

**ANALYSIS 7**  
THE US IS IN THE GRIP  
OF INFLATION**MONEY 8**  
JOB POSTINGS IN TRAVEL & TOURISM  
SECTOR SEES 4% RISE IN DEC**SPORTS 12**  
ROHIT FIT TO LEAD  
INDIA AGAINST WI

HYDERABAD, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

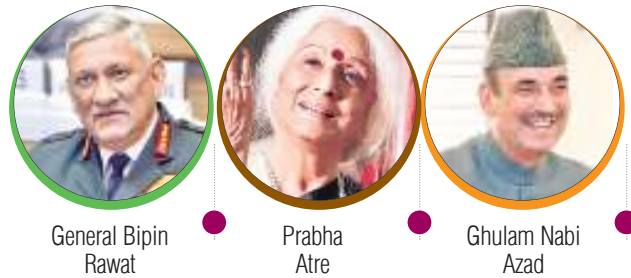


# the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

PRIYAMANI IS AN  
'ANXIETY  
CREATING'  
HOMEMAKER

Page 11

General Bipin  
RawatPrabha  
AtreGhulam Nabi  
Azad

## Kalyan Singh, Gen Rawat given Padma Vibhushan; Azad Padma Bhushan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Uttar Pradesh chief minister and Hindutva poster boy late Kalyan Singh and India's first Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat who died in a helicopter crash recently were awarded Padma Vibhushan on Tuesday, while veteran Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and former West Bengal CM and CPI(M) leader Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee were given Padma Bhushan.

### Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee rejects award

Buddhadeb  
Bhattacharjee

Veteran CPI(M) leader and former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on Tuesday rejected the Padma Bhushan award. "I know nothing about this award."

## RICH HAUL OF 'PADMAS' FOR TELUGU 'biddalu'

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

As many as 11 persons with Telugu background have been conferred with 10 Padma awards this year. Ahead of the 73rd Republic Day, the Union Home Ministry on Tuesday announced the list of 128 recipients of Padma awards in recognition of their distinguished contribution in various spheres of activity.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Google's Sundar Pichai, Vaccine maker Bharat Biotech founders and couple Krishna Ella and Suchitra Ella are among the 17 Padma Bhushan awardees this year.

Persons from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh together got six Padma Shri awards. Sowcar Janaki, though from Tamil Nadu, has Telugu roots.

Five persons from Telangana have been honoured this year with one Padma Bhushan and three Padma Shri awards.

Three personalities have been conferred with Padma Shri in Arts category. Popular Kinnera player Darshanam Mogilaiah has been honoured with Padma Shri. Popularly known as Kinnera Mogilaiah, the Kinnera folk artiste hails from the Amrabad Forest Reserve, Mahabubnagar, and is popular for singing ballads, which are often interspersed with simple and short monologues. He recently lent vocals to the introductory song of the actor's upcoming film



Krishna Ella and Suchitra Ella

Sowcar Janaki

Ramachandraiah

Padmaja Reddy

Darshanam Mogilaiah

Garikipati Narasimha Rao

'Bheemla Nayak'.

Renowned Kuchipudi dancer Padmaja Reddy was bestowed with Padma Shri. She revived the dance form 'Kakatiyam' that existed 1,400 years ago in the Kakatiya dynasty.

Folk artiste from Bhadrachalam Kothagudem Ramachandraiah has been conferred with Padma Shri in the Arts segment.



Satya Nadella

Dr Sunkara Venkata  
Adinarayana Rao

## President's Police Medal for 2, Police Medal for 11

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two Telangana police officials have been selected for the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

The two police officials are Chacko Sunny, Commandant, 3rd Battalion, TSSP, Ibrahimpatnam, and G. Srinivasa Raju, Head Constable, O/o the IGP, PTO.

The President's Medal for Gallantry, President's Medal for Distinguished Services, Gallantry Medal, and Meritorious Services Medals are awarded to personnel of the fire services, civil defense, and Home Guards every year on Republic Day and Independence Day.

Bhavana Saxena, Resident Commissioner, Andhra Pradesh Bhavan,

## KCR may not go to UP for election campaign

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TRS chief K. Chandrasekhara Rao may not go to Uttar Pradesh to campaign in the UP Assembly elections. Sources said the party is not at all thinking about the

issue and there is no discussion about that now in TRS circles.

TRS working president and IT Minister KT Ramarao had said that they will take a decision on the UP campaign after discussions.

Animal Husbandry Minister

Talasani Srinivas Yadav and some others had said that they are ready to go to Uttar Pradesh. However, no discussions were held about that, it is learnt.

### ON A GOOD WICKET



Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development K.T. Rama Rao, who launched a slew of developmental works and inaugurated various facilities in Outubullapur constituency on Tuesday, engages children at a sports theme park.

### KTR ON MOVE TO MODIFY IAS CADRE RULES...

## It's coercive federalism, unacceptable to all states

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Complementing the views of several states, including Telangana, that have so far

opposed the Centre's move to modify Rule 6 of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Cadre Rules of 1954,

## Gang dupes Railways, Metro Rail job aspirants of over Rs 1.5 cr; 3 held

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A fake job racket was busted here and three people of a gang including a couple, who allegedly cheated job aspirants of over Rs 1.5 crore by promising them employment in Indian Railways and Metro Rail were arrested on Tuesday, police said.

On credible information, a police team took the absconding accused K Surendra, his wife Nagalakshmi and one Suresh into custody for cheating as many as 20 students from whom they collected Rs 5 to Rs

10 lakh each on the pretext of providing Railway jobs and Metro Rail jobs through backdoor entry process, they said.

Police seized fake ID proofs, three four-wheelers, fake government job offer letters and mobile phones from their possession, R a c h a k o n d a Commissioner of Police Mahesh M Bhagwat said.

Surendra took the students to Rail Nilayam here and introduced them to two other members of their gang as Railway officers and

## Congress decides to say goodbye to Golconda Hotel

K VENKATESHWARLU  
■ HYDERABAD

Congress has decided to say goodbye to the Golconda Hotel. The party has decided to use senior leader Manthani MLA Duddilla Sridhar Babu's quarters at the Adarsh Nagar MLA Quarters from now onwards instead of

Golconda Hotel.

The Congress used to provide rooms in Golconda Hotel to party leaders from New Delhi.

Former Telangana Congress in-charge and AICC general secretary RC Kuntia and current AICC secretaries Bose Raju and Srinivasa Krishna used to stay at the Golconda Hotel.

The party has now decided to allot Sridhar Babu's quarters to the two AICC secretaries Bose Raju and Srinivasa Krishna.

The Congress in charge of TS, AICC general secretary Manickam Tagore will continue to stay at the Dilkusha Guesthouse.

## Stones pelted at BJP MP's convoy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A convoy of BJP leader and party MP from Nizamabad Dharmapuri Arvind was allegedly obstructed in a village in Nizamabad district and vehicles pelted with stones by some miscreants, even as the MP alleged that the ruling TRS was behind the "attack" on him and the party cadre.

Police said they were verifying the allegations.

The incident happened in Issapally village of Armoor mandal when Arvind was on his way to way to Nandipet mandal to inaugurate some developmental works when some people including some



The damaged car of BJP leader and Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind after the attack on his convoy in Nandipet mandal on Tuesday.

turmeric farmers stage a protest demanding setting up of a Turmeric Board in Nizamabad.

Raising slogans some miscreants obstructed the MP's

convoy leading to a clash between the BJP workers and protesters resulting in minor injuries to some of them,

Telangana tops  
in NREGS  
implementation

Page: 3

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month &amp; Paksham:

Pausa, Krishna Paksha

Tithi : Navami - Jan 26 03:25 AM to Jan 27 04:34 AM

Dashami : Jan 27 04:34 AM to Jan 28 02:16 AM

Nakshatram : Swati - Jan 26 10:54 AM to Jan 26 10:05 AM

Vedika - Jan 26 10:05 AM to Jan 27 08:51 AM

Rahukalam : 12:28 PM to 1:52 PM

Yamagandam : 8:16 AM to 9:40 AM

Varjyam : 03:25 PM to 04:56 PM

Gulika : 11:04 AM to 12:28 PM

Amritakalam : 12:31 AM to 02:02 AM

Abhijit Muhurtham : Nil

HYDRABAD

WEATHER

Forecast: SUNNY

Temp: 31°C

Humidity: 41%

Sunrise: 6:53 AM

Sunset: 6:04 PM

Updated JANUARY 25, 2021 5:00 PM



**SBI** | **yono**  
The banker to every Indians

## HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY

### SBI KE DHAMAKEDAR OFFERS PAO

- Car Loan**  
From 7.25% p.a.
- Personal Loan**  
From 9.60% p.a.
- Gold Loan**  
@7.50% p.a.

