an Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) and staffers from the GHMC and Department of Health, Medical & Family Welfare, have been going around the colonies and residential areas enquiring the health status of persons at every home. If the

people have Covid symptoms, such as fever or severe headache, they are provided with isolation kits.

Details of individuals with Covid-19 symptoms are being collected to ensure appropriate follow-up about their health status. The fever survey was clubbed with vaccination in some localities and in some places, people who were yet to take their second dose of vaccine were guided to the nearest vaccination centre.

During the survey, the corporation officials also informed the people about the GHMC Covid Control Room set up in GHMC Head Office. "We are asking citizens to dial 040 21111111 to get assistance and get their Covid-19 related queries answered. We also inform them about the facilities they can utilise by visiting the nearest Basti Dawakhana and Urban Primary Health Centres," said a GHMC official.

### Begumpet police arrest 7 in stabbing case

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Begumpet police arrested seven persons for allegedly attacking a businessman at Rasoolpura in the city in the early hours on Sunday.

The arrested persons are identified as Khaja Bahaduddin Hameedi, Mohammed Omar, Abdul Sami, Md Kareem, Mohammed Shoaib, Dasarwad Krishna and Syed Sameer.

According to the police, the victim Pradeep Kumar along with Hemanth Kumar, Shiva, Bharath Kumar, Arun and Naveen Kumar came to the house of their friend Raghavendra alias Sonu to Rasoolpura at around 3.30 am. The group was waiting for Raghavendra when Mohd Omer, Khaja and Krishna came to the place and questioned about their presence in the locality.

Omer confronted Pradeep near the Elahi Masjid in Rasoolpura where again an argument took place between them. Some friends of Omer came to the spot and all of them attacked Pradeep, resulting in stabbing wounds to the victim," said Additional CP, D S Chauhan.

## Blackmailing of parents by corporate colleges alleged

**DURGAM SRINIVAS ■ HYDERABAD**

Corporate colleges have been allegedly looting parents by charging hefty fees for providing Intermediate education and entrance coaching for EAMCET, IIT and NEET. In fact, parents have to shell out lakhs of rupees to provide intermediate education to students.

In fact, 80 per cent of the students have been inclined to send their wards to private colleges as they feel teaching in government colleges is not up to the mark.

During the past two and half decades, the corporate colleges have been exercising control over the Intermediate education. But, the recent Covid has drastically altered the financial position of the parents and paralysed lives of the people. Those who work in private sector have begun feel insecurity. The junior colleges have been conducting only online classes for the past 18 months or so.

The corporate colleges have been blackmailing parents to give textbooks or other paraphernalia to students. Parents were asked to pay 50 per cent of the tuition fees to get books to students. The classroom teaching has begun from Sep 1 last year. Moreover, the colleges



**Khalik, Commissioner of Exams, Board of Intermediate Examinations, said that linking paying tuition fees to allowing the students to sit for the exams is not proper. He said that the board would get tough with the colleges troubling the students.**

have been blackmailing the students to pay the full fee though the colleges are not conducting classes for good part of the two-years to get back their original certificates.

The parents would have no option except to pay fees even by borrowing funds from others to enable their wards to pursue higher education. Two corporate schools are forcibly extracting the tuition fees from parents, it is alleged. Further, it is pointed out that these institutions have not paid salaries properly to the employees on one hand and on the other they collected the full fees from parents.

The Board of Intermediate Education has released the deadline for collection of Inter examination fees, providing

the perfect opportunity to the junior colleges to recover the balance of the tuition fees. The colleges have sent SMSes to parents that only those students who cleared 90 per cent of the tuition fees are eligible to sit for the examinations.

The parents have no alternative except to plead with the management to send their wards to examination.

Parents were seen in groups calling on principals of corporate colleges in Vidyanagar, Nallakunta, Narayanaguda, Dilsukh Nagar, Kukatpally,

Sanjeev Reddy Nagar, Ameerpet and Madhapur areas.

Speaking to this correspondent, mother of twins Kalavati who got her children admitted to a corporate college in Nallakunta said that 70 per cent of the tuition fees has been cleared. But, the college has been asking her to pay the balance of the fee to give the examination application form to her wards. Her wards are in the same class, but the college management has been insisting on the students taking two sets of books, which will put an

additional burden on the family. The mother of another girl student Sudharani said that her daughter is a student of a corporate college in Narayanaguda and she paid 60 per cent of the fees at the time of buying

books from the college. But the principal is asking her to pay 30 per cent now to allow her daughter to sit for the exam.

Jangaiah, who works as a cab driver, got his son admitted to a private college in SR Nagar. He said that he was not having work due to Covid. He complained that the college principal is not allowing his son to sit for the exam though they have paid 50 per cent of the fees. He offered to pay a portion of the fees in February, but the principal was in no mood to listen to him.

Principal of a corporate college branch in Nallakunta said that he has orders to allow only those students who have paid 90 per cent of the fees. It is not his college, but he works there. He has no alternative except to comply with the management's orders.

ABVP state president Praveen Reddy has alleged that the Board of Intermediate Education officials are not taking any remedial measures though the corporate colleges troubling the parents.

## En masse transfer of nurses hits services in OGH, Niloufer

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Transfer of nurses as part of the new zonal system has led to scarcity of nursing services in several government hospitals - including the Niloufer and Osmania hospitals.

For want of suitable planning in the transfer of nurses, nurses in large numbers have been transferred to elsewhere from some important hospitals. But the transferred nurses were not replaced by other nurses. This has led to a deficiency in nursing services.

In fact, the 1000-bed Niloufer Children's Hospital used to have 200 nurses. In the onal transfers, over 130 have been transferred to other places. There was no replenishment



for the transferred services. Moreover, 27 nurses of the remaining 70 have been affected by Covid-19, leaving only 43 in services of the patients. The

same hospital also houses a 150-bed isolation ward, patients and hospital employees have been facing many problems.

In 1168-bed Osmania

General Hospital, there were 388 nurses. But, 147 of them have been transferred to other places. The out-patient department and operation theatre

services have been hit hard due to the transfer. Besides the two hospitals, several hospitals in the city have been facing the acute problem of lack of nurs-

es. In fact, 3,000 nurses have been appointed through the TSPSC six months ago.

The majority of them have been posted in the city hospitals. In the zonal transfer, 80 per cent of them have been re-allotted to their native places.

The existing nurses have been relieved even before recruitment or appointment of the new nurses, leading to the prevailing imbroglio in hospitals. The medical and health officials are understood to have taken the problem to the notice of the Director of Medical Education Dr. Ramesh Reddy. It is learnt that he had told the officials to appoint the transferred nurses back on a deputation basis and advised the officials to have patience.

## Online classes for govt school students commence today

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The state government has taken decision to conduct online classes from 8th class to class 10th from January 24 as a measure to prevent the spread of Covid-19 third wave. Accordingly, online classes will be conducted to the students of these classes from Monday. To protect school children from the pandemic, the decision to go for online classes was taken, says Director of School Education. Though the government has taken the step for the well-being of school children, several parents express fears that the closure of schools will badly affect the academic standards in schools and also of the

students. he primary education system has already been paralysed in the state in last two years.

The students from class 8 to 10 also suffer a lot as they could not concentrate on online classes due to various reasons. The children and the parents prefer regular class room classes. There are no adequate facilities for government school students to get online education. They do not have mobiles or laptops to pursue online classes and hence, 70 per cent of students are unable to avail online classes. Children of poorer sections and those from village background face numerous problems to pursue online education.



# Select Dalit Bandhu beneficiaries by Feb first week: Harish to officials

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Finance Minister T Harish Rao stated that the state government has decided to complete the selection of beneficiaries under Dalit Bandhu before the first week of February so that the units can be grounded in the first week of March. In tune with the decision, the MLAs and the officials have to strive to complete the process of selecting Dalita Bandhu beneficiaries at the earliest, he said.

The Minister addressed a media conference at Sangareddy district collectorate here on Sunday. He said that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, only MLAs



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao addressing a media conference in Sangareddy on Sunday

and MPs from the district were asked to participate in the review meeting on Dalita Bandhu. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, as he had promised earlier, plans to implement the scheme to all districts. However,

the BJP leaders have been making unnecessary statements. The Union government has been taking Telangana as role model and implementing welfare schemes, Harish Rao said.

Mission Bhagiratha scheme of Telangana is being implemented as Har Ghar Jal by the Centre, he pointed out and demanded the Centre to implement Dalita Bandhu across the country. There are 26 crores Dalits in the country and Dalita Bandhu has to be implemented for their welfare, he demanded the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman. Congress government had spent Rs 6,198 crore in 10 years, whereas the TRS government had spent Rs

24,114 crore in seven years for the welfare of Dalits, he said.

The BJP government at the Centre has been planning to sell out Public Sector Units and doing injustice to SCs and STs, he alleged. When Telangana was formed, there were 296 residential schools and now the number has been increased to 914, he pointed out. The state government has been striving to introduce English medium in government schools, he added. He also demanded the Centre establish 21 new Navodaya schools in the state.

MP BB Patil, MLA Manikya Rao, former MLA Chinta Prabhakar, and district officials were present at the meeting.

## Rename Mulugu as ‘Sammakka-Sarakka district’, demands Seetakka

PNS ■ MULUGU

MLA Seetakka released a handout at her camp office here on Sunday with the demand that the Mulugu district be renamed as Sammakka Sarakka district. She stated that the people have been organising agitations with the demand to establish Sammakka Sarakka district.

The MLA said that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had named other districts in the name of Gods. Why he is not showing interest to name the Mulugu district in the name of Vanadevatas, Sammakka-Sarakka, she asked.

Gadwal district was named as Jogulamba-Gadwal district and Bhuvanagiri was named as Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri district. Then, why Mulugu can't be



MLA Seethakka

The MLA said that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had named other districts in the name of Gods.

renamed as Sammakka-Sarakka district, she questioned. By joining hands with various sections of people, agitations would be conducted in support of the demand, she said.

Mulugu Zilla Sadhana Samithi had been constituted with Bikshapathi as founder president and the Samithi organised agitations in support of Sammakka-Sarakka district, she pointed out. The MLA also

demanded that Girijan University be established in Mallampalli Mandal in Mulugu district. A meeting will be held for which the leaders of various parties would be invited and plans would be drawn to take up agitations, she added. Congress district president Nallela Kumaras wamy, Congress Rythu Kisan Cell president Gollapalli Rajendra Goud and others were present at the programme.

## Demolition of Konda family memorial built on family site

Konda Surekha breathes fire at Parakala MLA Dharma Reddy

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Kicking off a sensation, former MLC Konda Surekha and her daughter have issued a strong warning to Parakala MLA Dharma Reddy for his fault of demolishing the memorial build by the family for Konda Murali's parents in the family's land.

She along with daughter Susmita Patel, breathed fire on the MLA, and accused him using some cuss words. They said that they were at a loss of comprehension how Dharma Reddy became MLA.

Warning him against asking for trouble, they said that the fall of the MLA was imminent whoever might be supporting him - be it KCR or the KTR. They even showed no regard to KTR while referring to his name. How the MLA order the



Konda Surekha

demolition of the memorial build in the family's own site.

She cautioned him against provoking the Konda family and said, "It does not augur well for the MLA."

Earlier, Konda Surekha visited the demolished memorial at Agrampahad. Enemy with her family would be akin

to playing with fire, she said recalling how Dharma Reddy stood in front of her with folded hands to secure contracts. The crowbar blow to the memorial is a blow to the hearts of the Konda family, she said warning him to set his house in order before people extracted his teeth.



For representation purpose only

## Liquor merchants allegedly violate licence conditions

PNS ■ MULUGU

Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL) outlets are reportedly violating the license conditions in the district. But the authorities, who are supposed to ensure that the outlet owners abide by licence conditions, seem to have turned a blind eye to violations.

According to informed sources, the IMFL outlets should only sell the liquor to consumer and should not con-

sumption of alcohol on the premises. But most of the outlets have opened eateries to sell non-vegetarian foods. It is an outright violation of licence conditions, the sources asserted. The State Prohibition and Excise Department officials have reportedly booked cases against some outlets for selling liquor at a price higher than MRP. Amid fast-surging Covid-19, liquor prices are increased day by day, it is learnt.

## Kalyana Lakshmi a boon to poor families: MLA Chandar

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

Kalyana Lakshmi is a boon to the poor families in the State, said Ramagundam MLA Korukanti Chandar here on Sunday. Telangana is the only State which has introduced the scheme to help the poor.

The MLA handed over Kalyana Lakshmi cheques and Chief Minister K Chandra sekhar Rao's portraits at the doorsteps of the beneficiaries in 47, 25, 2, and 4 divisions.

In the united Andhra Pradesh, female children were being sold in some areas. In Telangana State now, parents never felt that the female child was a burden and they were happy because of Kalyana Lakshmi scheme, he said. The Chief Minister has launched several welfare schemes for the welfare of everyone in the State. His administration was a boon to



Ramagundam MLA Korukanti Chandar handing over Kalyana Lakshmi cheques to beneficiaries in Ramagundam on Sunday

**The MLA handed over Kalyana Lakshmi cheques and Chief Minister K Chandra sekhar Rao's portraits at the doorsteps of the beneficiaries in 47, 25, 2, and 4 divisions.**

the State, the MLA said. City Mayor B [Anil Kumar, Deputy Mayor N Abhishek Rao and corporators N V Ramana

Reddy, M Sadana ndam and K Srinivas and TRS leaders B Ravinder, E Sankar and I Pulender were present.

## Narsapur urban park: where people relax in the lap of Nature



Narasapur urban park

PNS ■ NASAPUR

Do you want to relax in the lap of Nature? The perfect address to enjoy the pristine nature is the urban park located here in Medak district. It will provide a lot of amusement.

The government developed forest areas into wonderful urban parks, located close to Narsapur-Hyderabad national highway. Visitors are allowed to visit the facility from 9 am to 5 pm. The authorities here collect Rs 50 per head as the ticket for elders and Rs 30 per head as the ticket for children.

A huge clock tower, the idol of bison, medicinal plant garden are some of the features of the park, located close to

Hyderabad.

The park will have a heavy crowd in weekends because of its proximity to the state capital. The number of visitors to the park would be at least 50 on weekdays and would swell to 500 on weekends.

The forest department officials have provided drinking water toilets and tables for the benefit of visiting public. The cyclists have been visiting the urban park on bicycles to catch the beautiful nature. Birds, butterflies, tall trees, rock formations welcome the visitors to the facility.

Climbing onto the top of the clock tower one can watch the beauty of the forest. Cottages are being provided for the benefit of tourists.

## Tense moments as TDP, YSRCP activists clash

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Mild tension prevailed in Amaravati on Sunday as the YSRCP and TDP activists clashed and the police resorted to mild lathi-charge to disperse the classing activists.

The YSRCP and TDP cadres had been making allegations and counter-allegations on the corruption taking place in carrying out development works in the Pedakurapadu constituency for the last four days on social media.

The YSRCP and TDP cadres started going to a gravel quarry at Lemalle village for an open debate. On the receipt of information, the police detained some of the TDP activists at their houses. The police also prevented some YSRCP activists from going to the Lemalle village.

However, some of the YSRCP and TDP activists reached the village and clashed and the police resorted to mild lathi-charge to disperse them. DSP Pothuraju, CIs Rajesh Kumar, AV Shiva Prasad, and Shiva Naga Raju rushed to the village and dispersed the activists.