Zero processing fee  
In-principle approval through Yono

For assistance, call 1800 11 2211

bank.sbi | 75th Ka Amrit Mahotsav



# KCR’s all-out efforts to stem the tide of anti-incumbency

How can I stem the anti-incumbency factor without letting matters deteriorate? This thought could be uppermost on the mind of Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao who is determined to retain power with a 'positive vote' from the people of Telangana in the 2023 polls.

People do consider him a fighter and, more importantly, as a man who had secured statehood for Telangana. In general, people feel that KCR got Telangana State from the then Union government despite the hardships it was facing in view of the attitudes of principal political parties.

The Telangana Rashtra Samithi has a record six million party workers. No other party had this kind of mem-



bership in the history of the combined state of Andhra Pradesh. Even the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front that ruled West Bengal for three and half decades had organisational strength of just three lakh full-timers. The BJP, which is heading the ruling dispensation at the Centre, has six million members.

KCR is targeting the BJP at the national level because of its disdainful attitude towards TRS' rule in the state. By virtue of its strength at the national level and the clout of its government at the Centre, the BJP too is focusing on TRS and its leadership on every key issue.

The two national level parties, Congress and BJP, are individually concentrating on TRS' rule, keeping the latter on

**KCR is targeting the BJP at the national level because of its disdainful attitude towards TRS' rule in the state. By virtue of its strength at the national level and the clout of its government at the Centre, the BJP too is focusing on TRS and its leadership on every key issue.**

tenterhooks.

Purchase of lakhs of tonnes of paddy during the agricultural season has become the bone of contention between the BJP and the TRS.

The TRS says that the Centre's refusal to purchase paddy was against the interests of farmers and injustice was done to TS' farmers. The BJP has been making the same allegation against the TRS for



M D RATNA KUMAR  
Senior Journalist

now to effectively resolve the problem.

For the next agricultural season, farmers of TS need to go ahead with their own plans on paddy plantations. We are witnessing a rare situation in which the Union & state governments are engaged in a

wordy duel only for the purpose of getting political mileage, though it is clearly at the cost of farmers.

Several issues are haunting KCR, including the issuance of G.O No.317 that has literally pushed government employees, particularly teachers in huge numbers, into great trouble, with employees facing nativity issues regardless of where they go for work.

During the reorganisation of districts taken up immediately upon formation of the new state of Telangana, the state government's employees were allotted to new districts and told that they had to stay put there until retirement, causing heartburn to many of them.

The 'Dalit Bandhu' programme, involving financial assistance for the uplift of Dalits, appears to be becoming a white elephant for the gov-

ernment. It needs Rs.1.70 lakh crores of rupees for implementation the scheme across the state.

This programme was introduced in the Huzurabad Assembly seat, where a bye-election was held recently.

The Government hurriedly introduced this programme eyeing the presence of a huge number of Dalits in the constituency. However, former minister in KCR's cabinet Etala Rajender won the battle in the bypolls, giving a shock to the TRS leadership. Now the TRS government is compelled by circumstances to implement the Dalit Bandhu scheme throughout the state at any cost. It is now a moon shot with there being no guarantee that this card would serve the purpose of the ruling party at the hustings.

Amid these issues behind

the anti-incumbency tide, the TRS is going to face the elections next year with the sole purpose of making the third successive win.

In general, it is not so easy for any party to register its third successive victory, given probable shifts in people's preferences linked to the overall performance of the government.

Just as people would be wary of letting a novice to rule them, a ruling party that is eyeing third consecutive win in elections will have to stem the tide of anti-incumbency circumspectly. Only time will tell whether KCR would find place beside his counterparts in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, Nitish Kumar and Shivraj Singh Chowhan respectively, who had the last laugh in their third consecutive elections!

## Let’s rededicate ourselves to the federal spirit of Constitution: KCR

ML MELLY MAITREYI  
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, while extending his greetings on the occasion of the 73rd Republic Day celebrations, said that India as the world's biggest democratic country represented unity in diversity. The nation was a land of different cultures and traditions and therein lay its greatness.

India's unity in diversity philosophy was mirrored by the



humanitarian outlook of citizens as well as their social, political, cultural and world view. The nation had continued

as a strong federation of States with different languages, attire and topographical features. The credit for this would go to people for their political vision, KCR said in his message.

KCR said that to strengthen the democratic foundation of the country, the rights and powers of States were included in the Constitution and the States had become the face of the country. The fame and reputation of India would spread across the world only when the rights of the States

were protected. Telangana, the youngest State of the country, had believed in, and espoused the cause of, the federal spirit of the Constitution right from its inception. The State did not mix politics and administration and hence had become a role model for other States.

The Chief Minister said: "Let us rededicate ourselves to the federal spirit as enshrined in the Constitution and adhere to it in letter and spirit. All of us should take a vow in this regard".

Ceremorphic unveils first development centre in Hyderabad  
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ceremorphic known for creating leading silicon systems opened its India development centre in Hyderabad on Tuesday. It currently employs 150 people and by the end of 2024, it plans to employ 400 people at its Hyderabad Development Centre.

Ceremorphic was founded in April 2020 by industry veteran Dr Venkat Mattela, the founding CEO of Redpine Signals, which sold its wireless assets to Silicon Labs in March 2020 for USD 308 million.

Principal Secretary Jayesh Ranjan said, "I am happy to note the success of Redpine Signals which built its entire wireless technology and products in Hyderabad. It symbolises the engineering talent of Hyderabad and Telangana. Venkat and his team were actively involved in supporting our initiatives in semiconductor technology for many years. I am optimistic about Venkat's new venture in the supercomputing space."

Venkat Mattela, the founder and CEO of Ceremorphic said, "We strongly believe that building a technology foundation is the key to developing highly differentiated products that can lead the industry. We proved that in the wireless space with Redpine Signals and we are now doing the same thing in the computing space with Ceremorphic."

## Revanth to contest Assembly elections from Kodangal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC President Revanth Reddy has declared that he would contest from the Kodangal constituency in the next Assembly elections.

Revanth turned emotional while thanking Congress workers for enrolling 75,000 people as Congress party members in Kodangal constituency. With a huge membership of 75,000, he said that Kodangal has emerged as an ideal constituency for the Congress not only in Telangana, but the entire country.

He felicitated Congress leaders and workers who had enrolled more than 500 members in their polling booths at a function at Kosgi on Tuesday. He also announced that these activists would be

honoured by AICC leader Rahul Gandhi.

The TPCC chief said that the Congress government had introduced schemes like crop loan waiver, free electricity for farmers, Aarogyasri, four per cent reservation for Muslims etc.

He said that after getting elected as an MLA from Kodangal in 2009, he had developed temples, schools, roads, 5,000 sub-stations, the Kosgi Bus Depot, and had also established a school in Maddur on his own land.

Revanth said that he had also brought junior colleges to Kodangal, Kosgi and Maddur and a degree college was established in Kodangal. Excellent roads were laid in Kodangal and all villages were provided water tanks.

As an MLA, he said he had

brought drinking water to Kodangal at a cost of Rs 350 crore. A 50-bed hospital was also set up in Kosgi. Nothing was done after the TRS won, Revanth said.

Revanth said that development came to a halt after the TRS won the Kodangal seat in 2018. He said Minister KT Rama Rao had adopted Kondangal.

But he has completely forgotten about it after winning elections.

He said that the foundation stone for the Kosgi Bus Depot was laid in 2018 by five ministers. But works have remained incomplete. Even mud was not cleared from Kodangal roads in the last three years. He challenged TRS leaders to an open debate regarding development in Kodangal.

### Congress decides to say goodbye ...

Continued from page 1

Manickam has been staying at the Dilkusha Guesthouse from the beginning instead of Golconda Hotel.

Party sources said AICC secretaries Bose Raju and Srinivasa Krishnan will function from the MLA Quarters whenever they come to Hyderabad. The TPCC leaders visited Sridhar Babu's MLA quarters and examined it on Tuesday. Some Congress leaders had objected to party leaders staying at the Golconda Hotel saying that it didn't help the Congress when the party faced a severe blow in the Assembly as well as Lok Sabha elections in 2018 and 2019.

## Hyderabad start-ups funding defies corona third wave

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

It is a big week for the Hyderabad start-up ecosystem as start-ups are defying the covid-19 pandemic and raising funds.

HR tech platform Darwinbox has more than tripled its valuation to become a unicorn in a new USD 72 million funding round. Med Tech platform Stanplus Tech has raised USD 20 mn. The agritech start-up, Our Food, has raised USD 6 mn.

Telangana celebrates its first unicorn in Saas which was earlier confined mostly to Chennai.

Technology Crossover Ventures (TCV), an investor

known for backing firms such as Netflix, Meta, Spotify and Airbnb led the Darwinbox USD 72 million Series D funding.

Darwinbox helps organisations manage their human resource needs such as hiring and on-boarding, touchless attendance and employee management digitally. It works with both new age firms such as MakeMyTrip and Swiggy and traditional companies like Adani firms.

StanPlus, India's leading emergency medical response company has raised USD 20 million in a massive Series A investment. Notably, this is the largest Series A funding raised in the healthcare sector.

Overall, the capital infusion will be used to scale up StanPlus's operations to 500 hospitals, launch its flagship Red Ambulance brand in 15 cities from the current five. They're piloting an eight-minute ambulance service in Hyderabad, making it the fastest medical response system in India.

Minister KT Rama Rao congratulated the start-ups and said that there will be many more unicorns from the city.

Our Food, an agritech start-up with innovative, low cost and decentralised mini food processing units, has raised USD 6 mn in growth funding.

## Rich haul of ‘Padmas’...

Continued from page 1

From Andhra Pradesh, Garikipati Narasimha Rao, Gosaveedu Shaik Hassan (posthumous) and Dr. Sunkara Venkata Adinarayana Rao have been conferred with Padma Shri.

Sunkara Venkata Adinarayana Rao is an Indian orthopaedic surgeon noted for his work for the poor and needy. He hails from Bhimavaram, West Godavari District. Narsimha Rao Garikipati has been honoured with Padma Shri under Literature & Education category. He is a Telugu Avadhani (literary performer) hailing from Annavaram in East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh. He is respected for his abilities to spin out verses conforming to Telugu grammar. He delivers lectures on personality development based on Hindu culture and way

of life. He regularly gives discourses on ancient Hindu texts like Bhagavad Gita, Balavikaasam, Ramayana, and Mahabharata.

Gosaveedu Sheik Hassan Saheb is a former disciple of Sheikh Chinna Moulana, who has served as the resident vidhwan of Bhadracharam Sitarama Temple for about 45 years. From Tamil Nadu, veteran actress Sowcar Janaki was honoured with Padma Shri. The actress has appeared in over 450 films, predominantly in Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada languages. She also performed on stage in over 3,000 shows and was a radio artiste during her earlier years. She won two Nandi Awards.

The Padma awards are presented by the President ceremonially at his official residence - the Rashtrapati Bhawan - around March or April each year.

### KCR may not go to UP for ...

Continued from page 1

The corona pandemic and the ban on public meetings and roadshows till January 31 imposed by the Election Commission of India were also reasons for the TRS not showing interest in it.

It is also learnt that the TRS and the Chief Minister have not got an invitation from the Samajwadi Party leadership and hence the TRS leadership is not showing interest. Sources said the TRS may send a team or KCR himself may go to Uttar Pradesh in case the party gets an invitation from the Samajwadi Party. It is learnt that only a few leaders like Talasani Srinivas Yadav had shown interest in going to Uttar Pradesh to campaign as he had links with former UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav.

## President’s Police Medal for 2, Police ...

Continued from page 1

too was selected for the President's Medal for Distinguished Services.

Shahanawaz Qasim, Inspector General of Police, Director, Minorities Welfare, Sankranthi Ravikumar, Addl. Dy. Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, Cyberabad, Rayappagari Sudarshan, ASP, Intelligence, Polagani Srinivasa Rao, DSP, and IGP, Intelligence, Mettu Venkata Raman A. Reddy were selected for the Police Medal.

Pulla Sfiobhan Kumar, Addl. SP, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Guddheti Sreenivasulu, DSP, IT & C, O/o ADGP, Technical,

Hyderabad, KM Kiran Kumar, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Wanaparthy, Mohd, Yakub Khan, RSI, Intelligence, Telangana, Bendi Satyam, Arsi, 7th Bn TSSP Dichpalli and Ilapadna Koteswar Rao, Head Constable, TSSP Kondapur, were selected for the Police Medal.

Two Railway Protection Force (RPF) officials of the South Central Railway were selected for the Indian Police Medal.

The RPF officials are Narasimha Udugu, Inspector, Secunderabad Post, and Mastan Vali Shaik, Assistant Sub-Inspector, Tadepalli, Vijayawada Division.

### Total Covid cases cross 22L in AP; active 1L

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The coronavirus caseload in Andhra Pradesh crossed 22 lakh while the number of active cases crossed one-lakh with the addition of 13,819 fresh infections on Tuesday.

The last one lakh cases came in a span of 10 days with the state registering over 10,000 fresh positives per day

over the past few days.

The state also reported 12 fresh Covid-19 deaths, the highest in a day after about two months.

Also, 5,716 infected persons got cured in the state, the latest bulletin said.

The state Covid-19 chart now showed a total of 22,08,955 positive cases, 20,92,998 recoveries and 14,561 deaths to date.

## Kalyan Singh, Gen Rawat given...

Continued from page 1

Cyrus Poonawalla of the Serum Institute of India, which manufactured COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, and Krishna Ella and Suchitra Ella of Bharat Biotech, which produced India's indigenous coronavirus vaccine Covaxin, were also given Padma Bhushan.

Kalyan Singh and General Rawat were given Padma Vibhushan, the country's second-highest civilian award, posthumously.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and Google CEO Sundar Pichai were conferred Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award.

Late Punjabi folk singer Gurmeet Bawa, actor Victor Banerjee and former Union Home Secretary Rajiv Mehroshi have been awarded Padma Bhushan.

Olympic gold medalist

Neeraj Chopra and singer Sonu Nigam were awarded Padma Shri.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the President approved conferment of 128 Padma Awards, including two duo cases, this year. In a duo case, the award is counted as one.

The list comprises 4 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 107 Padma Shri awards. Thirty-four of the awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 13 posthumous awardees.

### Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee rejects award

Continued from page 1

No one has told me anything about it. If they have decided to offer Padma Bhushan to me, I refuse to accept it," he said in a statement.

According to CPI(M) sources, it was a decision of Bhattacharjee and also the party.

Former Uttar Pradesh chief minister and

Hindustva poster boy late Kalyan Singh and India's first Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat who died in a helicopter crash recently, were awarded Padma Vibhushan on Tuesday, while veteran Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and CPI(M) leader Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee were conferred with Padma Bhushan.

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

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.



# TS tops in NREGS implementation

Provided 97% of mandays to workers in 2021-22, says Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Minister Errabelli Dayakar Rao stated that Telangana government has provided 97 percent of work to workers under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS). The Minister, at a programme held at Ministers' quarters in Banjara Hills here on Tuesday, released the calendar and diary for 2022 brought out by Additional Project Officers Association of the NREGS. "The Centre allocated 13.75



crore mandays for Telangana under NREGS for the year 2021-22. Out of this, the state government was able to provide 13.38 crore mandays to the workers so far covering 97.31 percent of the allocation. An amount of Rs 2,374 crore



was paid to the workers under NREGS. The Minister said. The state was able to get clearance for allocation of another 2 crore mandays, he said. In

addition, Rs 1,049 crore was spent in the form of material for employment generation and to provide basic amenities in villages, he said.