YSRCP and TDP activists nearly coming to blows at Pedakurapadu on Sunday

## Crop loss: Minister assures compensation to farmers

Dayakar Rao asks officials to speed up survey on crop loss

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Errabelli Dayakar Rao here on Sunday assured the farmer that all those who lost their crops would be provided with compensation. He asked the Agriculture officials to speed up the survey on crop loss.

Participating in a review meeting at Hanumakonda District Collectorate, the Minister said preliminary estimates on crop loss showed that standing crop was damaged in not less than 50,000 acres. Chilli and maize farmers suffered most with their crops



Errabelli Dayakar Rao

damaged in the district.

Dayakar Rao stressed the need to curb the spread of Covid-19 in the district. He called upon the officials and people's representatives to

work in coordination with each other to create awareness among people on Covid-19. He directed the district administration to arrange beds and equip them with oxygen. He asked the officials to create ICU facilities too at all the primary health centres, community health centres. He also stressed the need to ensure that the private hospitals extort money from patients.

He expressed satisfaction over the efforts being made by health workers in conducting door-to-door fever survey. He said no other State had launched the door-to-door survey so far.



Persons who got appointments on compassionate ground at Peddapally on Sunday

## 43 persons appointed on compassionate grounds

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLY

A total of 43 persons were appointed on compassionate ground in RG one General Manager office of Singareni Collieries. General Manager K Narayan handed over appointment letters to the beneficiaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Naryan said the appointments were made on the initiative

taken by Singareni Collieries Managing Director N Sridhar. Dependent family members of employees who were declared medically unfit were given appointments on compassionate grounds. He further said the management had sanctioned postings to 1,327 persons under medical invalidation clause. A total of 1,022 persons were given appointments too, he said.

## People urged to cooperate with survey teams

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Former Chairman of Legislative Council and MLC Gutha Sukhender Reddy and Miryalaguda MLA Nallamotu Bhsakar Rao on Sunday appealed to people to cooperate with the health workers conducting door-to-door fever survey. The leaders accompanied by former MLA Tippana Vijaysi mha Reddy, Municipal Chairman T

**The leaders accompanied by former MLA Tippana Vijaysimha Reddy, Municipal Chairman T Bhargav and others visited 36th ward in Miryalaguda**

Bhargav and others visited 36th ward in Miryalaguda town and monitored the survey being conducted.

They suggested that the teams should work in coordination with each other. Sukhender Reddy said the State government had made all arrangements to tackle the Covid-19 third wave. The government had made available 1 crore home isolation kits and 2 crore testing kits. He recalled that the door-to-door survey conducted by the State government during the second wave gave amazing results.



Former Chairman of Legislative Council Gutha Sukhender Reddy and leaders monitoring door-to-door fever survey being conducted in Miryalaguda on Sunday

## KCR toiling for welfare of people, says Minister

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Minister for Agriculture S Niranjn Reddy on Sunday accused the BJP government at the Centre of discriminating against the interests of the people in Telangana. The Centre, he said, continued its non-cooperation towards Telangana.

Speaking shortly after distributing Kalyana Lakshmi cheques to 112 beneficiaries, the Minister said the TRS government remained committed to the welfare of the people belonging to the weaker sections of society. Community



Minister for Agriculture S Niranjn Reddy handing over Kalyana Lakshmi cheques to beneficiaries in Mahabubnagar on Sunday

lunch was organised on the occasion. Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is toiling day in and day out for the wel-

**Speaking shortly after distributing Kalyana Lakshmi cheques to 112 beneficiaries, the Minister said the TRS government remained committed to the welfare of the people belonging to the weaker sections of society.**

fare of the people. The blessings of the people for KCR government would remain undiminished, Niranjn Reddy said. He appealed to the TRS activists to ensure that the benefits of welfare measures reach the needy. The government remained

committed to reservations for the Valmiki community, he said.

The Union government had failed to solve the problem being faced by the State despite the State government took to its notice several times.

## Minister helps for surgery of bedridden youth

A. SESHACHARYULU ■ NALGONDA

A young man, who lost both of his legs and his backbone in a road accident, was confined to bed. Though he was having bright future, the accident made him bedridden. He has been facing financial problems besides having mental depression. In this situation, knowing the information, State Energy Minister G. Jagadish Reddy visited the victim's house, spoke to him and

tried to infuse confidence in him. M. Vineet, age 26 from the Church compound of Suryapet town lost his father at an early age and worked as a computer operator to look after his mother. Within days of getting married, he lost both his legs and was confined to bed due to a spinal cord injury caused by the accident. Seeing the situation of her husband, the newlywed wife left him. Upon learning about the incident through local leaders, the Minister went to Vineet's

house and was shocked to see the young man confined to bed. Minister spoke to NIMS doctors and directed them to conduct an operation on Vineet. The Minister asked the doctors that they would also bear the medical expenses of the youth. Vineet will soon undergo an operation at NIMS Hospital. The initiative taken by the Minister towards Vineet is lauded by the people of the municipal ward and also the people of the town.



INDIA CORNER

Amarinder Singh announces first list of 22 candidates

Former chief minister Amarinder Singh on Sunday announced the first list of his party Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) candidates from 22 constituencies for the February 20 state assembly elections, with ex-captain of Indian hockey team Ajit Pal Singh entering the fray from Nakodar. "We have given a good set of candidates with a clear focus on winnability while ensuring due representation across regions and various sections of the society," the PLC chief, who will contest from his Patiala Urban seat, said here. The PLC has been allotted 37 to contest out of the 117 seats in the state as part of its alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and SAD (Sanyukt), with discussions still in progress on possibly another five seats for the party, he said. Of the 37 seats in the PLC kitty, the maximum of 26 is from the Malwa region of the state. The PLC's share in seat allocation for the Majha region currently stands at seven, while the Doaba region accounts for four seats.



Centre's move of dropping 'Abide with me' hymn sad: Chidambaram

Objecting to the Centre's decision of dropping one of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymns 'Abide with me' from this year's Beating Retreat ceremony, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday said the government's move has hurt the 'thinking and sensitive' people. 'Abide with me', written by Scottish Anglican poet and hymnologist Henry Francis Lyte in 1847, had been part of the Beating Retreat ceremony since 1950. The Indian Army announced on Saturday that it has been dropped from this year's ceremony. For this year's ceremony, the hymn has been replaced by the popular patriotic song 'Ae Mere Watan Ke Logon', which was written by Kavi Pradeep to commemorate the supreme sacrifice made by Indian soldiers during the 1962 Indo-China war. Talking to reporters in Goa, Chidambaram said, 'Abide with me' is an old hymn that dates back to 1847. It was Mahatma Gandhi's favourite hymn. Ever since we became a republic in 1950, the ceremony called Beating the Retreat on the last of the Republic Day celebrations would always end with the march to the tune of 'Abide with me', he said.



Karnataka achieves 100 pc first dose Covid vaccine coverage: Minister

Karnataka on Sunday achieved 100 per cent coverage of first dose of COVID-19 vaccine among its eligible population, Karnataka Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said. He also claimed that Karnataka became the first state in the country to achieve this feat. "We made it! It took us exactly 1 year and 7 days to achieve 100% first dose coverage! Karnataka is the first state in the country (over 4 crore adult population) to achieve this feat! Kudos to all health workers and district administration on this stellar achievement!", Sudhakar tweeted. According to the data shared by him, Gadag district achieved 105 per cent vaccination of its eligible population with the first dose whereas inoculation coverage in Bidar, Bagalkote and Vijayapura districts, was 104 per cent of the population.



4 cr people pushed into poverty in country: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi on Sunday alleged that over four crore people have been pushed into poverty in the country and that there has been development of only "Hamare Do".

"'Vikas overflow' only for 'Humare Do'. While our 4,00,00,000 brothers and sisters are pushed into poverty," he said on Twitter.

"Each of these 4,00,00,000 is a real person, not just a number. Each of these 4,00,00,000 deserved better. Each of these 4,00,00,000 is India!," Gandhi said, using the hashtag "BJPfailsIndia".

Citing an Oxfam report, he put out a graphic alleging that the wealth two top businessmen has grown by billions of dollars during the year 2021 while over four crore people have gone below the poverty line in India during the pandemic since 2020.



R-Day parade: Indian Army contingents to display rifles

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

How Indian Army uniforms and rifles have evolved over the decades will be on display at this year's Republic Day parade, Major General Alok Kakkar said on Sunday.

Three marching contingents of the Indian Army will wear uniforms and carry rifles from previous decades, while one contingent will wear the new combat uniform and carry the latest Tavor rifles at Republic Day Parade-2022 (RDP-2022) as a part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrating the 75th year of India's independence, he said. There will be a total of six marching contingents of the Indian Army at RDP-22, he said at a press conference.

Each marching contingent at RDP-22 will comprise 96 soldiers instead of the usual 144 so that proper attention can be given to COVID-19 protocol.

The Indian Army's first marching contingent, of Rajput regiment soldiers, will wear the 1950s uniform and carry .303



rifles, Kakkar said.

The second marching contingent, of Assam regiment soldiers, will wear the 1960s uniform of the Indian Army and carry .303 rifles.

The 1970s uniform of the Army will be worn by soldiers of the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry regiment, who will form the third marching contingent, and they will carry 7.62 mm self-loading rifles, he informed.

The fourth and fifth marching contingents will be of Sikh Light Infantry and Army Ordnance Corps Regiment respectively, he said, adding

that these soldiers will wear the current uniform of the Army and carry 5.56 mm Insas rifles, Kakkar noted.

The sixth contingent will be of Parachute regiment soldiers who will wear the new combat uniform, which was unveiled earlier this month, and carry Tavor rifles, he stated.

Overall, there will be a total of 14 marching contingents -- six of Army, one of Navy, one of Air Force, four of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), two of National Cadet Corps (NCC), one of Delhi police and one of National Service Scheme (NSS), he said.

SC sets aside NGT order on firecracker factory blast

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has set aside a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order directing compensation of Rs 20 lakh to the heirs of the victims of a firecracker factory blast in Tamil Nadu's Virudhunagar district last year in which 19 workers were killed.

A bench of justices A M Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari noted that the NGT proceeded ex-parte and directed the tribunal to reconsider the case afresh.

"Accordingly, in the interest of justice, we deem it appropriate to set aside the impugned judgment and order and relegate the parties before the National Green Tribunal for reconsideration of the entire matter afresh after giving an opportunity to the parties concerned, including the appellants, and to pass appropriate orders in accordance with the law," the bench in a recent order said.

AIADMK takes credit for Hogenakkal project

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's principal opposition AIADMK on Sunday slammed Karnataka government for opposing the second phase of the Hogenakkal Drinking Water Project, saying the neighbouring state has no moral or legal right to challenge it.

The main opposition party also took credit for implementing the Hogenakkal project (first phase) in Tamil Nadu. The scheme was launched in 2008 during the DMK regime when late M Karunanidhi was the Chief Minister.

Top party leader O Panneerselvam said the Hogenakkal Combined Drinking Water Project, a long time dream of the people of Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri districts of Tamil

Nadu, was fulfilled by late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa.

Tamil Nadu is a lower riparian state, the AIADMK leader pointed out, apparently indicating that the state was dependent on water supply by upstream state, Karnataka.

The Karnataka government, which has the habit of releasing only 'surplus water' after all its dams were

filled, does not have a right 'morally and legally' to oppose Tamil Nadu's Hogenakkal project's second phase, Panneerselvam said in a statement. The project area falls under Tamil Nadu, he said.

"Tamil Nadu has all the rights to implement this project. This (DMK) government should implement it. The AIADMK will extend its full support (to the government) for the project implementation," he said.



Over 35k trains cancelled in first nine months

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 35,000 trains were cancelled in the first nine months of the 2021-22 fiscal year due to maintenance reasons, the railways said in a reply to an RTI query.

The national transporter also said that during the April to June quarter of 2021-22, it had cancelled 20,941 trains due to "maintenance reasons", in the next quarter it had cancelled 7,117 trains, while in



the October to December quarter, it had cancelled 6,869 trains.

The RTI query was filed by

Madhya Pradesh-based Chandra Shekar Guar. Officials indicated that the highest number of such cancellations in recent history

was in 2019, when around 3,146 trains were cancelled due to maintenance work.

In 2014, 101 trains were cancelled due to maintenance work and the number increased to 829 in 2017, 2,867 in 2018 and 3,146 in 2019, according to official figures.

"This shows the amount of work that is required to be done on worn out tracks that have been long pending," an official said.

MP cops raid govt employee's premises, unearth

The Madhya Pradesh police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) on Sunday raided the premises of a state government employee in Rewa district, and unearthed disproportionate assets worth Rs 1.5 crore from there, an official said. More assets are likely to be found as the raid and the estimation process are underway, said Virendra Jain, Superintendent of Police (SP), EOW. He said that following a complaint about the disproportionate assets and its verification, a raid was conducted at the premises of PWD time-keeper Pannalal Shukla, at Mada village residence and other places.

Illegal arms factory busted in UP's Muzaffarnagar

An illegal arms factory was busted at Budhana bypass road under Khatoli Police Station area with seizure of a cache of weapons, police said on Sunday. Sixteen pistols, 11 barrels, and several pistol under manufacture were seized and one man was arrested during the raid on Saturday night, they said. The raid was part of a drive the police is carrying out to nab illegal arms manufacturers in the region ahead of the UP polls. An arms factory was busted in New Mandi Police Station area on Friday too with seizure of several arms.

Naxal involved in killings of several security personnel arrested

A 20-year-old Naxal, who was allegedly involved in the killings of at least seven security personnel, including two Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) officials, was arrested in Narayanpur district of Chhattisgarh, police said on Sunday. The Naxal, identified as Pandru Padami, was nabbed on Saturday from Toyameta village located under Chotadonger police station limits in the district. Narayanpur Superintendent of Police (SP) Girja Shankar Jaiswal said, Padami is a close associate of Naxals' Amdai Ghati area committee secretary Suresh Salam, he said.

Bengal guv pays tribute to Netaji,

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankar on Sunday paid homage to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary and said his 'life is an inspiration and motivation for all'. Taking to Twitter, Dhankar also stated that a portrait of the revolutionary leader was unveiled at Raj Bhavan on the occasion. "Nation pays homage #NetajiSubhashChandraBose on #NetajiJayanti. Grand statue of #Netaji at India Gate Canopy - a befitting tribute to icon @PMOIndia. His life is inspiration and motivation for all to always keep nation first," he tweeted.

Healthcare professionals' battle with Covid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Covid fatigue among healthcare professionals is real, says 39-year-old Dr Samir Khurana, recalling how the pandemic and its severe waves in the last two years have left him and many from his fraternity 'mentally and physically exhausted'.

But for Khurana (name changed) the biggest fear was he becoming the spreader of the infection at home. "It was a huge part of the already stressful and tiring times we were facing," he said.

"I vividly remember the day the first Covid case was

diagnosed at the medical facility in Delhi that I work in. My shift had just begun and we were updated with the report. I wore my personal protective equipment (PPE) and started treating patients," he said.

Khurana, who did not want his or the hospital's name to be revealed, said initially he felt claustrophobic in PPE, but "now it has become my uniform".

"Since 2020, we are constantly on our toes. Covid fatigue is real for healthcare professionals who have been tirelessly working for the past two years," he said.



New translation reveals Mukherjee panel ignored Renkoji temple's offer

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Tokyo's Renkoji temple gave permission to Indian authorities to conduct DNA tests on ashes said to be those of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, according to fresh translation of a letter which refutes claims that the temple was "reticent", placing doubts on a commission of enquiry's ruling that the 'ashes were not Netaji's'.