Under the guidance of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, with the cooperation of officials of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development of state and the officials of NREGS, the scheme has been implemented successfully in Telangana. The state stands in the first place in the country in implementing NREGS, he said. He urged the APOs of NREGS to continue their efforts for implementation of the scheme so that the state will continue in the first place. He assured the APOs that he would strive to solve their problems.

## Private school teacher held for harassing minor girl

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

Cops of Cyber crime branch Rachakonda arrested a private school teacher for harassing a minor girl with sexual explicit words and photos through virtual whatsapp numbers. The accused is identified as Regonda Venkata Sai (31), resident of Jagityal, Telangana.

The accused used to develop sexual desires on girl students. To fulfill his desires, he collected phone numbers of girl students and held chats with them. Due to his bad behaviour with students, he was dismissed from his job from different schools. He also installed an app and generated virtual numbers through that App. Later he got registered those numbers with a Whatsapp messenger in his mobile phone and then started sending text messages to the victim girl like a stranger.

Later, he proposed to the victim to love him. But she refused and stopped to respond to his messages. On which the accused bore grudge on her and started sending abusive text messages to her and also to her mother. Further he also sent obscene nude photos to her and thus harassed her.

During the course of investigation, the IO collected all the technical evidences and after analysing the data, the accused was arrested on Tuesday (Jan 25). He will be produced for judicial custody. The case was investigated under the direct supervision of Mahesh M Bhagwat Commissioner of Police, with the guidance of Yadagiri, DCP Crimes and S Harinath, ACP. The case was investigated by Inspector Shankar of Cyber Crimes who apprehended the accused.

## Four special teams to probe Rs 12 cr e-fraud

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad police formed four special teams to investigate the Rs. 12.40 crore e-fraud which was reported at Mahesh Cooperative Urban Bank. Fraudsters had withdrawn the amount after hacking into servers and transferred the amount from three accounts of the bank to around 120 bank accounts maintained in various banks across the country.

The officials of the bank had lodged a complaint with the police on Monday while the transactions were made since Saturday. "Almost the entire sum of amount was withdrawn from the three accounts. We suspect collusion on part of some insiders," said a senior official of Hyderabad police.



## Around 100 cases booked against people for not wearing mask

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Around 100 cases have been registered by the Chikkadpally police on Monday against people who found not wearing a mask at public places. The police are conducting special drives to strictly implement the 'Mask On' policy in view of increase in Covid-19 cases. On Monday, the police booked 100 cases for violating the mask rule. The police nabbed the people who were not wearing mask at places including hotels, pan shops, tea stalls,

bus stands and imposed fine on them. Besides registering the cases, the police also asked the shopkeepers to ensure that the customers are wearing the mask and the staff are following Covid-19 norms. The police further advised the shop owners to keep 'No Mask, No Entry' boards and make sanitisers available at the shops for the customers.

The police officials said that special drive will be continued and people violating the rules will be booked and penalties will be imposed on them.

## Officials asked to hold meets to finalise budget for ULBs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state government has directed all the collectors and additional collectors (local bodies) to convene special meetings of the governing bodies of the municipal corporations and municipalities to finalise their budget proposals for the financial year 2022-23. Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar has written letters to the district collectors and additional collectors (local bodies) asking them to send budget proposals in their respective areas for the year 2022-23.

The meetings should discuss about financial conditions of the respective urban local bodies including revenue and expenditure and resource mobilisation. In addition, they have to discuss the procedures to strengthen their functioning further. Arvind Kumar, in his letter, said that focus of the new budget should be on equal development and all the urban local bodies should ensure planned development in their respective areas. The government, on its part, would ensure allo-



Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar

cation of funds through Finance Commission as well as Pattana Pragati programme. The budget should include expenditure on sanitation account, water charges, loan payments and power tariff. The urban local bodies have to allocate 10 per cent of the budget as green budget, he said.

As the financial year is coming to close in about two months, the district collectors have been asked to conduct preliminary meetings for finalisation of budget proposals. Collectors, additional collectors (local bodies) have been asked to attend without fail the special meetings of municipal corporations and municipalities for finalisation of their budget plans.

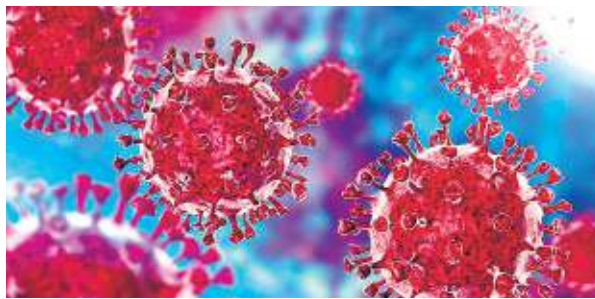
## Covid woes hit exam plans, medicos may lose a year

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Due to the continuous spread of Covid-19 for almost two years (2020,2021), both medical and dental students in Telangana face the threat of losing one academic year. The dreaded Covid-19 has been spreading across the country in the form of omicron variant in the third wave in 2022 and Telangana is also hit along with other states.

In the first and second waves in the last two years, medical and dental students across the state have been facing numerous academic problems in connection with the completion of their course in time.

There was disruption in conducting the classes regularly to most of the MBBS & BDS students in various colleges across the state. Due to lack of clarity on academic schedules, especially last year, teaching staff were not able to complete the syllabi and examinations could not be conducted as per schedule. The plans of health universities to complete medical PG admissions



also remain incomplete.

Academic cycle of every year was thrown out of gear in the last two years. Under the circumstances, all MBBS and BDS batches in Telangana are now staring at delay of almost one academic year in completing their course.

There are nearly 10,000 medical and 5,000 dental students in the state and all batches are staring at losing an academic year. Ranging from 8 months to 15 months, the students have not appeared even for one examination. Several students were stuck in second year instead of going to third year due to non-conduct of classes and non completion

of syllabi. The students are not sure when the next examination will be held to them. Similar situations prevail at Gandhi, Osmania and other medical colleges.

The students are not sure when the examinations would be conducted next time. During the pandemic, announcements for examinations were issued giving a short notice to the students and as such students could not prepare for the examinations properly. In addition, several medicos and teaching staff were infected by the dreaded Covid-19 virus and were hospitalised during last two years. In this connection,



Cyberabad CP Stephen Raveendra and other police officials at a review meet in Hyderabad on Tuesday

## Statue Of Equality unveiling: CP Cyberabad conducts review

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad Stephen Raveendra, on Tuesday, conducted a meeting at Cyberabad Police commissionerate with regard to bandobast-related arrangements. ACPs and other higher officers participated in the meeting. The meeting was held to streamline the arrangements for the unveiling of the "Statue Of Equality" at JIVA

Campus at Muchintal, Shamshabad on 5th of February.

The 13-day event will start on February 2nd and come to close on February 14th.

Cyberabad CP said the focus of the police personnel should be on better crowd management and Traffic management. The police personnel have been ordered to take every precaution for maintenance of Law & Order. He stressed on good coordi-

nation with the Fire, Medical & Municipal authorities. He also emphasised the need for better coordination between the government, non-government agencies, and the rest of the stakeholders.

Other participants in the meeting were Jt. CP Avinash Mohanty, DCP Traffic SM Vijay Kumar, Shamshabad DCP Jagadeeshwar Reddy, and officers from ACP rank to SP rank from all the districts of Telangana.



## JNTUH College of Engg Jagityal gets NAAC cert.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Registrar of Jawaharlal Nehru University Technology, Hyderabad said on Tuesday that JNTUH University College of Engineering, Jagityal got the NAAC A+ certificate. The Committee of National Assessment and Accreditation Council visited JNTUH University College of Engineering, Jagityal during 19th and 20th January 2022. The Committee inspected all the academic and infrastructural facilities in the College and granted A+ Grade with CGPA of 3.29 in the NAAC accreditation process. The Vice-Chancellor and all the University officials expressed their happiness as the college located in the rural area received A+ Grade by the NAAC.

## OU extends date for PhD thesis submission

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University (OU) has extended the last date for submission of PhD thesis by scholars availing one-time chance from January 31 to March 31.

In view of the holidays declared to educational institutions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the university took the decision to extend submission date for PhD thesis. In this connection, a meeting was held with Deans of the Faculties here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the decision to extend the date was taken. "This provision is extended only to such scholars who have made the pre-submission seminar presentation in front of the respective Departmental Research Committees on or before January 31, 2022," the OU said in a press release.

No new submission process would be entertained by any department under the one-time chance for submission of the PhD thesis, it added.



Medchal-Malkajgiri Additional Collector Narasimha Reddy administering pledge to the officials to mark National Voters' Day at the collectorate on Tuesday

## Voter ID cards issued to 7,558 freshers

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

Medchal-Malkajgiri Additional Collector Narasimha Reddy stated that officials have distributed voter ID cards to 7,558 youth who have become eligible to use their voting rights and who have enrolled themselves as voters afresh in the district. In view of the 12 th National Voters' Day, Narasimha Reddy held a meeting with EROs in

the district through Google, from Collector's chambers here on Tuesday. Addressing the meeting, the Additional Collector urged all the youngsters in the district who have become eligible for voting rights, to register themselves as voters and make use of the vote to elect suitable people's representatives. In this connection, he distributed voter ID cards to the new voters and adminis-

tered pledge to the officials for conducting elections in a free and fair manner and without any fear. He said that programmes are being held to celebrate National Voters' Day to bring awareness among people about the importance of using voting rights. By using their voting rights, people can elect well-mannered people for the development of the country, he said.

## Fraudster arrested for duping car customers

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

Cyber crime police Rachakonda arrested a fraudster for duping the victim on the pretext of providing new cars on discounts and made victim to transfer huge funds to his bank accounts. According to the police said in press release that, The victim has searched in internet for new cars at low prices and registered his phone number in some online marketplace sites. The accused Sayyad Abdul Rafey Rashid 50 years Resident of Keesara Mandal, Medchal-Malkajgiri district found the victim's number and he decided to cheat the victim on the pretext of providing cars on discounts. As per his plan February-2021 the accused contacted the victim over phone by introducing himself and informed to victim that he is having discount coupons of a particular Car company, so that he is avail discounts to purchase the cars in various show-rooms.

# KTR promises housing pattas for the poor

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development K.T. Rama Rao has announced that the state government would soon take up distribution of housing pattas for the urban poor. The Minister said that the government orders issued previously for regularisation of housing sites for the urban poor would be re-issued if required and the promise implemented.

In Qutubullapur constituency, KTR participated in a slew of programmes involving laying of foundation stones and inauguration of various developmental works taken up at a cost of Rs. 499.96 crore. KTR said, "We are carrying out developmental works in the suburbs of Hyderabad with definite plans. We are allocating thousands of crores of rupees on a large scale for development works without backtracking."

The Municipal Administration Minister said that he was happy to inaugurate



and lay the foundation stone for various developmental works worth nearly Rs 500 crore in a single day in the Qutubullapur constituency. He said that development of Nalas (storm water drains) in many parts of Hyderabad was progressing fast with the allocation of funds under the SNDP. The SNDP was intended to find permanent solutions in view of the hardships faced by people during the floods caused by the

heavy rains in the past. "We are setting up sewage treatment plants at a cost of Rs 248 crore in the Qutubullapur constituency without polluting the lakes," he said. He said that under the aegis of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority, efforts were being made to set up flyovers and underpasses in various parts of Hyderabad to cope with the growing traffic congestion.

KTR laid the foundation stone for the Fox Sagar nala development works taken up at an estimated cost of 795 crore to prevent flooding of the areas nearby. He said that thousands of acres of urban forest parks would be set up with the aim of providing a pleasant environment for the health of people of the city, as part of which a park named after oxygen would be set up in the glasshouse. He said these parks



"We are setting up sewage treatment plants at a cost of Rs 248 crore in the Qutubullapur constituency without polluting the lakes," he said.

were like oxygen factories in the current corona conditions.

KTR said that the government would set up multi-purpose function halls to cater to the needs of the poor and middle class at a low cost. As part of this plan, a multi-purpose function hall with all facilities would be made available at Chintal Bhagat Singh Nagar. He said that the sports theme park had been made available with sophisticated features for the sake of youth and children.

## CP invokes PD Act against two notorious offenders

PNS ■ MEDCHAL MALKAJGIRI

Rachakonda Police Commissioner Mahesh M. Bhagwat invoked PD Act against two notorious offenders Gajula Subramanyam and Sandiri Mallikarjun, detained them in the Central Prison, Cherlapally. Recently, accused Gajula Subramanyam, Sandiri Mallikarjun and remaining four associates formed as a gang and committed a dacoity. These two accused along with their associates abducted two persons who were running Gold shop business at Neredmet PS limits and confined in a room and injured them. The victims transferred an amount of Rs. 2,00,000/- from their account through Google Pay, when they were in an unconscious stage. The culprits also robbed their money. In October 2021 Neredmet Police arrested the accused and remanded them to judicial custody.



# ‘Govt committed to provide good quality healthcare’

Minister for Health T Harish Rao slams the opposition parties for blindly opposing introduction of English medium

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

Telangana State government has accorded top priority to healthcare and education sectors, according to Minister for Finance and Health T Harish Rao on Tuesday. The government, he said, was committed to provide good quality healthcare to every citizen in the State, he said.

The Minister along with Minister for Agriculture S Niranjan Reddy and Kollapur MLA B Harshvardhan Reddy was inaugurating the newly-built Mother and Child health centre at a cost of Rs 700 lakh at Ramapuram village under Kollapur mandal.

Speaking on the occasion, the health centre was equipped with all facilities. The centre would be upgraded into 100-bed hospital soon from the 50-bed centre at present. The Minister accepted the local MLA's appeal to upgrade the



Minister for Health T Harish Rao speaking at a function in Nagarkurnool on Tuesday. Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy is also present

centre to 100-bed hospital. He also promised to sanction a dialysis centre in Kollapur.

The State government, he said, had sanctioned three medical colleges in erstwhile Mahabubnagar district and they would be inaugurated shortly. The State government

was committed to keep its promise to provide good quality healthcare to people, he said. The State government was providing healthcare facilities across the State. All the vacancies in all government hospitals were being filled. On education front, Harish

Rao said 'mana voru mana badi' programme would be launched from next year as part of the plan to unveil English medium classes. All infrastructure facilities would be provided in all school to make the programme a success. The government would grant Rs

7,280 crore funds to provide all facilities in the school. The facilities in the schools would be improved on a par with corporate schools, he said. The Opposition parties, he said, were unable to accept the good work being done by the government. These parties had been blindly opposing the introduction of medium of English to help the students who came from poor families, he said.

MP P Ramulu, Corporation chairmen A Srinivas, Saichand, Zilla Parishad Chairperson Padmavathi, Government Whip K D Damodhar Reddy, G Balaraj, MLC K Narayana Reddy, Nagarkurnool MLA Marri Janardhan Reddy, District Collector Uday Kumar, Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Manu Chowdary, RDO Hanuma Nayak, District Medical and Health Officer Sudhakar Lal and others were present.



Minister for Excise V Srinivas Goud speaking at a function in Mahabubnagar on Tuesday

## SCs to derive benefit under Dalit Bandhu first

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Minister for Excise Dr. V Srinivas Goud has said that the SCs would derive benefit first under the Dalit Bandhu, as they have been remaining aloof from society for a long. Gradually, the scheme benefits would be extended to Dalits and backward classes in phases.

Reviewing the Dalit Bandhu scheme with Mahabubnagar and Narayanapeta MPs, MLAs district collectors and officials at the ZP Meeting hall here on Tuesday, Practitioners of caste-based vocations received support in the new state of Telangana under KCR, he said quoting the examples of welfare and development schemes being implemented for various sections, especially the farmers.