A new translation of a letter in Japanese written by the chief priest of Tokyo's Renkoji temple to the Indian government in 2005 revealed that permission was given for DNA test of the remains to the Justice MK Mukherjee Commission.

However, for inexplicable reasons this portion of the letter was not translated and a bland edited English version was attached to the Justice Mukherjee Commission's report on the disappearance of Bose as evidence that "on account of the Temple Authorities reticence...

the commission could not proceed further (on the issue of DNA tests)".

The Commission later used this to conclude that the ashes were not of Netaji's, giving credence to speculations that he may have survived to become an ascetic or prisoner in a Russian prison.

Madhuri Bose, the legendary freedom fighter's grand-niece -- the grand-daughter of his brother Sarat Bose, told PTI, "We recently commissioned the fresh translation after we found inconsistencies in the Mukherjee Commission report and found several paragraphs in the letter written in Japanese missing from the official English version in the Justice Mukherjee Inquiry Report."

The new translation by a Japanese language expert revealed that Nichiko Mochizuki, the chief priest of the Renkoji Temple -- a 427-year-old Buddhist temple, had written "I agreed to offer my coop-



eration for the testing. The same was agreed upon at the meeting with (Indian) Ambassador (M.L.) Tripathi (to Japan) last year (2004)" in the omitted portion. The translation could not be independently authenticated by PTI.

"We do not understand why this permission was not made public earlier or why DNA tests were not conducted," said Madhuri Bose, who has served

in the Commonwealth Secretariat and at the United Nations, besides authoring books on the Bose brothers.

The Mukherjee Commission, which tabled its report in Parliament in 2006, had concluded that Bose "did not die in the plane crash, as alleged" by eye-witnesses, including his close confidantes from the INA, and that "the ashes in the Japanese temple were not of

Netaji".

Eye-witnesses, including Col Habib-Ur-Rahman of the INA, had said Bose died in a plane crash in August 1945 in Taipei.

Theories that he survived or was never on the aircraft that crashed gained ground as a result of the report, as also a hypothesis that he may have turned into an ascetic or imprisoned in a Russian gulag.

A movie suggesting that he might have become someone called 'Gumnami Baba' was also made in the recent years, while several news reports indicated he might have been imprisoned by Russian leader Joseph Stalin in Siberia.

"We had great faith in the Mukherjee Commission and we saw a glimmer of hope at one time that the truth about Netaji's disappearance will come out with the final report... However many glaring discrepancies in the report forced us to look at it again," said Madhuri Bose.

Netaji sent secret letter to Soviet leadership in 1939 asking for help in India's liberation

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Amiya Bose, freedom icon Subhas Bose's nephew, was tasked by his uncle to carry a secret letter seeking Soviet help in India's liberation, which was to be delivered to agents in Britain in October 1939, barely a month into the Second World War. The freedom fighter's nephew, who was searched on landing in Britain by officers from New Scotland Yard, managed to smuggle in the letters -- one of which was handed over to British Communist leader of Indian origin Rajani Palme Dutt and another to a Soviet agent. "My father had recalled that his uncle had summoned him from Cambridge to India in May 1939 and was asked to go on a

'Russian mission'. His father Sarat Bose was in the know but not his mother. He was asked to carry the messages in his overcoat pocket," said Madhuri Bose, the daughter of Amiya Bose and author of the book 'The Bose Brothers', said in an interview to PTI. Amiya Bose had narrated to his daughter that he had told Subhas Bose, whose 125th birth anniversary is being celebrated Sunday, "If I get caught with your message, you would certainly be hanged." Bose had replied he would gladly take the risk. Subhas Bose, also called Netaji by millions of Indians, had held meetings with the Communist Party of India to enlist support in approaching the government of Soviet Russia. Madhuri Bose recalls that Soli


Bativala, who represented CPI at the meeting, agreed to this course of action. Bativala in a hand-written record of the meeting given to Amiya Bose three decades later recounted that Netaji told him, "The strategy I suggest is: We in India launch a full-scale national movement for freedom; at the same time Soviet Russia marches from the North." Netaji apparently told Bativala that "Soviet Russia could be trusted not to take advantage and occupy the country." CPI did not favour upon the scheme with look, according to the Kolkata-based communist, but agreed to see that the message reached Moscow. Accordingly, it was decided that Subhas Bose will send a direct communication through Amiya Bose.



**DOCYARD**  
DR SUSHRUT GANPULE

Consultant — Pulmonologist

JUPITER HOSPITAL, PUNE



## Lung infections can be dangerous



Lungs play an important role in our body hence it is necessary to prioritize lung health. Very often we tend to take them for granted; however, like other parts of the body, they age with time. They lose their strength and become less flexible which results in breathing difficulty.

While our body does protect the lungs by keeping dirt and germs at bay, we can maintain the health of our lungs and reduce the risk of lung disease by adopting certain healthy habits.

**Stay away from smoking**  
Never smoke and stay away from secondhand smoke as well. Smoking is known to be a leading cause of lung cancer and lung diseases like COPD. Furthermore, it is never too late to quit smoking as lungs begin to heal almost immediately once a person quits the butt. The risk of acquiring lung cancer reduces to almost half to that of a current smoker, ten years after quitting smoking.

**Control your exposure to pollutants**  
Avoid exposure to indoor and outdoor pollutants as it can damage your lungs and accelerate aging. Lungs can easily stay strong against toxins when they are young and strong, however, with age, they are more susceptible for the damage and become more vulnerable to the disease. Its best to reduce exposure to outdoor pollutants as much as possible including:

**Smoking is known to be a leading cause of lung cancer and lung diseases like COPD. Lungs can easily stay strong against toxins when they are young and strong, however, with age, they become more vulnerable to the disease**

Keeping your home smoke-free is equally important to avoid secondhand smoke exposure.

- ♦ Avoid exposure to biomass which is commonly seen in rural areas. Use LPG or natural gas instead. Use masks wherever exposure is unavoidable.

- ♦ Ensure appropriate ventilation inside homes.
- ♦ Avoid exposure to chemicals like benzene and formaldehyde found in synthetic air fresheners, perfumes and joss sticks (agar-batti).

**Regular exercise**  
Exercise plays an important role. Staying active keeps your lungs healthy and even improves the symptoms of some long-term lung conditions.

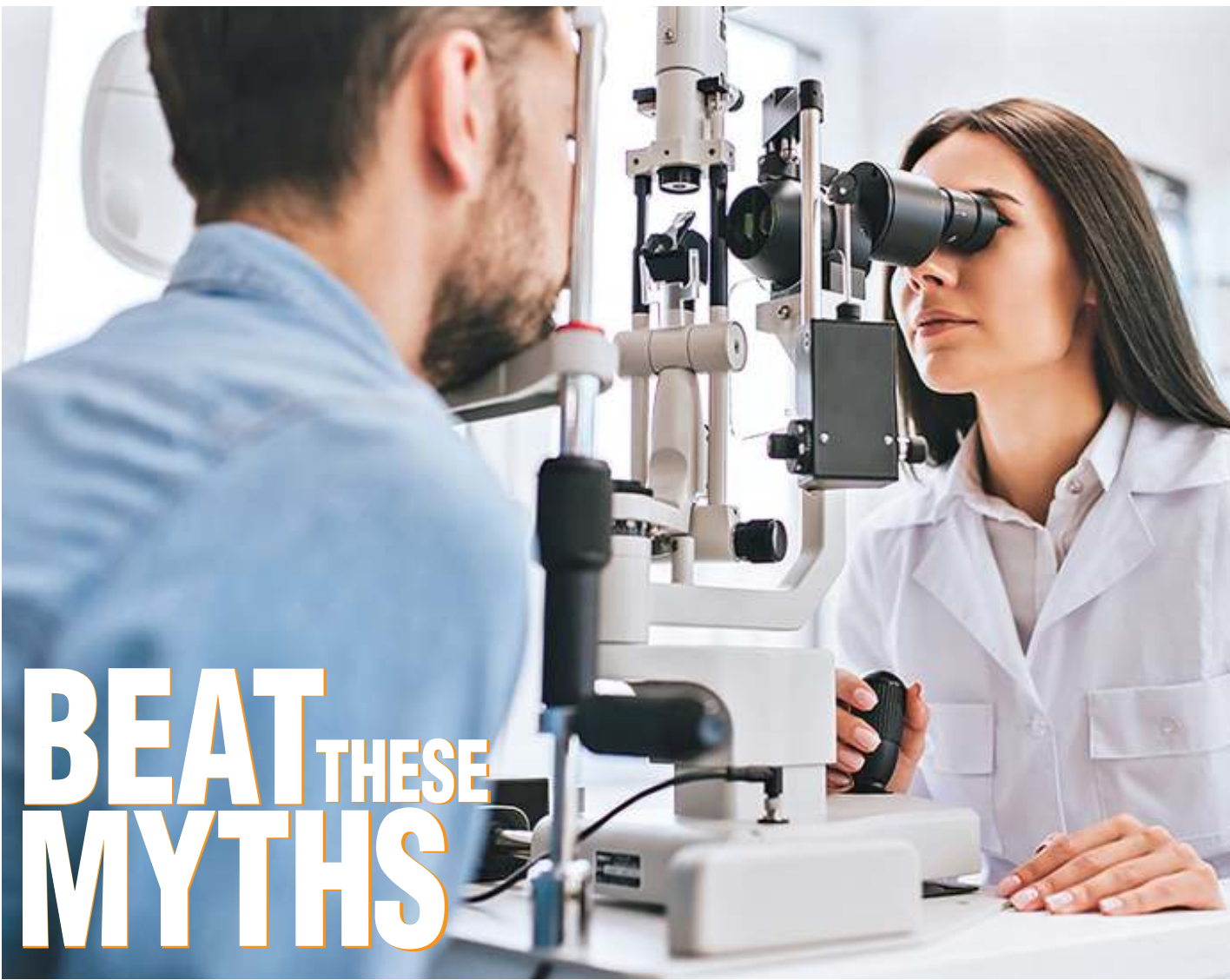
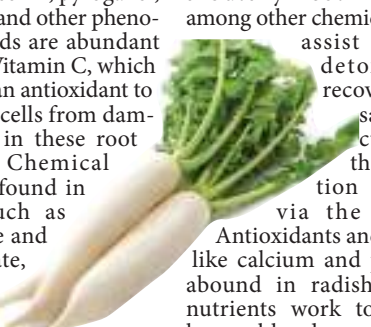
Do any form of exercise like walking, jogging or hitting the gym for a minimum of 30 minutes, five days a week to create strong, healthy lungs. However, if you have pre-existing breathing problems, make sure to talk to your concerned healthcare professional. In these cases specific exercises are required to relieve breathlessness.

**Prevent infections**  
As we age, any lung infection can be dangerous. It is a common cause of death in elderly. There are certain steps which can be taken to avoid serious lung infection. Keep your hands clean by washing them regularly with soap and avoid touching your face. Avoid crowded places, take appropriate precautions in social gatherings and stay away from sick people. Staying hydrated when sick helps your lungs to work better. It is important to visit a healthcare professional as soon as possible, in case one has fever, Chest pain and phlegm.

**Get vaccinated**  
All individuals with age more than 65 years should receive a pneumococcal vaccine, people who have other comorbidities can take it earlier. Everyone with a pre-existing lung condition or has a high risk of developing complicated flu should receive flu shot every year.

## WARMFOOD

**RADISH:** Antioxidants including catechin, pyrogallol, vanillic acid, and other phenolic compounds are abundant in radishes. Vitamin C, which functions as an antioxidant to protect your cells from damage, is high in these root vegetables. Chemical compounds found in radishes, such as glucosinolate and isothiocyanate, can help blood carbinol and 4-methylthio-3-butenyl-isothiocyanate, among other chemicals, which assist the liver to detoxify and recover. These same molecules aid in the elimination of toxins via the kidneys. Antioxidants and minerals like calcium and potassium abound in radishes. These nutrients work together to lower blood pressure and lower the risk of heart diseases.



## BEAT THESE MYTHS

According to the World Health Organisation, glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world. There are plenty of misconceptions surrounding the disease that can leave patients misinformed, says DR SHEFALI PARIKH

In India, glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible blindness with nearly 12 million people affected and nearly 1.2 million people blind from the disease. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world. Glaucoma can affect people of every age however, the risk of the disease increases with age. Glaucoma happens to be a common eye condition that affects the optic nerves of the eyes. These optic nerves are responsible for carrying information from the eye to the brain to get it processed. Thus, when the optic nerves get damaged, it leads to vision loss, and in severe cases, irreversible vision impairment. Unfortunately, there are plenty of misconceptions surrounding the disease that can leave patients misinformed.

### 5 of the most common glaucoma myths

#### Glaucoma only affects the elderly

While it is certainly true that people above the age of 60 have greater chances of developing glaucoma as compared to people in their 40s, it can also affect people aged 20-50 as well as infants. For instance, some babies can have glaucoma by birth (called congenital glaucoma), while other children have other eye diseases that lead to secondary glaucoma.

The same is true for adults—one can have an eye condition, for example, uveitis, diabetes which results in secondary glaucoma.

Other types of glaucoma can often manifest in patients between ages 20 and 50 like pigmentary glaucoma.

#### Symptoms are visible during the early onset of glaucoma

Open-angle glaucoma, which is the most common form of glaucoma, doesn't exhibit any signs or symptoms until the later stages when vision loss sets in. Even though people may think that the increased eye pressure causes pain, it doesn't. Also, as peripheral vision is generally first compromised very slowly, one may not recognize vision loss until the vision has become significantly impaired. The only way to detect glaucoma is to undergo a comprehensive eye exam.

#### Glaucoma can't be prevented

Routine and regular eye exams can certainly aid in the prevention of glaucoma related blindness. While it is true that vision loss due to glaucoma can't be reversed, having regular eye exams by an ophthalmologist that include measurements of the eye pressure can certainly go a long way in preventing blindness due to disease. According to the Glaucoma Experts, it is important to have an exam every two years beginning at age 40 if there are no glaucoma risk factors, and every one year if one is at high risk or over 65.

#### Glaucoma testing can be painful

Testing for glaucoma is not at all painful. There are different



Dr. Shefali Parikh,  
Glaucoma Specialist at  
Shreeji Eye Clinic, Andheri,  
Mumbai

**Glaucoma happens to be a common eye condition that affects the optic nerves of the eyes. These optic nerves are responsible for carrying information from the eye to the brain to get it processed**

types of tests for glaucoma. There's also a test known as Goldman applanation tonometry where patients receive a painless eye drop in each eye. The ophthalmologist then directs a blue light onto each eye and looks into an instrument that precisely measures intraocular pressure. This test is also quick and painless. Angle assessment with lenses called gonioscopes is very important to differentiate between two most common glaucoma prevalent in Indian scenarios. Other tests include testing of visual field with perimeter, and scanning of the optic nerve with imaging technology.

#### Glaucoma is inherited

Certain types of glaucoma are hereditary, and a family history of glaucoma is a risk factor no doubt. But there are many glaucoma patients who are the only ones in their families who are diagnosed with the disease.

It is also possible that there does not appear to be a strong family history because not every family member has been appropriately examined. Thus, it is important that patients with glaucoma should share their diagnosis with their family members and ask them to have a dilated eye examination.

Stop believing in the myths surrounding glaucoma and work with your eye doctor to preserve and protect your eye health. Glaucoma cannot be cured but definitely the blindness due to glaucoma can be prevented if early diagnosis.