Negligence on the part of Dalit Bandhu would not be tolerated, he said appealing to all to work for the scheme's success.

In all, 100 beneficiaries in each constituency would be given Rs 10 lakh to start self-employment units in agriculture, dairy, industries, and so on and wanted the officials to identify the profitable units in thrust areas to benefit the

Dalits. He asked them to submit him a report on the units to be implemented by various government departments.

Custom hiring centres, poultries, buffalo units, dairy industry, industries, marketing, centring works, back yard, paddy transplanters, transport services, auto-trolley, fertiliser and seed units, he said asking the officials to identify the areas by tomorrow and submit

a report. MP of Mahabubnagar Manne Srinivas asked the officials to make the cost-benefit analysis and wanted them to focus on fertiliser, agricultural, organic manure, dairy units and asked them to make the scheme a grand success.

Mahabubnagar ZP chairperson Swarna Sudhakar Reddy, Narayanapeta ZP Chairperson Vanaja spoke.

## Tourism centres to be promoted

Minister for Tourism and Excise V Srinivas Goud on Tuesday said the government would promote tourism centres in the State. After formation of Telangana State, the tourism industry had got a boost and several ancient structures gained international recognition, he said. The Minister was flagging off a tourist bus to facilitate free

travel for tourist to tourism spots on the occasion of National Tourism Day. Srinivas Goud said under the leadership of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao, Ramappa temple was recognised by UNESCO. The Pochampally village was recognised as one of the world's best tourism village. He further said the district administration would promote tourism spots in the district. The administration was taking all measures to encourage tourism in Mahabubnagar district.



Minister Srinivas Goud flagging off a tourist bus in Mahabubnagar on Tuesday

## Adulterated milk products seized

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Patancheru police busted an alleged racket in adulterated milk, curd and cheese in a dairy at Industrial area in Pashamylaram in the district on Tuesday. The police seized 6,000 litres of milk and other milk products. Deputy Superintendent of Police Bheem Reddy said the



Adulterated milk products seized at industrial area of Pashamylaram in the district on Tuesday

dairy management was preparing milk, curd and cheese with milk powder by mixing chemicals. The dairy management was packing the adulterated milk in buckets in buckets of Amul, Visakha and others.

## Maa Tujhe Salaam held in KITS

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Music, Dance and Fine Arts (MDF) Club of the Student Activity Centre (SAC) in Kakatiya Institute of Technology and Sciences here organised 'Maa Tujhe Salaam' under the initiative of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on Monday. MDF Club general secretary D Sathvik Reddy and his

team organised the event. Patriotic songs competition was held. Twenty students participated in the event. Dean of Student Affairs G Raghotham Reddy, faculty incharge and MDF and Associate Dean of Student Affairs D Prabhakara Chary, Head of PSD and Faculty incharge of PMC Y Manjushree, assistant professor of EIED B Krishna were

judges at the event. Principal K Ashoka Reddy said Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched programme. The results of 'MAA TUJHE SALAAM' are: First prize went to G Sai Spurthi (B21ce127L), second prize to Mohammad sufiyaan (B21EE094) and consolation prize to M Saketh (B21CE032).

## Youthful push to democratic life

Collector distributes voter ID cards to the youth

Exercising voting rights in a free and fair manner gives a new and renewed life to democracy. It reflects the significance of our role as the proud citizens of vibrant and democratic India. Collectors of different districts urged the new voters while distributing voting cards to them on the occasion of National Voters' Day. The day marked the celebrative mood of the youth who enrolled as voters with a pledge to protect and preserve the vibrancy of democracy.

PNS ■ JAYASHANKER BHUPALAPALLY

District Collector Bhavesh Mishra on Tuesday exhorted the people to exercise their franchise. The right to vote provided by the Constitution is a boon for the people, he said. Speaking at a meeting, held on the occasion of 12th National Voters' Day at Singareni club, the Collector said India is the largest democracy in the world. The Constitution has granted the right to vote to every eligible person. The minimum age for voting was reduced to 18



Jayashanker Bhupalapally Collector Bhavesh Mishra felicitating a senior citizen in Bhupalapally on Tuesday

from 21 years, he said. The Central Election Commission and the State Election Commi

ssion were conducting programmes to create awareness among the voters.



Peddapally District Collector S Sangeeta Satyanarayana administering pledge to the Collectorate staff on National Voters' Day, in Peddapally on Tuesday

PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI

District Collector Dr. S Sangeeta Satyanarayana administered oath to the collectorate employees and officers that they will exercise their right to franchise without fear or favor in elections. Administering the oath to them on the occasion of the National Voters' Day on Tuesday, she said that the right to vote is a right created for the people of the country as per the tenets of the Indian Constitution. She explained the significance of a vote to right and the

reforms introduced by the Election Commission. To get photo identity voter card afresh, people should register as voters from Mee- Seva centres or an Internet centre or through a mobile application. There is greater transparency in the services rendered to voters as the Voter Helpline The mobile application provides for registering as a voter, incorporate changes in names or other relevant information, she said. She distributed voter identity cards among those who are registered as new voters.

## District Collector releases groundwater assessment report

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Nalgonda District Prashant Jeevan Patil on Tuesday inspected the new office premises of Groundwater Department here. The office was shifted to the Zilla Parishad office from a building at Clock Tower. The Collector on the occasion released 'groundwater resource assessment 2019-20.' Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Executive Engineer were present. The village-wise groundwater resource assessment was conducted by the Groundwater Department of Nalgonda.



Nalgonda District Collector Prashant Jeevan Patil inspecting new premises for Groundwater Department office in Nalgonda on Tuesday

dal to know the problems being faced by the people. The BJYM activist was also attacked with knives by the TRS gangsters, he alleged. The BJP MP claimed that he had tried to get in touch with the Police Commissioner, but there was no response to his call. He suspected that the police were in the know of the attack. The

DGP too did not respond to the phone calls, he alleged.

He accused the Chief Minister of disturbing the law and order and said he would take the matter to the notice of the Centre. He asked the Chief Minister to mend his ways. He expressed condolence over the suicide of a youth in Khammam. He

said teachers too were committing suicide. He demanded scrapping of GO 317. Saying that the Chief Minister was staying in his farmhouse, Sanjay said he was criticising the Centre to stir up Telangana sentiments among the people. He said the Chief Minister had failed to fulfil the promise to set up tribal university.

**The BJP MP claimed that he had tried to get in touch with the Police Commissioner, but there was no response to his call. He suspected that the police were in the know of the attack. The DGP too did not respond to the phone calls, he alleged.**



## Minister asks officials to gear up to tackle Covid-19

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Minister for Transport Puvvada Ajay Kumar on Tuesday directed the Medical and Health officials in the district to gear up to tackle the Covid-19 infections. The Minister, accompanied by Zilla Parishad Chairman and others went round the city to monitor the ongoing door-to-door fever survey. He interacted with people in 57th division. He told the people that there was no need for panic. The State government had taken all measures to tackle Covid-19 third wave. The Government District Headquarters Hospital, and all



Puvvada Ajay Kumar

primary health centres in the district were fully equipped with all facilities to provide quality treatment to patients, he said. He made it clear that there was no shortage of testing

kits and home isolation kits. He expressed happiness over the district completing 100 per cent vaccination.

Ajay Kumar asked the officials to ensure that the patients with seasonal diseases do not face difficulties when they approached the hospital for treatment. He asked the people's representatives to monitor the implementation of the government's policies. District Collector V P Gautham, Municipal Commissioner Adarsh Surabhi, Mayor P Neeraja, DCC Ban Chairman K Nagabhushanam and others were present.

## Woman in labour denied treatment

Health Minister Harish orders action against doctor



People village in Nagarkurnool district protesting at Community Health Centre over a woman in labour being denied treatment in Banala village in Nagarkurnool village on Tuesday

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

The doctor and health staff at a Community Health Centre on Tuesday allegedly refused to treat a woman in labour on the suspicion that the Adivasi woman, named Lalamma, was infected with Covid-19. The incident happened at Banala village under Balmoor mandal in the district. Those, who accompanied the woman in the advanced stage of pregnancy,

pleaded with the doctor and the health staff to provide treatment to the woman, but in vain. The woman at last gave birth to a baby on the premises of the Community Health Centre. On knowing the incident, the people in the village gathered at the centre and protested.