## Make healthy resolutions



With the excitement of the holiday season over, now is the time for us to prioritise a healthy beauty

regimen. DR SACHIN PAWAR shares six resolutions for healthy hair and skin

#### Build a good sleep habit

The New year is the perfect time to resolve to develop proper sleep hygiene. Not only does it keep you well rested, getting a good night of sleep is beneficial for both your hair and skin. As you sleep, your body boosts blood flow to the skin, preventing it from sagging and giving a healthy glow. Lack of sleep can also cause hair loss, breakage, damage, and affects hair growth. 7 to 9 hours of sleep every day can help you develop a radiant complexion.

#### Vitamin E intake is Vital

Traditionally, festive seasons especially New Year's Eve is all about getting decked up and feasting. Well, make-up may give you the glam look, but there are chances that your skin may end up looking dull if you have not maintained a balanced and healthy diet. For a solution that works from the inside to renew your look on the outside, include a daily dose of Vitamin E. Though Vitamin E is widely available in everyday foods, you can also strengthen the cellular health of your skin and hair by adding Vitamin E supplements like Evion® Forte to your daily routine. The natural antioxidants work at the cellular level to repair, restore, and revive your cells, thus, protecting your skin from damage and supporting the microcirculation and oxygenation of the scalp. Its anti-inflammatory properties can protect your skin from the harsh effects of the sun.

#### Sun and Heat Safety

External stresses cause your body to produce free radicals that attack collagen, the protein that allows your skin to stay young and beautiful. This imbalance caused by free radicals is known as oxidative stress. It damages and weakens your skin cells, which leaves your skin looking tired and worn out. Having a skincare routine becomes even more important during this time. Likewise, hair damage—hair that is thin, brittle, dull, or flat—can result from many factors, including environmental factors like UV radiation and pollution. Make sure you prep your tresses with a good heat protectant. The key to having strong and glossy hair, perfect for your new year avatar is combining good hair care with healthy habits.

#### Hydrate and Nourish your body

The more hydrated you stay, the fewer wrinkles and improved complexion you'll see. Drinking enough water can help you combat a variety of skin issues and give you glowing skin. A hydrated body also results in hair growth as it reduces dryness in the scalp and promotes the growth of hair from the roots. Let's not forget the importance of nourishment to your body. A healthy body and mind require consuming a daily dose of nutrients, including vitamins and minerals. One of the easiest ways to ensure youthful skin and rejuvenated hair is by incorporating Vitamin E-rich foods into your diet.

The writer is MD Head—Medical & Technical affairs  
— India Cluster, Procter & Gamble Health Limited

## Get rid of joint pain this time

Low temperature exacerbates joint pain. Now that the weather is getting colder, it's more necessary to pay attention to your bones, says DR VIVEK MAHAJAN

The number of patients diagnosed with arthritis increases during the winter. It's defined as the swelling of one or more joints, with joint discomfort being the most common symptom, which often gets worse as you get older. The two most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

#### Knee Pain

Chronic knee pain is caused by a lack of ligament in the knee bone and bone wear. Knee discomfort is more common in adults over the age of 50. People who are overweight have a higher risk of developing this condition. It is an illness that will be passed down through the generations. Women are more likely to have this condition as compared to men.

#### Joints stiffness

In chilly conditions, muscle spasms are more prone to occur, resulting in greater joint discomfort and

stiffness. Cold weather decreases blood circulation in the fingers and toes, exacerbating arthritic discomfort. Low temperatures can cause the joint fluid to thicken, making the joints stiff and difficult to move. Vitamin D levels drop as a result of less sunlight throughout the winter, which can lead to brittle bones and joints.

#### Prevent arthritis pain

**Vitamin D:** Joint discomfort might worsen in the winter due to a lack of sunlight, which reduces the body's ability to synthesise vitamin D. It is therefore important to take adequate sunlight even during the winters. If you intend to take Vitamin D capsules, make sure to consult your doctor first.

Exercise on a regular basis: During the winter, people's fitness regimens tend to stall. This can not only cause you to gain weight, but it can also lead to other problems.



Dr. Vivek Mahajan  
Orthopedic and Joint  
Replacement Surgeon  
Indian Spinal Injuries Center,  
New Delhi

Consult your doctor before beginning a fitness programme to alleviate the pain of arthritis. Make it a point to exercise for at least 30-40 minutes every day. In addition, get a good night's sleep of around 8 hours per day.

Dress warmly: Dress appropriately with extra layers of clothing to keep yourself protected. Sitting on a

chilly floor is not recommended by doctors because it may aggravate the pain. Avoid taking the stairs as well, as it puts additional strain on your joints. Even if you're at home, don't walk around without warm socks. Woollen socks should always be worn to protect your feet. Use hot water to relieve arthritis pain.

**Healthy diet:** Try to eat more fruits and vegetables than you normally do throughout the year. Consume only fresh fruits and vegetables. Vitamin B12, found in eggs, yoghurt, and many types of fish, has been shown to help lower homocysteine levels. Homocysteine levels in the blood have been linked to an increased risk of developing cardiovascular complications.

Similarly, vitamin B6 may aid in the reduction of joint inflammation. Carrots, spinach, sweet potatoes, and bananas are just a few of the

many common vitamin B6-rich foods. If you're thinking about taking vitamins or supplements, talk to a doctor first because everyone's needs are different.

It is also critical to avoid alcohol and refined sugars while following a healthy diet. If these things are consumed in large quantities during the winter, it can aggravate the pain.

**Stay hydrated:** Water consumption decreases during the winter. This can cause issues for arthritis patients. Drinking enough water is critical for your body's proper functioning. Being adequately hydrated may help regulate your body temperature, aid digestion, and boost your immune system, among other things.

Furthermore, the extra walks to the bathroom as a result of drinking more water are an easy way to add a little more movement to your day.

## INBRIEF

First Closed Loop  
Artificial Pancreas  
Insulin Pump installed

India's first automatically adjustable, *The MiniMed™ 780G system* which is the world's first Advanced Hybrid Closed Loop (AHCL) system, was successfully delivered and fixed on a 7-year-old boy with type 1 Diabetes at Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, one of the healthcare groups in Asia devoted to the treatment of Diabetes and its complications. The patient recently diagnosed with type 1 Diabetes is the first one to get the advanced and automated insulin pump fixed in India. *Medtronic's MiniMed™ 780G* made its first ever launch in India, at the hands of Dr V Mohan, Chairman & Consultant Diabetologist, Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre.

Commenting on the first successful delivery of the device, Dr V Mohan said, "It's extremely difficult to manage blood sugar levels in children and teenagers with Type 1 diabetes because of their high activity levels, constantly fluctuating hormones and ongoing growth and development. The 7-year-old boy who was recently diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, was also struggling with blood sugar control with several high sugar and low sugar episodes. The device automatically adjusts and corrects insulin levels 24/7, every 5 minutes, as needed. It also anticipates insulin needs and adjusts insulin delivery, while also correcting highs automatically and protecting from lows."





Priyanka listens to issues put up by women from her village

Last year, the panchayat elections in Bihar witnessed an increase in the number of women contesting the elections. The voting for the panchayat election took place in 11 phases. While the first phase began on September 24, the last one was held on December 12. As per a report, five to 10 per cent more women than men participated in the panchayat elections in each phase and won. Against a total of 4,17,772 male candidates, 4,74,917 women contested in all the phases.

The Government of Bihar has reserved 50 per cent of the seats in the panchayat election for women to motivate them to enter politics. These provisions have helped in increasing women's participation in decision-making and strengthening women's empowerment. In the recent panchayat election in Bihar, women from different rural areas have ensured their participation through their candidature. Interestingly, women who have studied at prestigious colleges in the country and worked in multinational companies have also contested the elections.

Take the case of 31-year-old Dolly, who completed her MBA from Symbiosis International University in Pune and worked in several multinational companies before deciding to enter the fray in the recent panchayat elections. Not

## POLITICS OF GENDER

SAUMYA JYOTSNA delves into the effects of more women participating in the electoral process in Muzaffarpur, Bihar

only did she participate, but also won by receiving 2,600 votes in her favour and is currently the sarpanch in the Shadi Pur panchayat of Manpur block situated in the Gaya district of Bihar. "I started working after I passed my XII standard in 2008. I wanted to get back to my village and work for its development. With this vision in my mind, I finally left my job in 2018," said Dolly.

In 2014, she got married and has a four-year-old daughter. Her mother-in-law was the sarpanch of Shadi Pur panchayat for eight years but, unfortunately, died during her tenure in November 2018. "The death of my mother-in-law was a huge loss. An educated and responsible person was required to take her place and carry out the duties. This is when I decided to contest in 2018. With everyone's support, I won the election," she expressed. Ever since she has been working towards the development of the village and won the



Sarpanch Dolly with women from her village

panchayat election for the second time.

While talking about her initiatives, she said, "I want to establish a cottage industry in the village so that more women can get work and become financially strong. As women in this village take an active part in agricultural work, they will benefit from this initiative." On the other hand, talking about the challenges, Dolly informed that the biggest one in the village is domestic violence, which needs to be curbed. Although women in the village complain about it, they are afraid to take action. Over

the years, Dolly has been able to bring several positive changes to the village. She has also received the Aparajita Award for Women Empowerment in Excellence of Gram Kachhari by Dainik Jagran for establishing the first digitised village office in Bihar.

Similarly, Priyanka, from Bishanpur Gonahi panchayat in Sonbarsa block of Sitamarhi district in Bihar, is driven towards breaking stereotypes through taking part in politics. However, her journey was not easy. Coming from an average family, her parents did not want to spend on her education and preferred to save money for her dowry. Despite several hurdles, she managed to take tuition and get an education. Even though she had started getting proposals when Priyanka was young, she did not want to get married.

"I told my brother about the situation, who was studying in Delhi. He did not just stop the wedding but

also helped me complete my X standard. I became the first girl from my family to get a first division in the exams," Priyanka informs gladly.

In 2013, she came to Delhi with her brother, completed her XII and got admitted to Miranda House. Coming from a village with a low literacy rate and getting admission to a prestigious college in the country's capital is indicative of Priyanka's grit and spirit. She completed her education in Philosophy. During her course, she came to know about India's first MBA degree holder sarpanch, Chhavi Rajawat, which motivated Priyanka to become one herself.

"In 2017, I got an opportunity to participate in the Gramya Manthan programme — a 10-day rural immersion initiative — by the Youth Alliance of India. And in 2018, I was entrusted by the organisation with the responsibility of Nibada, Kharagpur, Badi Palia and Chhoti Palia villages in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur district, where I started a campaign named Sham Ki Pathshala for the children in the villages and did other developmental works," she informed.

Inspired by these works, she returned to her village in April 2020 and started working on awareness. Currently, there are four members in her team, who are running the Chetna Choupal programme under the Gram-Chetna-Andolan initiative. Under the programme, they visit different villages and inform people about social issues. She aims to become the sarpanch of her village and, therefore, participated in the recent panchayat elections. Despite her loss in the election, she did not lose her zeal to work towards developing her village.

Women in decision-making positions not only leads to increasing women's representation but also bridges the gender gap in political decision making. Given the right support and access to resources, these women can undertake outstanding work. And most importantly, society has to do away with conservative notions and discourage those who work relentlessly towards the greater good. As Priyanka puts it, "A woman has to struggle more than a man to get into politics because society wants to only see a woman making bread and this situation is more prevalent in rural areas."

—Charkha Features  
(The author has been a grassroots journalist for five years and is the winner of the UNFPA Laadli Media Award for Gender Sensitivity 2020 and 2021.)



## Change perspective

If we see the 21st century with a new outlook, we will be rewarded with a break from the past, says

RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI

It's been a couple of weeks since we entered a new year with fresh plans and renewed hopes. We have been reading and watching the intelligentsia sharing their views and visions of what the society in this year would be like. Generally, these talks revolve around the new inventions of science or about social and economic issues.

However important these inventions and issues may be, there is hardly any forum or platform where anyone ever offers ideas, ideology or visions which have such social, political, economic, administrative, cultural and health-related dimensions that represent almost a complete departure from what we know of what has been in the past 20 centuries. They only stretch their human imagination, linked as it is to what we see today and their visions or predictions are, more or less, a knitting-together of the latest researches and findings, projected by their fertile imagination into the future. What they say is not altogether novel nor do they give any scenes of a wonderland that will become a reality.

Similarly, newspapers, magazines and electronic media also give almost the same stuff with only little additions or changes in perceptions, observations or conclusions and they call some of these changes a 'breakthrough'. Perhaps, these are a breakthrough but what will be their overall effect, reflected in the emerging society is hardly discussed with any clarity, certainty and coherence. They just give bits and pieces of information which are disjointed and no one tells how these will fit in the jigsaw puzzle of the new society. They give only grains of information; no one gives an integrated and holistic view of what society in the coming years will be like. No effort has ever been made to synthesise the findings of all branches of knowledge to give mankind the multi-disciplinary sum-up or resume of the whole thing. Perhaps, no human being could do this because no one is well-versed in all the branches nor has anyone the requisite time and acumen.

Moreover, the total information provided by all kinds of research, done in all fields of knowledge, is so scant and sketchy that one cannot make out anything concrete about the 21st century, with any certainty. Also, there are many gaps and missing links in the information, so much so that the knowledge of these in future may overturn and invalidate the current beliefs. If we read the history of Philosophy, Physics, Astronomy, Geology, Biology or Psychology, to give a few examples, we will find that many theories in all the disciplines have been changing and some of them have been changing very frequently and



overnight. So, we cannot say that what we have learnt is accurate and final and will stay unchanged at least in our lifetime. What then can, we, human beings say about the 21st century when we do not know whether a nuclear world war will start or an environmental catastrophe will result in grave devastation of our flora, fauna and humankind or the population explosion and the expanding cities will cause havoc during our lifetime? Again, the so-called new information or discoveries have not yet even been delinked from the old and the obsolete and contradictory theories co-exist as there is no clinching proof of either or the paucity of time and effort to sift the grain from the chaff. For example, there is no universal agreement as to whether the mind or soul is an entity separate from the body or the mind is an epiphenomenon of the brain. The information we have is so inadequate that nothing can be said with certainty that is acceptable to all.

Further, the major and minor events that occurred from the 20th century till today are recorded in history but no human being knows their effects and after-effects thoroughly nor has anyone ever combined and coherently collated these to give a cogent view of what will happen as a cumulative result of these. No one can calculate these. We do not even know for sure whether we are sitting on an active volcano or that, soon, the gates of paradise would be flung open unto us to enter. More importantly, we do not know whether all these events have been part of a well-knit plan that has a meaning and a goal for all of us without a single exception. And, what is most important is that most of us haven't ever thought that there is a plan of retrieval that is being implemented and there is an incognito intervention of Supreme Almighty to impart new holistic knowledge, give a new paradigm and teach new ways of making spiritual efforts to usher a new era that is almost totally different from what we see today. So, let us look at the 21st century from that perspective. No one can neglect or postpone seeing the birth of this golden era in this light. Can we?

Protesters were walking back to their village post-rally when they turned violent. Within a flash of a second, one person began pelting stones and bricks in the demonstration sloganeering against the administration. Others joined him instantly and charged at the police. Crowds turn unruly and dangerous. What transforms peaceful protesters into violent agitators?

Rarely does a single demonstrator, even if provoked, becomes violent. However, crowds easily adopt violence. Why? According to social psychologists, mob mentality turns individuals into conformists. To fit in with the rest of the group, individuals, including law-abiding individuals, become irrational. Driven by the mob's mind they blindly follow others actions.

A single person tends to behave or act independently but that person, in a crowd, loses his inhibitions, defers blame, responsibility, accountability and/or judgment in a crowd. He assumes group identity ignoring his guiding inner voice. In the crowd, he does what he would otherwise term as unlawful.

Moreover, as humans have instinctive responses, their responses intensify by group influences. Such situations can become dangerous. The 'larger the group the greater the amplification of that crowd behaviour'. History and even present times have several examples of a mob killing

## Mob mentality impacts our culture

Osho sannyasin, MA SHASHIN, says an individual might be incapable of violence but a crowd has a different psyche

those who committed blasphemy or were accused of being witches.

Let's understand mob behaviour based on three major psychological theories. The Contagion theory, for example, is where one learns to smoke from a friend. It's nearly a magnetic influence as a non-smoker feels it's okay to smoke. According to the Convergence theory, people with common interests, motivation, and goals align, for example, college students or civil activists protesting against the administration. The Emergent-norm theory explains that mob behaviour results in collective action. People under strain assume a new norm and are stimulated to act both anti-socially and against their rationale. There are many examples of communal riots in our history.

Floyd Henry Allport, the father of experimental social psychology, holds this view: "The origin of crowd response is not by crowd members and the stimulus situation but it is the prepotent trend of the individual himself. The trend escalates with crowd stimulus.

While there can be many

factors leading to unlawful mob behaviour, Jung and Martin explain the cause for crowd behaviour. They say that 'every individual possesses the innate ability for mob behaviour'. The ability is adjusted with socialisation by social conditioning and social training. However, in a crowd situation, humans are possessed by the primitive, unconscious impulses that abort social conditioning and training. So, do humans become more powerful in crowds and give expression to their suppressions? Or are we humans responsible for our conduct regardless of the predisposition to adopt mob mentality for conforming to groups?

Consider this scenario to understand mob mentality. All the villagers draw water from a well. Until one day, the king and his Minister see that all those who drank water from the well have become insane. In a few days, all of them turn mad and they say that the king and the minister are mad. Later, these two confer and later decide that it's best for them to also drink water from the well if they



want to survive in the village.

Further, Jung and Martin say that our suppressions and repressions lead to such behaviour. What is the solution?

Osho says: "When you are angry with someone and you throw your anger at him, you are creating a chain reaction. Now he too will be angry. This may continue for the rest of your lives and you will go on being enemies.

How can you end it? There is only one possibility. You can end it only in meditation, nowhere else, because in meditation you are not angry with someone: you are simply angry."

This difference is basic. You are not angry with someone. You are simply angry into the cosmos. You are not hateful towards anyone. If hate comes, you are simply hateful and the

hate is thrown out. In meditation, emotions are not addressed. They are unaddressed. They move into the cosmos, and the cosmos purifies everything.

It is just like a dirty river falling into the ocean: the ocean will purify it... In meditation, you are throwing yourself into the cosmos to be purified. All the energy that you throw is purified in the cosmos. The cosmos is so vast and so great an ocean, you cannot make it dirty. In meditation, we are not related to persons. In meditation, we are related directly to the cosmos."

"To grow one's own insight, one needs to be deeply meditative, very alert and aware. The crowd lives a kind of sleepy, unconscious life; it makes no effort at awareness; it lives in a mechanical, robot-like."

Osho says: Why do people feel so happy in a crowd? Why does happiness in a crowd become so infectious? Because in a group they fall, they become unconscious. They lose their individuality. Then they are happy, then there is no worry, then there is no responsibility... Beware of mobocracy and be alert.

It would be appropriate to end this in Osho's words: "A group can have a mind — not a soul."

“

The wound is the place where the light enters you.

— Rumi

”

### BACTERIAL BIOFUELS COST REDUCED

Researchers from the University of Kent's School of Biosciences have designed and built equipment that can be used to investigate bacterial biofuel production at a fraction of the cost of commercial systems. This technology was then used to demonstrate that bacterial genetic engineering could be used to enhance biofuel production.



Commercial equipment used to study biofuel-producing bacteria can be prohibitively expensive, which prompted the team to build their own bioreactors that are accessible to most research laboratories. The researchers then used this equipment to verify that one of their genetically engineered variants of *Clostridium* bacteria could produce the biofuel butanol more rapidly.

These research findings, published in the journals *Access Microbiology* and *Microbial Biotechnology*, reveal that a change to a single gene can result in remarkable changes to how sugars are converted to biofuel products.

### SCIENCE RESEARCH PAPERS SIMPLIFIED

Science research papers are notoriously difficult for an average person to comprehend without drifting away, but an artificial intelligence project aims to change that by summarising the gist in merely a few sentences that are easy enough for a second grader to understand.

A new technology has lowered the bar to the comprehension level of students in second grade. Say hello to t|d|r papers, a research paper summarising AI that describes its motto as "science abstracts a second grader can understand."

At first, the project sounds too ambitious because one can't expect even a season expert, let alone an AI, to explain what a niche quantum tunneling breakthrough is all about to a school-going kid. But it appears that the scientific research community is quite enamoured by the idea.



t|d|r papers

### DON'T MISS IMPORTANT MESSAGES

A new patent application from Apple reveals that future AirPods could let users switch off Active Noise Cancellation (ANC) with just a code word. AirPods Pro and AirPods Max come with Active Noise Cancellation to help users filter out ambient noise for a disruption-free audio experience. However, ANC blocks out pretty much all sounds indiscriminately, which means users sometimes miss out on important messages from their friends and family, something the company is trying to address with its new patent.

Apple's new patent describes the option to use designated code words to switch off noise cancellation on AirPods. Called 'Interrupt for noise-cancelling audio devices,' the new feature would ensure that users get to enjoy the benefits of noise cancellation without worrying that they will miss out on an important message from their family or friends. As part of the plan, the patent proposes that the noise-cancelling headphones or earbuds will scan externally-generated sounds to detect whether somebody is speaking the code-word.



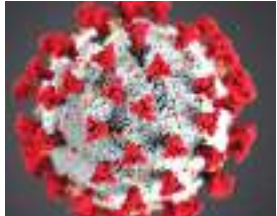
### OCEAN SEA-SALT TO PREVENT WARMING

In an opinion article published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, a team of scientists led by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and The Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES) researchers outline a framework for assessing the viability of a method for reflecting sunlight called marine cloud brightening, or MCB. The proposed method would use ocean sea-salt particles to increase the reflectivity of low-lying clouds over certain ocean regions. This is one of a number of proposed methods under consideration as a temporary measure to limit warming. Climate scientists agree that the most important steps that can be taken to avoid the worst impacts of climate change are to decarbonise the economy, and preserve and restore natural ecosystems that absorb carbon.



### NEW COVID DRUG WITHOUT SIDE-EFFECTS

Scientists in the Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) in Lucknow are trying to develop another drug for Covid treatment without any side-effects. A team led by chief scientist Ravi Shankar, is working on two combinations to provide the safest medication to coronavirus patients. "Experts say that a combination of antivirals with different mechanisms can be more effective to counter the viral pandemic. We are working on two combinations — Umifenovir with Molnupiravir (an antiviral) and Umifenovir with Niclosamide (anti-parasitic)," he said. Molnupiravir showed reduced hospitalisation during clinical trials, its biggest drawback are the side-effects, he added. "Now, we are trying to keep a low dosage of Molnupiravir in its combination with Umifenovir which may weed out the side-effects," said the chief





MONEY MATTERS

## HDFC Capital achieves initial close of US\$ 1.8-billion fund for affordable housing

HDFC Capital, a wholly-owned subsidiary of HDFC Ltd, has achieved the initial close of its third fund of USD 1.88 billion (about Rs 13,500 cr) focused on affordable housing. HDFC Capital's target is to finance the development of one million affordable homes in India through a combination of innovative financing, partnerships and technology, whilst focusing on sustainability, the company said in a statement. In order to achieve this objective, the company is in active discussions with leading global investors to raise additional funds to be invested in affordable housing in India. The HDFC Capital Affordable Real Estate Fund-3 (H-CARE-3) is one of the largest funds raised to invest in the residential real estate sector in India with investors committing in excess of USD 1.22 billion towards the first close. It combined with potential reinvestments by the fund creates an estimated total fund corpus of USD 1.88 billion, it said.



## Will continue to see large global markets open more offshoring opportunities: Infosys

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed demand and clients understand that every work does not have to be done onsite, which is expected to open a lot more offshoring opportunities from large global markets going forward, according to a top Infosys' executive. The Bengaluru-based company, which logged a 23 per cent jump in its December 2021 quarter revenue, also said its portfolio of services and capabilities, especially on cloud and digital, are resonating well with clients and it sees a good pipeline for that. "In the long run, if you see, COVID-19, while it had a huge impact on demand, the entire ability for the supply side to deliver in a remote environment really will shine up, and that has opened up the eyes of many of our clients that every work does not have to be done onsite. "It can be done in a near-shore location, it can be done offshore," Infosys Chief Financial Officer Nilanjan Roy said during an analyst call.



## NAEC seeks govt intervention in containing high cost of cotton yarn, fabrics to boost

The Noida Apparel Export Cluster (NAEC) on Sunday sought immediate intervention of the government in containing high cost of cotton yarn and fabrics, saying rising prices are impacting exporters. NAEC president Lalit Thukral suggested control in cotton exports, removal of 10 per cent cotton import duty, and development of a mechanism to regulate the prices of cotton and other raw materials to support the sector. "Apparel industry is facing a severe problem of high cost of cotton yarn and fabrics. During the last couple of months the cotton prices have been hiked up to 80 per cent. The prices of the cotton per candy of 335 kg went to Rs 74,000 from Rs 37,000. In apparel making, 75 per cent of raw material used is cotton," he said.



# Market selloff: Mcap of top-10 most valued companies erodes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The top-10 most valued companies suffered a combined erosion of Rs 2.53 lakh crore in market valuation last week, as the domestic equity benchmarks witnessed heavy selling in line with the global market rout.

Benchmark indices witnessed nearly a 4 per cent cut last week as FPIs booked profits across large-caps and select mid-caps. On a weekly basis, the Sensex lost 2,185.85 points or 3.57 per cent, while the Nifty slumped 638.60 points or 3.49 per cent.

Mirroring the lacklustre trend in the broader market, the combined market capital-



isation (m-cap) of the country's top-10 firms eroded by Rs 2,53,394.63 crore during last week. Corporate major Reliance Industries' m-cap fell

by Rs 40,974.25 crore to Rs 16,76,291.69 crore. IT bellwethers - TCS and Infosys Technologies - together lost Rs 1,09,498.10 crore

from their cumulative market cap. The m-cap of TCS stood at Rs 14,18,530.72 crore, while that of Infosys was at Rs 7,51,144.40 crore.

Country's top lenders HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and SBI saw a cumulative erosion of Rs 29,239.04 crore in their market capitalisation.

HDFC Bank's valuation dipped by Rs 13,563.15 crore to Rs 8,42,876.13 crore.

The m-cap of State Bank of India (SBI) tanked by Rs 4,863.91 crore to Rs 4,48,729.47 crore and that of ICICI Bank slumped by Rs 10,811.98 crore to reach Rs 5,58,699.39 crore.

The valuation of Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) tanked by

Rs 9,938.77 crore to Rs 5,45,622.08 crore and that of Bajaj Finance declined by Rs 27,653.67 crore to Rs 4,45,033.13 crore.

HDFC's valuation slipped by Rs 22,003.75 crore to Rs 4,69,422.38 crore.

Telecom major Bharti airtel also witnessed a dip of Rs 14,087.05 crore from its market valuation which stood at Rs 3,81,723.36 crore.

In the ranking of top-10 firms, Reliance Industries was leading the chart, followed by Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, Infosys, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, HDFC, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance and Bharti Airtel.

## India Inc staring at 'integrity crisis', top management ought to act: Survey

PNS ■ MUMBAI

India Inc is staring at an "integrity crisis" in the second year of the pandemic, a survey done by a consultancy firm has revealed.

The global survey conducted by the consultancy firm EY, which saw executives from 100 companies, including chief executives, board members and also mid-management personnel participate, has found concerning details like 59 per cent of the respondents feeling there are executives who would not mind compromising on integrity for short-term gains. Over half of the Indian participants in the survey also said that they did not report a misconduct, which is much higher than the 30 per cent average globally, the survey said. In what can impact the ability to curtail further



frauds, more than a third (39 per cent) of the respondents expressed apprehension about the whistle-blowing channels, saying the concerns raised may not be acted upon.

"It is very important for organisations to guard against risks and the tone has to be set from the top," Arpinder Singh, the India leader for the firm's

forensic and integrity services vertical, told PTI.

He pointed to another finding, wherein 33 per cent of the respondents reported that their own organization has experienced "significant fraud" in the aftermath of the pandemic, and added that India ranks second among 54 countries surveyed on this count.

## CII for additional 1 pc CSR levy in Budget to provide Covid vaccine booster shots

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body CII has suggested the government include an additional 1 per cent corporate social responsibility levy apart from the mandatory 2 per cent for one year in the upcoming Budget to encourage corporates to spend on providing Covid vaccine booster shots.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has also urged state governments to lift the pandemic-induced restrictions on economic activity, arguing that the occupancy rate of hospital beds due to the Omicron variant of Covid is well within the manageable level.

"CII suggests that 1 per cent of mandated CSR funds be earmarked for vaccination. We also recommend that an additional 1 per cent be added to CSR requirements in the Budget, for a specified period of 12 months, so that boosters



can be made available to all age-groups," CII President T V Narendran said.

The chamber said it expects Budget 2022-23 to focus on measures for strengthening economic recovery.

CII requested that the government should encourage industry to deploy CSR funding towards providing precautionary shots to the community. Further, the industry is

ready to contribute an additional 1 per cent under the CSR norms to the national vaccination mission, apart from the mandated 2 per cent, and this can be part of the Budget for a period of 12 months only, suggested CII.

"Hospitalisation rates in the present wave stand at manageable levels and therefore, industry feels that Covid-related restrictions can be removed to enable the robust

recovery process to continue," it stated.

In line with the Prime Minister's guidance to state governments to undertake restrictions where required at a localised level, CII has written to state chief ministers to consider curbs at micro containment zones only when hospitalization rates are over 75 per cent, Narendran shared.

With a lower level of hospitalisations seen in the Omicron variant, it is possible to maintain normal economic activities and protect lives and livelihoods, he added.

The CII President emphasised that the investments under National Infrastructure Pipeline and Gati Shakti programme must be fast-tracked and it is expected that the Budget would provide for this.

CII has also written to state chief ministers with suggestions regarding the level of curbs on markets and factories.

## Tata Motors expects growth momentum to continue in 2022

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors expects its growth momentum to continue this year as well as anticipates supply side issues to improve, helping it roll out more units to cater to the enhanced demand, as per a top company official.

The Mumbai-based automaker, which sells models like Punch, Nexon and Harrier, saw its total passenger vehicle dispatches to dealerships rise by 44 per cent to 99,002 units in third quarter (October-December 2021) as compared with 68,806 units in the same period of the previous year.

Last month, it reported a 50 per cent jump in total passenger vehicle sales to 35,299 units as compared with 23,545 units in December 2020.