Minister for Health T Harish Rao, who is in the district, ordered an inquiry into the incident and take action against duty doctor.



INDIA CORNER

Police service medals for 18 ITBP personnel

Eighteen personnel of the India-China LAC guarding force Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) have been decorated with various police service medals including gallantry decorations on the eve of Republic Day. A notification issued by the Union home ministry on Tuesday stated that three personnel have been awarded the police medal for gallantry (PMG), three with the president's police medal for distinguished service and 12 with the police medal for meritorious service. The PMG has been given to the team of Assistant Commandant Ashok Kumar, Inspectors Suresh Lal and Neela Singh for neutralising two wanted Maoists during a fierce encounter in the left wing extremism-affected area of Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon district in February, 2018. A huge assortment of arms and ammunition was also recovered after the operation.



DDA fines 929 vehicles for dumping garbage, debris on Yamuna floodplains

The Delhi Development Authority imposed a fine of Rs 2.41 crore on 929 vehicles over the last four years for illegal dumping of construction or demolition debris and garbage, and unauthorised parking on the Yamuna floodplains. According to latest data, the authority issued 610 challans over the dumping of debris and unauthorised parking on the river floodplains in 2021, the maximum in the last four years. It issued 54 challans in 2020, 186 in 2019 and just one in 2018. An environmental compensation of over Rs 2.41 crore was imposed on the violators, but only Rs 46.87 lakh has been recovered so far, the data showed. The National Green Tribunal had banned the dumping of garbage or construction or demolition debris on the Yamuna floodplain in 2015. Anyone found violating the order is liable to pay environmental compensation up to Rs 50,000.



Adityanath slams Akhilesh over Pakistan remark, says SP promotes gun culture

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday accused the Samajwadi Party of promoting gun culture and sought to corner its president Akhilesh Yadav over the Pakistan remark. An interview in the Economic Times quoted Yadav to have said that India's real enemy is China while Pakistan is a political enemy, which the BJP attacks for its 'vote politics'. "Those who do not think Pakistan is an enemy and consider Jinnah a friend, what can be said about their education and vision. They call themselves socialists but the truth is that 'tamanchawad' (gun culture) is running in their veins," Yogi Adityanath said in a tweet in Hindi without taking any name. Earlier, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra had also attacked Yadav over the issue, saying this shows his mindset and he should tender an apology to the country for the comments which show his love for Pakistan.



Voter turnout should be at least 75 per cent in next LS polls:Naidu

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Tuesday called for increasing the voter turnout to at least 75 per cent in the next Lok Sabha elections. In his message at an event on the occasion of the 12th National Voters Day, he said as a nation we must think and arrive at a consensus to have simultaneous elections to all the three tiers of federal set up and move towards better governance by focusing on all-round development of our people. Naidu was the chief guest at the event but could attend the function as he is in home isolation in Hyderabad after test-

ing positive for COVID-19. In the 75th year of our Independence, let us resolve to leave no voter behind and aim to increase the voter turnout to at least 75 per cent in the next general elections. Let each one realise that vote is not only a right but a responsibility," he said. His message was read out at the event in Hindi and English. The vice president said the country has come a long way from the first general elections of 1952 when only 44.87 per cent of the eligible voters turned up to vote. In the last general elections in 2019, 67.40 per cent or more than two-third of the eligible voters exercised their franchise, he noted. "It is

heartening to note that today, we are among the highest voting nations in the world with a substantial increase of 50 per cent in voter turnout in 70 years. The Election Commission came into being on January 25, 1950, a day before India became a republic. For the past 12 years now, the day is celebrated as National Voters Day. Thanks to initiatives like Systematic Voter Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP), voter turnout has increased by 8 per cent from 58.21 per cent in 2009 to 66.44 per cent in 2014, he said. "I am delighted that in the last general elections in 2019

and for the first time, women voter turnout was more than that of men by a margin of 0.17 per cent," Naidu said. Elections to five state assemblies last year held under Covid protocol formulated by the Commission has witnessed a huge voter turnout in the range of 74 per cent to 84 per cent, he observed.



Maiden flypast of 75 aircraft, display of 10 scrolls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A grand fly-past of 75 aircraft of the Indian Air Force, cultural performances by 480 dancers selected through competitive process, display of 10 scrolls each of 75 metres length and installation of 10 large LED screens will be happening for the first time at the Republic Day parade on Wednesday, the Ministry of Defence said. The Republic Day parade (RDP)-2022 is happening in the 75th year of Indian independence, which is being celebrated as 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' across the country, the MoD's statement on Tuesday noted. The grand finale and the most keenly awaited segment of the parade, the fly-past, will for the first



time witness 75 aircraft of the IAF displaying a number of formations, as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav,' it mentioned. For the first time, the IAF has coordinated with Doordarshan to show cockpit videos during the fly past, it noted. Vintage as well as current modern aircraft like Rafale, Sukhoi, Jaguar, Mi-17, Sarang, Apache and Dakota will display different formations -- including Rahat, Meghna, Ekavya, Trishul, Tiranga, Vijay and Amrit -- at the fly-past, the MoD stated. Ten scrolls each of 75 metres in length and 15 feet in height will be displayed along the Rajpath during the parade for the first time, it mentioned.

Hearing & speech-impaired teenager raped in Chittorgarh



PNS ■ JAIPUR

A rape case has been registered in the matter of a hearing and speech impaired 19-year-old girl who was found to have been raped as she approached a government hospital in the Bhilwara district of Rajasthan, complaining of stomach pain and bleeding on Monday, police said. The case was registered against an unknown person with Sadas police station of Chittorgarh district from where the girl belongs, a

senior police official said. During examination on Monday, the girl was found two-months pregnant following which the hospital administration informed the local police and district administration, which arranged for a sign-language expert to know how she fell victim to the crime. In her interaction with the sign language expert, the teenager victim said she had been raped in an agriculture farm around two months back.

Political condition in Bengal 'horrible and frightening': Governor Dhankhar

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Calling the political condition prevailing in West Bengal "horrible and frightening", Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar alleged on Tuesday the people of the state do not have the freedom to exercise their franchise freely and fearlessly. He also accused state assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee of transgressing constitutional norms, provoking sharp reactions from the ruling TMC dispensation. "We have seen post-poll violence of unprecedented level. Those who dared to vote according to their own volition had to pay the price with their life," Dhankhar said after paying floral tributes at the statue of B R Ambedkar on the assembly premises on the National Voters Day. Noting that a fact-finding committee appointed by the chairperson of the National



Human Rights Commission had observed that rule of the ruler and not the law prevails in the state, the governor said, "This is an understatement; West Bengal's situation is so horrible and frightening that there is horror about the ruler here." He also came down heavily on Speaker Biman Banerjee, accusing him of

transgressing constitutional norms and not providing information sought by him. The speaker shot back, terming Dhankhar's accusation "uncalled for". The governor also accused Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of failing to provide answer to his queries on various occasions. "The speaker.... he thinks he has the

license to talk anything about the governor," Dhankhar told reporters. He claimed on several occasions the speaker did not provide him information he had sought, including details of the assembly resolution on extension of BSF's area of operation. Dhankhar alleged his address to the assembly was blacked out twice. "Does he not know Article 168 -- governor is number one in the legislature..... I will not withstand such indiscretions, unconstitutional work. The speaker shall not henceforth blackout address of the governor. If he does so, he will face music of law," Dhankhar said on the lawns of the assembly as the speaker stood a little distance away. Dhankhar asserted no file was pending with him with respect to any bill or government recommendation.