"We believe so, because every model in our portfolio, we have now seven products and each model has contributed to this growth," Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles



Managing Director Shailesh Chandra told PTI in an interaction. He was replying to a query if the company is confident about sustaining its growth momentum in 2022 as well after ending the last year on a high. "There have been supply side issues which have not allowed us to fully unleash the demand potential that we have for our range of cars. And therefore, I'm confident that we would continue to grow as well (when) the supply side situation improves," Chandra noted. He said the company is

coming with more options in the mass segment in order to expand its customer base. The company's debut in the entry-level SUV segment with Punch last year is one fine example of bringing in models in growing segments.

"We will keep introducing new models in the new growth areas. We have been doing that over the last two years and we are continuing to do that as you would have seen that our intensity of launches was possibly one of the best in the industry," Chandra added.

## Syngene to carry growth momentum to next fiscal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Having raised its revenue growth guidance for 2021-22 to "high teens" on the back of robust performance, integrated research, development and manufacturing services firm Syngene International Ltd is looking forward to carry the momentum into the next fiscal, its Managing Director and CEO Jonathan Hunt said. The company, which serves global pharmaceutical, biotechnology, nutrition, animal health, consumer goods and specialty chemical sectors, has witnessed its discovery services performing "particularly well this fiscal" and expects development and manufacturing services "to see a bit of a pick-up" by the end of this fiscal and into next year.

## Mobikwik expects to double revenue this fiscal, stays cautious on IPO launch

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IPO-bound fintech firm Mobikwik is expecting to close the current financial year with 100 per cent revenue growth, a top company official said.

Mobikwik chairperson and chief operating officer Upasana Taku told PTI that the company's initial public offer (IPO) is a monumental opportunity for the company and will not like to hit the market when it is behaving erratically but wait for the market condition to stabilise.



The company, which posted a narrowing of loss to Rs 111.3 crore and revenue of Rs 302.25

crore in the financial year 2021, expects to double the revenue by the end of current financial year.

Talking about the path to profitability of the company, Taku did not mention any definite timeline but said that if the company is able to increase revenue and keep control on the cost then losses can be covered over in a few quarters. "In just two quarters we have already achieved the revenue number of last year. Any investor can calculate what will be business performance for the full year.

## MP wants FM to fix special interest rates for sr citizens

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi has urged Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to provide a special interest rate on bank fixed deposits for senior citizens and remove the cap on investments in postal savings scheme and public provident fund. In a letter to Sitharaman, Chaturvedi said lower interest rates on savings schemes have left senior citizens with lower retirement funds and put a severe strain on their pockets, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Global trends, quarterly earnings major drivers for equity market this week: Analysts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets will look for directions from global trends, ongoing quarterly earnings and investment patterns of foreign institutional investors (FIIs) in a holiday-shortened week ahead and may encounter volatility amid the scheduled monthly derivatives expiry, according to analysts.

Equity markets will remain closed on Wednesday on account of 'Republic Day'. "This week is a holiday-



shortened one and it's going to be critical due to the list of events and data that are lined

up. First, markets will react to the earnings of two index heavyweights — Reliance

Industries and ICICI Bank," said Ajit Mishra, vice-president (research) of Religare Broking.

Mishra added that currently, the uncertainty around the quantum of a rate hike by the US Federal Reserve is spooking markets the world over and participants expect clarity in the scheduled FOMC (Federal Open Market Committee) meeting outcome on January 26. "Amid all, the monthly expiry of January month derivatives contract would keep traders on their toes," he said.

## Devas shareholders to continue seizing Indian assets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Unfazed by the Supreme Court upholding winding up of the company, shareholders of Devas Multimedia will continue to seek seizure of Indian government assets abroad to collect USD 1.2 billion the firm has been awarded by arbitration tribunals for cancellation of a satellite deal but are open for talks to settle the issue, their counsel said.

"The decision by the Supreme Court does not change anything. The Modi government and the Indian courts cannot rewrite the facts. Their flimsy allegations of fraud will never stand up in



courts outside of India," said Matthew D McGill, partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, and lead counsel for several Devas' shareholders. "A better

approach for the Modi government would be to return to the negotiating table, and continue with settlement talks."

Devas shareholders are pursuing

Indian assets abroad to recover the awards and have got a French court order for freezing Indian properties in Paris and got partial rights over funds maintained by India funds in Canada.

"We have already entered liens or obtained seizure and garnishment orders on tens of millions of dollars in Indian state assets," a spokesperson for Devas Multimedia said. "We will continue to identify and seize state assets wherever we find them until India returns in good faith to the negotiating table."

Besides securing a freeze on a Paris property of the Indian government, they have

got a Canadian court order for seizure of about USD 23 million that Air India had with IATA, the spokesperson said.

Last week, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that the government will use the Supreme Court ruling calling the 2005 Antrix-Devas agreement a fraud to counter seizure of its properties overseas. "The Modi government's strategy is not rocket science. They will use the decision of the Supreme Court to uphold the NCLT liquidation order to attack Devas, around the globe, however, we're ready. Courts around the world will see through these sham proceedings," the spokesperson said.

## NCLAT directs NCLT to decide over SREI's plea against rights issue of Trinity Alternative Investment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has asked the Kolkata bench of NCLT to decide over the plea of SREI Infrastructure Finance against the rights issue of its subsidiary Trinity Alternative Investment Managers.

SREI Infrastructure Finance Ltd (SIFL), which owns 51 per cent equity in the fund management firm Trinity Alternative Investment Managers Ltd, is anticipating dilution of its shareholding in the subsidiary after its rights issue. The remaining 49 per cent shareholding is owned by



Payaash Capital Singapore Pte Ltd. A two-member NCLAT bench, while disposing of SREI Infrastructure Finance Ltd (SIFL) petition observed that the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has ordered a status quo and is yet to pass

any order over the plea filed by the non-banking financial company. The appellate tribunal has directed NCLT to take up the matter on February 18, 2022, as scheduled, without any further adjournments and deal with all issues.



## Dharma's new boy configuring his own constellations

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Welcome Dharma's new baby, no it's not us who's saying this. Well, it was Karan Johar bidding Dhairya Karwa a warm welcome into this cut-throat industry. But why is this Dehradun kid making headlines? Well, it is because of his OTT feature film *Gehraiyaan* alongside Deepika Padukone. And with whom is Deepika in a relationship in the film? Dhairya's character will be the one! Yes, we understand that our readers are wondering where he's been all this time, and why he wasn't revealed sooner when the *Gehraiyaan* promotions started. The performer showed himself to be the source of all thinking, removing the whys and hows. From the trailer's premiere, we learned that the filmmakers were planning his big surprise! Snatching the big launch by Dharma Productions, then starring opposite a big-hearted star like Deepika Padukone; it just doesn't end there, Deepika ends up calling him an older brother — Dhairya Karwa's stars seem to really align and he seconds our opinion on it. In this fun interview, the forthcoming star begins the conversation on a grateful note, and says, "I am not here attempting to define acting but build on the big opportunity that has been given to me by Karan Johar. Not everyone is lucky enough to be launched by a reputed production house of this country — it's been here since forever and etched its name in the filmography history."

During the virtual trailer launch, the film's co-producer Karan Johar revealed that Dhairya had lied about his height in order to get the role. After this surprising fact that Dhairya didn't see it coming, he couldn't stop laughing with us. He clears it out, "While I was auditioning for the role, I didn't have any idea that I'd be paired opposite the prima donna, Deepika Padukone. She's a tall-heightened woman herself so myself being 6'4" wouldn't have mattered then, I would have told the truth. But, when Karan heard this, he wasn't angry with me and instead burst into laughter. The joke was with Shakun Batra actually — during the script narration, I was slouching before him on the chair to hide my height. I am clarifying it here, if Shakun's going to read this interview, he'll know it now."

*Gehraiyaan* deals with the concept of emotional infidelity but the actor elucidates that they aren't propagating it, they are just showing the characteristics of relationships that happen but none talks about! Shedding light on it, he shares, "We aren't suggesting our audiences to cheat on their partners, just to clarify for the record. It's an observation of modern, adult relationships being shown through

*Gehraiyaan*. We have always seen love and relationships from a very conventional way, through *Gehraiyaan*, we are asking our spectators to not judge anyone in a relationship. Everyone will identify with it, infidelity is prevalent in society and we must talk about it."

Prepared to deal with any criticism that comes his way as a new-comer, Dhairya knows how to pass it on with a pinch of sass! He further reflects, "My character or the movie's theme is not going to normalise emotional infidelity in relationships, especially, through intimacy. Honestly, the plot couldn't have

for it. He shares details, "I was present at the wrap party of 83, people were clicking snap-

*Gehraiyaan* is an observation of modern, adult relationships. We have always seen love and relationships from a very conventional way. We are asking our spectators to not judge anyone in a relationship. Everyone will identify with it, infidelity is prevalent in society and we must talk about it.

moved ahead without showing the bits and pieces of physical intimacy. Contrary to that, our director didn't forget to touch upon the trembling notes of emotional intimacy. For me, intimacy is just not being physically intimate, emotional intimacy should be the foundation of any solid relationship. To help us lead the way, an intimacy coordinator was hired by Shakun! When you get to watch the intimate scenes in the movie, you'll notice how it is dealt with so much sensitivity, care and sophistication. None can call it a vulgar scene because it's a fact, that it isn't there for shop value in the movie but because it's integral to the plot. We aren't going against the norms, it's something already so widespread in society." Moving ahead in the interview, it was categorical for us to ask Dhairya about the camaraderie he developed with Deepika Padukone on sets and he couldn't stop thanking his stars

shots with Deepika. I was standing at a distance and just alluring her beauty. After a moment, not knowing what got into me, I walked up to her and began a conversation with Deepika. Amid conversation, I said that Deepika I am holding myself from clicking snaps with you because I am gearing up to do a movie with you and she was startled! As you mentioned rightfully, my stars were so aligned that I really got a film opposite her in no time. When she met me after four months, she asked me quite clearly that Dhairya did you know that *Gehraiyaan* was being made earlier and I nodded into a no. Universe was listening to me I guess! I just didn't land up in the same film as Deepika, but also starred opposite her — it's a dream set-up."

Dhairya has been signed by one of the most reputed production houses in the fraternity, he stated that they have taken a chance on him and then he's being

paired opposite the top star in movie business — he thinks he is on a roll and illuminates that he'll prove his mettle. Divulging into more on the off-set memories, the actor discloses that all the four primary actors from *Gehraiyaan* were spending a gala time in Goa getting to know each other. He adds, "From doing yoga together to having our meals at the same table — Shakun envisioned that camaraderie between us. Deepika and I have become friends for life now. It's not us, it's really her big-hearted aura that comforted me at all times despite never knowing her. She was so sweet! It's not just me, Ananya and Siddhant had the same perspective to say about her."

With a hint of love triangle, infidelity, chemistry and passion, the upcoming movie will take viewers on a whirlwind of romance and one can't miss the new hottie on the block, that is Dhairya Karwa for you!

## Soha Ali Khan shares skincare tips she learnt from her mother

Growing up, we always look up to our mothers, and try to emulate everything they do. Mothers play several important roles in our lives — a guide, mentor, teacher, friend, and this multifaceted relationship and bond grows along the way. Soha Ali Khan and her mother are a perfect example of that bond. As someone who never fails to give us goals, be it easy nuskahs or family recipes, read on as Soha shares exclusively with *The Pioneer* skincare tips that she has imbibed from her mother, the graceful Sharmila Tagore.

Healthy skin is a direct outcome of what we eat. Our skin's health relies on food intake and maintaining a healthy diet helps the skin in many ways. "Consuming food that is rich in vital nutrients like proteins, vitamins, minerals, good fats, carbohydrates, surely helps, and growing up one constant food item that was always a part of my brother and my daily diet was Almonds. A lot of people in India already believe in the memory-led benefits of regular almond consumption, and that's why they are popular across households. But, I remember mom used to say that almonds have several benefits and regular consumption can also aid in better skin health. This is something that has always stayed with me, and I made sure to include a handful of almonds to my snacking routine every day," shares Soha.

"It's important to recognise almonds as a whole food with multiple nutrient components including alpha-tocopherol (vitamin E) and good unsaturated fats. Almonds are high in alpha-tocopherol, which has antioxidant functions, and may be partially responsible for the effects that we see in both wrinkles and skin tone in post-menopausal women," says she in reference to a recent study by

Raja Sivamani.

Moisturise: There are so many ingredients in our kitchen that can be used to create simple concoctions that can be applied on the skin! "My mum always taught me the importance and benefits of using home remedies for the skin. The first thing is to moisturise your skin daily as our skin faces a host of aggressors and is exposed to the rays of sunlight, so it's necessary to nourish your skin and pamper it from time-to-time. I remember having face-masks days where we would try different face packs, sometimes with honey or haldi. My mother insisted that I apply moisturiser every day. Incorporating this habit into my daily routine in my early 20s was the best decision I (well, my mom) made," says Soha.

Let your skin breathe: We often over-layer the skin and that causes more harm than good. Soha suggests a minimalist way of keeping the skin healthy and happy.

"Being an artist I often have to wear makeup, and spend a lot of my day in front of the camera and under artificial light. This can lead to a rise in skin irritation and skin inflammation, which is why I use sunscreen and a little kajal while working from home. Our skin needs to breathe and caking it with too many products may cause skin breakouts and acne. Lastly, wash your face thoroughly with a light face wash followed by light dabs of rose water for a refreshed feel," concludes the actress with grace.



Back to working from home? Here are some must-have home essentials

Just when we thought life was getting back to normal, the third wave took over the country and we're back to the work from home era where everyone is once again juggling home and work. Not sure how long this will continue so it's best to figure out ways to make your work-from-home life a wee-bit better! Here are five home essentials that can help you improve your work from home experience.

### Dishwasher

While the eat-sleep-work-repeat schedule continues, one will have to face the entire day's dishes in the kitchen sink at the end of the day. Work may take up a large chunk of your day's time and in the winter months, getting out of the bed can be a struggle. At the end of the day, instead of doing the dishes, a dishwasher can resolve all problems efficiently. An easy-to-use, hassle-free, noise-free and a time efficient machine, it deep cleans the toughest stains with low water consumption. This is an investment that will help you unwind post work, without any worries.

### Smart assistant

Multitasking everyday can be challenging but life can be made easier with your

own virtual smart assistant. With hands-free, voice-controlled interaction, you can just browse the internet for anything at any time you like. Order groceries, get your amazing facts of the day or play some music during your down time at work effortlessly with the smart assistant at your service. You can also set task reminders and more with the best in market smart assistants — Amazon's Alexa and the Google Assistant. Get your hands on the latest tech on any of the online stores.

### Coffee maker

Working from home equals having snacks and beverages at your disposal at any time of the day. Post lunch drowsiness can be conquered over with a piping hot cup of coffee. You can boost your productivity and make your every-day simpler by owning a coffee maker. These appliances do not occupy a lot of space and work as per your convenience. Within minutes, you can take refills and store them in your coffee tumbler for you to enjoy the beverage throughout your e-meeting. The market has a wide variety of coffee makers for you to choose from, based on your needs and convenience.

### Ergonomic work set up

Working long hours in front of the lap-

top/computer screens can be tiring. An ergonomic work set up provides good posture and boosts productivity throughout the day.

Whether you like to be seated in an ergonomic swivel chair or work standing with an adjustable table, an ergonomic posture is a must for maintaining safety and health measures. Ensure you destress your body with a better posture, it's time to modify your workspace. You can take a step towards your health and well-being by investing in a smart table from the likes of products from Flowlyf online or walk into your nearest furniture store to explore the ergonomic furniture range.

### Home gym essentials

Keeping up with your physical health is a must when working from home. With little to no physical activity in today's time, you can opt at-home fitness and keep yourself fit. An exercise bike is a go-to equipment for many working professionals. It is a value purchase which caters to you and your entire family. Available in various price ranges and designs, the exercise bike also fits into smaller spaces. You can now take a step towards your fitness regime by purchasing your perfect exercise bike from stores like Decathlon, Amazon and Flipkart.



# Road to localisation

**I**t is 2022! We are heavily into the era of globalisation and digitalisation, which is akin to living in a global village. The pandemic has already forced businesses to rely on remote working and the ripple effects can be felt on consumer markets as well. Buyers are no longer restricted by geography. People desire, expect, and need access to a variety of information and products, preferably in their native language. It has become increasingly important for businesses to be equipped with tools that help them traverse these global landscapes while providing tailored local experiences to their worldwide buyers. Radhakrishnan Mani shares reasons why localisation will become important next year

## Localisation is not translation

If you think localisation is just a fancy word for translation, you couldn't be more wrong! Localisation doesn't mean translating just your content into local languages. It means adapting to the local region in every aspect. Your content, services, products all should be adapted to the local markets. Translation changes text from one language to another while preserving the meaning. Localisation, on the other hand, adapts everything from content, images, and formatting to design and even payment methods. Localisation makes sure your business is accommodated to cultural, linguistic, political, and legal differences.

## Importance

Communication is crucial if you plan on staying connected to your audience. And effective communication is the key to building a strong rapport. If you plan on taking your business to a global level, localization becomes even more important from the context of effective communication. Here are a few reasons why localisation would become even more important in 2022:

## Rapid global growth

Entering a new market is not a walk in the park. It is not as easy as launching a Facebook ad targeting a specific location. If you are entering a market culturally distant from your home country, you'll have to overcome several barriers. These include the socio-cultural environ-

ment, political barriers, and technological preferences. Localisation helps you overcome all of these barriers rather rapidly. In short, you'll experience rapid global growth by localising incrementally. It saves you from committing cultural faux passes that could be detrimental to your brand image. And also helps you avoid translation blunders. In fact, a good localisation strategy will help your company get traction faster and better.

## Your business will have a competitive edge

When you enter a new market, you are also signing up for competition with the businesses already present there. And it is never easy going up against brands that are native to the local market. People are much more likely to trust a local business than an outside player. Guess what would level the playing field for you? Localisation! That was about competing with the local businesses. You'll also have a competitive edge over global businesses that aren't localising their products and services. You get to establish a firm hold in the market.

## Better sales

Suppose you are on a road trip in a

foreign country. Your car has stopped suddenly, and you need to see a mechanic. Which professional would you rather see - a mechanic with lower prices but you cannot communicate properly with them? Or, a mechanic who charges a bit higher but you can communicate with them easily? You are most likely to go with the second option because easy communication irons out so many challenges. It is convenient!

In fact, research has found that 57 per cent of buyers find the ability to get information in a language they easily understand is more important than the price tag. Being able to communicate with your potential buyers promotes trust and loyalty. As a result, they will be more comfortable purchasing from you.

## Increased brand relevance

It seems like a broken record to say that the pandemic has forced several businesses to go online. But that's the truth. Even businesses that were earlier relying on a brick-and-mortar model have gone online. It is becoming increasingly difficult to stand your own ground in this sea of online businesses. Brand rele-

vance is the one factor that would keep you afloat comfortably. Brand relevance is even more important to stand steady amidst trends changing at an unimaginable speed. The process of localization makes your brand more relevant to the audience. You'll be able to better understand your local customer's needs and values, thereby creating products and services that meet those needs. As a result, you'll be able to develop the deepest levels of connection with your buyers and prospects.

## Reduced risk

Localisation is like a safety net that mitigates risks like cultural misunderstandings and mistaking consumer needs. By mitigating these risks, localisation helps ensure your business runs smoothly. For instance, localisation helps you understand sensitivities. Certain expressions and even colors can have negative connotations in a particular region. With the help of localisation, you can steer clear of them.

In short, localization is a powerful tool you should be leveraging in 2022 to drive sales for your business. This is the decade for localisation!



## 5 job portals to help you in finding the right job in 2022

**B**usinesses all throughout the world have been impacted by the spread of the pandemic. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, around 22.7 million jobs were lost in April and May 2021. (CMIE). As businesses return to normal and hiring activity in India has surged, with August witnessing an 89 percent year-on-year increase, hiring for specific roles has grown as well, with more movement across the market. There will always be a need for talented professionals to work for the firms as the business grows in the approaching year. Many job portals have grown as a result of this. More than 80% of job postings are filled through the biggest employment portals, according to estimates. As a result, we've compiled a list of the best Job Portals to help you find work. Here is the list of 5 job portals to help you in finding the right job 2022:

### Indeed

Indeed is one of India's most popular job search engines, with users searching for opportunities all around the world. Indeed, is assisting in the provision of employment throughout the epidemic with its Coronavirus Work Tools. You can search for millions of jobs and advance your career using the India Yes online employment marketplace.

### Shine.com

Shine.com was founded in 2008, at the dawn of India's digital transformation, at a time when the need for a transparent and effective online portal connecting job seekers and recruiters was greatest. While other employment portals rushed in to fill the apparent demand, Shine.com's founding team performed a thorough investigation into the current market difficulties and the different ways that technology may be used to address them. This data-driven, tech-driven approach has

paid off handsomely: the portal now has 8,000+ businesses on board, including big corporations like SBI Life Insurance, Deloitte, Infosys, ICICI, and Amazon, and offers over 3 lakh+ jobs to its vast pool of over 4.1 crore registered jobseekers.

### Jobs for her

A platform that connects women to jobs, community, mentoring, reskilling, inspiration, and networking opportunities in order to help them advance their careers. It was founded in 2015 and now links over 2.2 million job seekers with over 7500 firms around the country. Mentorship is also available for women who want to start or resume their careers on the platform. In addition, the brand has over 500 reskilling partners to help women reskill/upskill before entering/reentering the job.

### Monster

Monster is a well-known website for job seekers all across the world, including Indians. It has a well-developed and extensive network of Indian recruiters and job seekers. Both employers and future employees have a wide range of possibilities. It was founded in 1999 when The Monster Board and Online Career Center merged. It is based in Weston, Massachusetts, and is a subsidiary of Randstad Holding, a Dutch global human resource consulting organisation.

### Naukri.com

Platform provides a variety of services, including access to a resume database, listings, and response management tools. Naukri.com served over 76,000 corporate clients in 2017-2018, with over 4, 75,000 jobs live at any given time and over 60 million CVs. In India, the firm has 56 offices in 42 locations, as well as international offices in Dubai, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, and Bahrain.

## FUN

### ARCHIE



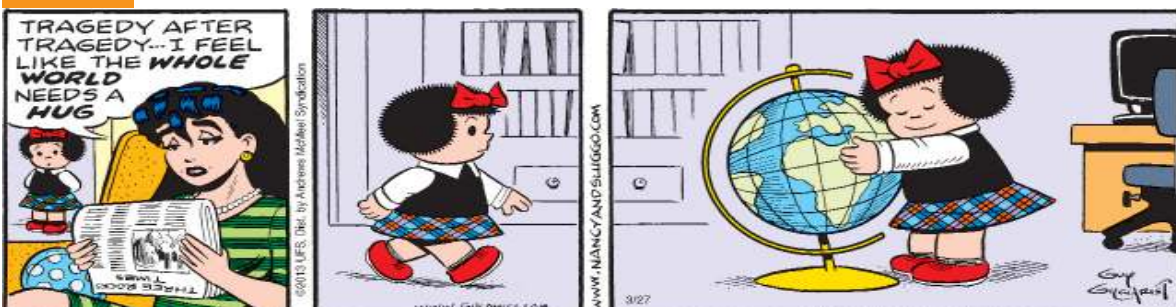
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### ACROSS

- 1 A game with a bat and ball
- 2 Wear these on your feet
- 3 A large group of soldiers
- 4 School classes
- 5 A very large bird
- 6 See old stuff on display here
- 7 These are a kind of fungus that people eat
- 8 A stand for holding an artist's painting
- 9 The tiniest particle
- 10 World's highest mountain
- 11 Metal money
- 14 A greeting
- 15 The tiniest particle
- 17 We breathe this
- 18 Too
- 19 A red sauce is made from these

### DOWN

- 1 These make a torch work

### SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution								
7	6	8	4	2	5	3	9	1
4	9	5	1	3	8	6	7	2
3	2	1	6	9	7	4	8	5
8	3	2	9	5	1	7	6	4
1	4	6	8	7	2	9	5	3
9	5	7	3	6	4	2	1	8
5	7	4	2	1	6	8	3	9
6	8	9	5	4	3	1	2	7
2	1	3	7	8	9	5	4	6

### Rules

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







## 'The way Raj & DK treat female characters is amazing'

**R**aashi Khanna has established herself as one of the most in-demand actors in the South Indian cinema industry. Despite beginning her career in cinema with the Bollywood film *Madras Cafe*, she has since moved her concentration to South cinema and has become a household figure. The actress has made news for her roles in Telugu, Tamil, and Malayalam films, and she is now back in the Hindi entertainment industry, working on her upcoming web series, in which she will play alongside Ajay Devgn in one series and Shahid Kapoor and Vijay Sethupathi in the other. Speaking exclusively with *The*

*Pioneer* about her upcoming web-series with Raj and DK, the actress tells us, "Being a part of filmmaker duo Raj Nidimoru and Krishna DK's web series is a blessing, they are one of the smartest director duos in the industry with a gender sensitive gaze. Raj and DK are the creators of *The Family Man*, which has changed the way we see OTT shows. The way they treat their female characters is amazing! That's what I have understood working with them. They are extremely sensitive to issues and have no gender bias. They are into breaking those stereotypes, which is why they are these wonderful filmmakers."

She further adds, "The kind of storytelling they have, it is not easy to blend in so many characters in a story like this and give each of them the importance they deserve. But they have managed to do it. Every character is so important in their series that it really isn't just a one-person thing."

## MM Keeravani to score music for *Gentleman 2*

**S**outh India's well-known producer KT Kunjumon who once made high budget movies like *Gentleman*, *Premikudu* and *Prema Desam*, which were massive blockbusters both in Tamil and Telugu is making a comeback to film production.

The veteran producer who is known for his unique and aggressive promotional strategies had

announced to make sequel for his superhit *Gentleman* under the distinguished production banner Gentleman Film International.

Kunjumon had also announced a contest on Twitter. He had asked movie buffs to guess the legendary musician who would be scoring music for his film titled *Gentleman 2* with the hashtag #G2MusicDirector and said that three lucky winners would be rewarded with a gold coin each.

On Sunday, Kunjumon announced that MM Keeravani will be the music director of *Gentleman 2*. He tweeted: "I proudly announce that the iconic legend of Indian cinema, MM Keeravani *garu*, will be the music director of my Gentleman Film International's *Gentleman 2*. Gold coin winners will be announced."

Kunjumon who introduced S Shankar as director with *Gentleman* was renowned for suggesting the director to rewrite the climax of the movie based on the assassination of former Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa. The film *Gentleman*, which starred Arjun Sarja and Madhoo in the lead roles, threw light on corrupt politicians and the education system in India. After 27 years, the producer will be making the sequel, but with a different team. As of now, only MM Keeranai is confirmed for the project. Other cast and crew will be announced later.



## Akhanda gets highest viewership

**S**etting a new record on Disney+ Hotstar, *Akhanda* received

the highest viewership and watchtime on the streaming platform for a Telugu movie ever. Viewers of Disney+ Hotstar have showered their love towards *Akhanda* essayed by Nandamuri Balakrishna for his new look and strong character whilst applauding the top-notch production quality of the movie and the ensemble cast. *Akhanda* with its proven record in the Box office witnessed Nandamuri Balakrishna in a unique character of aghora who has blessings of Lord Shiva and becomes the saviour of the village trapped under the mining goons. The film also

features Jagapathi Babu, Srikanth, Pragya Jaiswal, Shamna Kasim, Viji Chandrasekha and Subbaraju in lead roles. The music provided by SS Thaman for this film received accolades for the background score and the songs. Actor Nandamuri Balakrishna said, "I am thankful to my audience who always stood by me, each time I have tried something new. I have the blessings of Lord Shiva and after such an overwhelming response in the Box office celebrating 50days, we also did a record-breaking opening on Disney+Hotstar. I am enjoying this period and happy that many more movie lovers got to watch the movie from anywhere through this."

## Sumanth's *Malli Modalaindi* releasing on Zee5



**A**ctor Sumanth is gearing up to dazzle movie lovers with his next film *Malli Modalaindi*. The film is expected to be released exclusively on OTT. The filmmakers chose to forego a theatrical release in favour of an OTT arrangement with Zee5. The

film's OTT streaming date has been set, according to the newest information. From February 11, *Malli Modalaindi* will be available on ZEE 5. "*#MalliModalaindi*, a whimsical tale of life after divorce, launches this Feb 11 on #ZEE5. Sumanth wrote on Twitter. *Malli Modalaindi* tells the story of what happens when a divorce applicant falls in love with his lawyer.

In the film, Sumanth is romancing Varshini Soundarajan and Naina Ganguly, which is directed by TG.Keerthi Kumar. Varshini Soundarajan plays Sumanth's wife, and Naina Ganguly plays his lawyer in the film. Posani Krishna Murali plays the part of divorce lawyer Kutumba Rao, while Vennela Kishore plays the role of Kishore, a motivational speaker. Anup Rubens composed the film's music. The film is being produced by K.Rajasekhar Reddy under the Red Cinemas banner.

# Boom time for dubbed films

**I**t looks like the preferences of movie watchers have changed during the lockdown. The idea of going to a cinema has always been to enjoy an entertaining fare. You would have observed that the films that do not entertain or identify with the taste of the audience are rejected.

The whole parallel cinema, backed by Film Finance Corporation (FFC), later renamed National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), amounted to nothing eventually. NFDC was government-backed and the only recognition these NFDC films got was from the government itself; they kept winning National Awards.

That was funny because it amounted to government largesse going from one pocket to another. In the process, the National Awards never got due recognition from the real film industry, the filmmakers who mattered.

So, the film buffs stuck to regular commercial stuff. At least, it did not induce boredom like art and parallel cinema. The audience had no option but to consume the 'opium of the masses' as commercial Indian films have been labelled over the decades.

Looks like the addition to this opium was the only thing available to people. There was no alternative entertainment available. There was no exposure to any other form.

Suddenly, during the periodic lockdowns over the last two years, people's preferences are seen to have changed. They are rejecting what is peddled as commercial entertainers.

Whether they come in cinemas, or through OTT streaming platforms, the audiences are not willing to be taken for granted any longer! Be it Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgn, Ranveer Singh, they came up with new

films which did not really find takers.

While the admission rates remain high, the stars keep peddling the same stuff, film after film. Salman Khan has delivered a line-up of flops over the last few Eid festivals, his favourite release date; Akshay Kumar has delivered one dud, Bell Bottom, and one average film, Sooryavanshi, which even his co-stars Ajay Devgn and Ranveer Singh could not salvage. The films of all these stars are failing to make an impact on OTT platforms as well. Surprisingly, though, the films, serials and other content of either lesser known or past-their-prime actors are working on all platforms. By non-star actors, or actors past their prime, one means actors such as Saif Ali Khan, Kay Kay Menon, Manoj Bajpai, Abhishek Bachchan, Susmita Sen, and many such whose appearance in feature films was getting scarce. The careers of these actors have been revived on OTT.

What is also obvious is that while Hindi stars are being rejected, dubbed films from the South are being lapped up.

One of the reasons why some of the dubbed South Indian films are readily accepted is because they don't lack in any way when compared to Hindi films. In fact, they come up with different subjects and are spectacular, providing a visual treat.

These films are made with mammoth budgets, which they justify. The acceptance of these dubbed South Indian films seems to have happened gradually through television channels. In the absence of new Hindi films, most of the filmy television channels are telecasting the dubbed versions of the South Indian films day in and day out.

Watching films on television was fine, but what worked finally was the release of

'Baahubali'. The film took the Hindi box office by storm. Nothing like this had been seen coming from the Hindi film industry. Hindi filmmakers claimed crores being spent on their films, which never showed in their films!

*Baahubali: The Beginning*, especially, was an out-of-the-world experience. *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion* came across as half-baked but it still enjoyed the equity of its predecessor.

*Baahubali* has successfully neutralised the aversion of Hindi film audiences to Tamil and Telugu films.

Look at the recent release, *Pushpa: The Rise*. The makers dared to release the film in direct opposition to 83. The story of the 1983 Cricket World Cup-winning team under the leadership of Kapil Dev, a legend in his own time, 83 came a cropper while 'Pushpa' turned out to be a hit.

Imagine, a dubbed South Indian film getting the better of the most promoted Hindi film with a top star!



The saga of dubbed films is long. Dubbed films from the South were never bought by distributors expecting to earn money. They were bought mainly as gap fillers or for adjustment. Earlier, cinemas were controlled by exhibitors.

For instance, in the Bombay Circuit, cinema owners from far-off places in Gujarat, Kutch or Maharashtra could not manage the bookings of films week after week from where they are. They delegated this task to an individual or a group of people in Mumbai whose responsibility it was to make sure the cinemas got a film every week. Some of these exhibitors controlled multiple cinemas.

There were some phases in a year that were considered non-productive for the film business. There were no new films that were released during these periods. March to April (due to exams) and then from September to Diwali were dull for business. The Ganesh Chaturthi, Shradddha and Navratra days and the pre-Diwali fortnight were disastrous for business. But the cinema exhibition business could not be shut down. It had to have a film every Friday. That is when these dubbed films helped fill the gaps. So as not to incur losses on the deal, some interpolations took place. Many times, porn clips were inserted into these films and they managed to draw a certain type of audience.

The other reason why a distributor needed to buy a dubbed film from the South was if he had had a good year with distributing his other, mainstream films. The income tax slabs were very high and some way had to be found to keep the profits earned. After all, how many petty expense vouchers could an accountant make?

The idea was to buy the rights to a dubbed film at a comfortably inflated price and get most of the amount back in cash.

Now, dubbed films are a big business. Especially thanks to Hindi movie television channels. Initially, even these channels used dubbed movies as fillers for late night or all-night slots. There were no viewers, so it did not matter.

— IANS



# Sindhu clinches Syed Modi International title

**IAN S** ■ LUCKNOW

**A**ce Indian shuttler PV Sindhu clinched the 2022 Syed Modi International title after beating young Malvika Bansod in the women's singles final at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium, here on Sunday.

The 26-year old Sindhu beat Malvika 21-13, 21-16 in just 35 minutes to win her second title at the Super 300 event. She had won the tournament in 2017 as well.

It was also Sindhu's first BWF title since winning the BWF World Championships in 2019, after losing twice in the finals last year -- at the Swiss Open and the BWF World Tour Finals.

The two-time Olympic medallist raced to a 7-0 lead inside the first three minutes and kept the charge on to pocket the game quite comfortably in 14 minutes.

The second game saw a similar pattern with the world No 7 leading 11-4 at the mid-game interval. Bansod, the world No. 84, mounted a comeback and reduced the lead at 17-12 but the experienced Sindhu went on to seal the match in straight games. Notably, this was the first

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meeting between the 20-year-old Malvika Bansod and PV Sindhu at the international circuit. Bansod, who clinched the All-India Senior Ranking Championships in December, had beaten the London 2012 Olympic bronze medallist Saina Nehwal at the India Open, earlier this month.

Meanwhile, the mixed doubles title went to seventh seeds Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto, who defeated compatriots Nagendra Babu and Srivedya Gurazada 21-16, 21-12 in the 29 minutes final to claim their first Super 300 crown.

The pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Pullela won the women's doubles title after beating Anna Cheong Ching Yik and Teoh Mei Xing. Earlier, the men's singles final between Frenchman Arnaud Merkle and Lucas Claerbout was declared a 'no match'. One of the finalists tested positive for Covid-19 while the other was deemed a close contact and was also withdrawn.

The Syed Modi International 2022 was the second tournament in this year's BWF calendar after the India Open. The Odisha Open Super 100, will be the next tournament, scheduled to be held in Cuttack from January 25 to 30.



## India-Chinese Taipei Asian Cup match is off

**IAN S** ■ MUMBAI

**I**ndia had to withdraw from the ongoing AFC Women's Asian Cup football competition on Sunday as the hosts failed to name their team for the match against Chinese Taipei because of injuries and Covid positive tests.

The rules specify that a team should be able to put up a bare minimum of 13 players to compete in a match. The Indians had only 11 players fit and available to play Sunday's match against Chinese Taipei at the DY Patil Stadium here. Of the 23 players in the squad, two players had to isolate themselves as they tested positive on the eve of India's opening match in the competition on January 20.

Sources said on Saturday, the hosts had 13 players that were not down with Covid-19 but two of them were injured. The two injured players could not recover in time and thus a team could not be named for the match against the Chinese Taipei.

"The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has confirmed that the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 match between Chinese Taipei and India at the D.Y. Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai could not be played today," the AFC said in a statement on Sunday.

"Following several positive cases of Covid-19, India failed to name the required minimum of 13 players for the Group A match against Chinese Taipei," said the statement.

"In accordance with Article 4.1 of the 'Special Rules Applicable to AFC Competitions during the COVID-19 pandemic' (Special Rules), India was therefore unable to participate in the match and the full provisions of Article 4.1 will apply," the statement said.

Article 4.1 of the 'Special Rules Applicable to AFC Competitions during Covid-19 pandemic' states, "If a Participating Team/Participating Club has less than thirteen (13) Participating Players (including one (1) goalkeeper) available for a Match for any reason (whether or not relating to Covid-19), the relevant Participating Team/Participating Club shall not be able to participate in the Match. Such Participating Team/Participating Club shall be held responsible for the Match not taking place and shall be considered to have withdrawn from the relevant Competition. The relevant Participating Team/Participating Club and its affiliated Member Association shall be subject to the provisions of the relevant Competition regulations regarding the consequences of withdrawal, as applicable."

## Sania Mirza-Rajeev Ram advance to mixed doubles quarters

**IAN S** ■ MELBOURNE

**I**ndia's Sania Mirza and her American partner Rajeev Ram advanced to the quarter-finals of the 2022 Australian Open mixed doubles event after beating Australia's Ellen Perez and Matwe Middelkoop of the Netherlands, here on Sunday.

Mirza-Ram won their second-round match 7(8)-6(6), 6-4 in one hour and 27 minutes.

The Indo-American pair got off to a bad start and trailed



2-0 in the opening stages of the first set. However, they struck back to level up the score at 6-6 and stretched the set into a tiebreaker.

Sania and Ram had a better start in the second set, racing to a 2-0 lead. The experienced duo, with no unforced errors, then won the set comfortably.

In the quarters, Sania Mirza and Rajeev Ram will now face the winner of the match between Australian wild card pairs Samantha Stosur-Matthew

Ebden and Jaimee Fourlis-Jason Kubler. Notably, both Mirza and Ram have won the Australian Open mixed doubles title before with different partners. While Sania Mirza won the Grand Slam in 2009 with Mahesh Bhupathi, Ram won the 2019 and 2021 mixed doubles events with Barbora Krejickova.

The 35-year-old Sania is the only Indian left in the competition after Rohan Bopanna made a first-round exit in mixed doubles event on Saturday.

## Ash Barty beats Anisimova, to face Pegula in quarters

**IAN S** ■ MELBOURNE

**T**op-ranked Ashleigh Barty booked her place in the 2022 Australian Open quarter-finals with a win over Amanda Anisimova, here on Sunday.

Top seed Barty beat 20-year-old Anisimova 6-4, 6-3 in a 74-minute clash. She will meet No 21 seed Jessica Pegula, who reached the last eight in Melbourne for the second straight season after defeating No 5 seed Maria Sakkari of Greece 7-6(0), 6-3. With this win, Barty's quest to become the first home women's champion at the Australian Open since Chris O'Neil in 1978 remains alive. In her previous second-week showings, she lost in the 2019 quarter-finals to Petra Kvitova, the 2020 semifinals to Sofia Kenin and the 2021 quarter-finals to Karolina Muchova.



During Sunday's outing, Barty's progress was not all smooth sailing. At times, she was outthit by bold drive volleys and down-the-line winners from Anisimova. She gave her younger opponent openings with a smattering of dou-

ble faults (three, two of which came consecutively) and unforced errors (17, outweighed by 23 winners).

However, the World No 1 found solid one-two punches to wriggle out of her tightest service games in the first set, and a couple of moments of magic with delightfully angled backhand slice winners to break Anisimova for the first time. Her crafty variation on the slice paid dividends throughout, repeatedly tangling Anisimova up tactically and technically.

The 25-year-old Barty also raised her level to accelerate toward the finishing line of both sets. The first three of her seven total aces came in her final two service games of the first. And in the second, Anisimova held two game points to hold for a 4-3 lead, only for Barty to reel off 12 of the next 14 points to take the win.

# China thrash Iran 7-0 for another stylish win

**IAN S** ■ MUMBAI

**E**ight-time champions China virtually sealed a place in the quarter-finals and underlined their AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 title credentials by cruising to a 7-0 win over Iran at Mumbai Football Arena here on Sunday. Wang Shuang scored a birthday brace, Wang Shanshan too scored a double, Xiao Yuyi and Tang Jiali contributed a goal each while Iran's Fatemeh Adeli scored an own goal as Shui Qingxia's side continued their blistering start to the tournament and set their sights towards the latter stages of the competition. The result leaves Iran's quarter-final ambitions hanging on Wednesday's clash against Chinese Taipei, which



is likely to be pivotal to both sides' knockout stage hopes.

As expected, China dominated the match, enjoying 80.4 percent possession, and attempted 23 shots and 12 of them on target, resulting in six goals. Iran could get only one shot on target. The Steel Roses returned to the scene of Thursday's 4-0 win over Chinese Taipei eager to build on their fast start, and they quickly assumed control against a deep-lying Iranian defence.

Wang Shanshan forced a strong save from Zohreh Koudaei in the 10th minute, and the star goalkeeper got down low to deny the Chinese captain once again five minutes later, continuing the form which saw her voted Player of the Match in Thursday's 0-0 draw

against India. It seemed that it would take something special to beat Iran's number one, and that's exactly what Wang Shuang provided in the 28th minute, picking out the bottom corner with a perfectly directed left-footed effort from the edge of the box to celebrate her 27th birthday in style. Coach Maryam Iran doost's Iran side was never easily broken down, but China produced a move that would have picked apart the very best defences just before halftime, with Zhang Xin's slide-rule pass setting up Xiao Yuyi, who duly caressed the ball into the net to make it 2-0 two minutes before half-time. Iran's dynamic teenage striker Negin Zandi was introduced at half-time as they looked for a way

back into the match, but their cause suffered a significant blow when Melika Motevalli clumsily fouled Chinese substitute Li Mengwen, with Wang Shuang easily beating Koudaei from the penalty spot to make the points all but safe in the 49th minute. The earlier intensity of the game now noticeably absent, Wang Shanshan extended the lead when she poked home Xiao Yuyi's cross in the 55th minute, and the same duo teamed up four minutes later to increase the tally to 5-0.

China's superior fitness and technique was evident throughout the second half, and they duly added a sixth through Tang Jiali 77th minute, with the Tottenham forward finding the net with the swerving effort 15 minutes.

## Ngannou regains heavyweight crown over Gane



**IAN S** ■ ANAHEIM (USA)

**F**rancis Ngannou's win in UFC 270 over interim champ Ciryl Gane has put the organisers in a spot.

The heavyweight champion, who took on Gane in a five-round clash at the Honda Centre in Anaheim, California, has made it clear that he will not fight again unless he is given a considerable fee hike.

So far, UFC President Dana White has been reluctant to consider it. The fight was a literal

and figurative clash of titans with both men standing at 6 feet 4 inches and weighing in well over 230 pounds.

Both fighters also share a considerable history having been long-time sparring partners and this was evident throughout the fight with Gane winning the first two rounds on the feet, nullifying the Cameroonian's scary knockout power, no doubt due to being used to it in the sparring sessions they have together. But Ngannou showed that he too had learnt lessons from those sessions as he proceeded to turn around the fight in the next three rounds by repeatedly taking down the French kickboxer, leaving him helpless as he couldn't wrestle away from the Champion's considerable frame.

The fight between the former training partners wasn't the only title clash on the card, however, with the co-main event being contested for the flyweight championship between incumbent champ Brandon Moreno and Deiveson Figueiredo.

This was the third battle for the title between the pair with the first two matches ending in a draw and a win for Moreno which saw him snatch away Figueiredo's crown.

## Shapovalov gets past No. 3 Zverev

**IAN S** ■ MELBOURNE

**C**anadian star Denis Shapovalov remained calm and composed as he booked his Australian Open quarterfinal berth with a 6-3, 7-6(5), 6-3 victory over world No. 3 and Tokyo Olympic Games gold medallist Alexander Zverev of Germany at the Melbourne Park on Sunday.

Shapovalov has now set up a quarterfinal showdown with Spanish stalwart Rafael Nadal, who is aiming for his second Australian Open crown after the title triumph in 2009.

The searing Melbourne heat could not stop Shapovalov from extinguishing the hopes Zverev in the duo's first meeting at a major.

The 14th-seeded Canadian had to take an ice bath after his gruelling five-setter against world No. 54 Soonwoo Kwon of South Korea in the second-round, but he kept a cool head

throughout the tough encounter to brush past an inconsistent Zverev in the fourth round. "It's probably the one I least expected to finish in three (sets)," Shapovalov was quoted as saying by atptour.com on Sunday. "I'm very happy with my performance, definitely happy with where my game is at."

With his returns sharp as ever, Shapovalov broke Zverev early for a 3-1 lead, the German dropping just his third service game of the tournament on the way to also losing his first set in Melbourne this year.

Zverev looked frustrated as Shapovalov broke the German again immediately in the second. But seven double faults in the set from the Canadian helped Zverev claw back. Serving for the set at 5-3, Zverev's inconsistency again came to the fore at crucial moments and Shapovalov forced a tie-break. The Canadian

looked more comfortable of the two, winning 7/5.

"I think off the ground I was playing really well, really feeling my shots off both wings," said Shapovalov. "I played pretty smart today, it felt like things were going my way early on. I lost a little bit of momentum mid-way in the second set but fought well to come back and just kind of rolled with it after."

Shapovalov's opponent in the quarterfinals will be Nadal, after the sixth-seed defeated Adrian Mannarino of France 7-6(14), 6-2, 6-2. Nadal holds a 3-1 lead in the ATP head-to-head against Shapovalov.

always an honour to go up against a guy like Rafa," said Shapovalov. "It's always going to be a battle against him. It's going to be a tough one and I'm definitely going to enjoy it."