Govt imposes curbs on export of human hair

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday imposed restrictions on the export of human hair, a move, according to the hair industry, would help in checking alleged smuggling of the product from India. Hair exports were earlier allowed without any restriction. But now an exporter would have to seek permission or licence from the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) under the Commerce Ministry. "The export policy of human hair, unworked, whether or not washed or scoured; waste of human hair or any other form of raw human hair...has been put under restricted category, with immediate effect," Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) Santosh Kumar Sarangi said in a notification. Welcoming the move, member of Human Hair and Hair Products Manufacturers and Exporters Association of India Sunil Eamani said that it was their long-pending demand. Time and again, he has alleged that this labour intensive industry was facing a peculiar challenge of smug-

gling of raw human hair to countries like Myanmar and China, which is hurting local industries and exports. "Now with this restriction, only genuine exporters will be able to export the product," he said. In India, West Bengal is the major hub for the industry besides Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Tamil Nadu. Major competitors of India are China, Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar. Raw human hair are mainly collected from households and temples of these states and these primarily cater to the beauty market globally. Two types of hair are collected in India - remy and non-remy hair. Remy hair, the best grade, is collected from temples where pilgrims donate their hair as part of a religious vow. This quality is mainly used to make hairpieces and wigs. Non-Remy hair is a household waste collected by small groups of people in villages and cities. They segregate that and sell to dealers. During April-November this fiscal, hair exports stood at USD 144.26 million, while it was only USD 15.28 million in 2020-21.

EC ban on physical electioneering affects campaign material business

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Ban on physical electioneering for the assembly polls amid a spurt in Covid cases has taken a toll on the shops selling publicity material with people in the business complaining that they are not even able to meet their daily expenses. The shops equipped with colourful publicity material, dotting the areas adjacent to different political party offices in the state capital, await buyers even though the party offices in the vicinity contin-



ue to witness a heavy turnout of leaders and ticket seekers. The Election Commission has extended the ban till January 31 on physical rallies and roadshows ahead of the next month's assembly

elections in five states. The curb was imposed by the poll panel while announcing the schedule earlier this month on account of a surge in Covid cases in the country. "Every day I think it would be a better business but so far it has been very bad. I have three workers employed at the shop and I am not able to meet their expenses under the present conditions," Raghuraj Pal, owner of an over three-decade-old shop, Raghuraj Pal Enterprises, next to the state BJP headquarters told PTI.

Security forces recover IED planted by CPI(Maoist)

PNS ■ GARHWA

An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) planted on a road in Jharkhand's Garhwa district by suspected CPI(Maoist) was recovered by security forces, a senior police officer said on Tuesday. A joint security team of district armed police and CRPF detected the IED planted on a road in Beheratoli village during a search operation on Monday, Superintendent of Police, Anjani Kumar Jha said.

Ready to contest against Adityanath in Gorakhpur, says Dr Kafeel Khan

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Paediatrician Dr Kafeel Khan, whose name surfaced in the 2017 BRD Medical college tragedy in which several children died allegedly for lack of oxygen, said on Tuesday that he may contest against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath from Gorakhpur if any party supports him. Dr Khan was terminated from the service on November 9 last year and he has challenged it in the High Court. "I can contest the assembly election against Yogi Adityanath in



Gorakhpur. If any party gives me a ticket I am ready," Khan said while talking to PTI. When asked if he is in touch with any party or approached by anyone, "He said yes, talks are on. If all goes well I will be contesting the polls."

AIADMK fumes over vandalism of MGR statue in TN

PNS ■ THANJAVUR

A 40-year-old daily wage labourer was arrested on Monday here for allegedly vandalising a statue of late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MG Ramachandran, hours after the incident raised the hackles of the opposition AIADMK, which called for stringent action against the "anti-social elements" behind the incident. Police identified the arrested person as Sekar and said he vandalised the statue in an inebriated state. The bust of Ramachandran, the AIADMK founder who is more popularly known as



MGR, at North Main Street here was found removed from the pedestal by some party workers this morning, sparking



strong response from the main opposition party which said no insult to its founder will be brooked. Earlier, tense

moments prevailed here for some time as party workers gathered at the spot following the vandalism. The AIADMK strongly reacted to the incident, alleging the role of "anti-social elements" behind the damage to the party founder's bust. While AIADMK Coordinator O Pannerseelvam wanted legal action against those demeaning leaders who had served the country, Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly and party Joint Coordinator, K Palaniswami derided any attempts to "malign Puratchi Thalivar" (Revolutionary leader) and

urged the government to quickly act on the matter. In a series of tweets, he hailed the late chief minister's pro-people measures aimed at the poorer sections of the society and said he therefore was etched in the hearts of people forever. "I strongly condemn the damaging of MGR's statue in Thanjavur by anti-social elements. The government should take stringent action against those maligning Puratchi Thalivar and attempting to disturb public peace. Further, if such mischievous incidents continue, there would be serious consequences," the former chief minister said.

Mumbai records AQI 271; air quality severe in parts of city

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai's air quality index (AQI) was at 271 on Tuesday, which was worse than Delhi, with some areas of the city recording air quality under "severe" category, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) said. According to the SAMEER, the CPCB's air quality monitoring application, Mumbai's AQI was 271 in the afternoon, while Delhi recorded AQI 235. The Mazagaon air monitoring station



recorded AQI 454, which comes under the "severe" category, while Deonar and Navy Nagar-Colaba stations recorded AQI 324, which is categorised as "very poor", an official said.



# Life before death

The vaccination drive in terror-hit regions hasn't run into any problem, which is a good sign

On June 8 last year, Weyan, a tiny hamlet in Kashmir's Bandipora district, became India's first village to vaccinate its entire adult population against COVID-19. In a few days, Jammu and Kashmir will become India's second State, after Himachal Pradesh, to vaccinate all those over 18. The achievements are noteworthy considering health workers had to brave inaccessible terrain, non-existent communication facilities, terrible weather and terrorism to complete the process of giving the first dose of the vaccine to all. The State's vaccination drive carried on in the face of frequent incidents of cross-border terrorism in one of the most hostile international border areas of the world. The drive stayed on course despite a wave of killings throughout October 2021 when terrorists targeted non-Kashmiris, members of minority communities and did not spare even daily wage labourers. The surge in violence left 33 dead. However, the health workers were welcomed wherever they went, especially in areas known for separatist sentiments. The presence of security forces accompanying the teams caused no reservation among the locals, who overcame their wariness to receive the doses. The possibility of some separatist elements or sympathisers surreptitiously getting a free dose by the State cannot be ruled out. For once, the fear of terror paled before the fear of the unseen virus. That brings us to the moot issue: Do anti-State elements, whether terrorists, militants, insurgents, Naxalites or Maoists have a right to COVID-19 vaccines?



Under international humanitarian law, in situations of conflict, the wounded and sick are entitled to medical care. During the pandemic that we currently face, such care can include a vaccine. The State, which alone can acquire the vaccine, arranges for it to reach across the country. It will respect its human rights duties towards the population living in the conflict areas. The resistance groups have the primary responsibility for the wellbeing of those living in their area of influence. Whether in J&K that witnesses terror attacks, the 'Red Corridor' districts in central India that brave Maoist attacks, or the deep interiors of some States in the Northeast which have a brush with insurgency, the issue must have cropped up when security agencies were preparing for the vaccination drive. In Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Odisha, there were reports of the virus infecting Maoist cadres deep inside forests. Many may have succumbed for lack of medical care. The lockdowns or movement restrictions prevented couriers and sympathisers from reaching medicine or oxygen cylinders to them. What we do know is that the vaccination drives were never disturbed. In the Northeast, too, the drives never met with harm. The insurgents, like the Maoists, must have realised the danger of the virus spreading in their areas. The States did offer anti-COVID treatment and vaccine doses to those who surrendered. It is not known how many acceded to the call. Parliament must debate the issue and give shape to a protocol for the future.

## PICTALK



People walk past a sand sculpture on the theme of the 73rd Republic Day, in Puri

PTI

# Happy R-Day

But it's time for agencies to work professionally and to let the suffocating security cover go

As India celebrates its 73rd Republic Day today, there is a multi-layered security ring enveloping the Capital. Of course, the pandemic is a hindrance to the grandiosity of celebrations for a couple of years now. But, that apart, is there really a need to insulate the normal, common Indians from their national celebration? Why shouldn't they be allowed to be part of the joy, pride and festivities as those who claim to be the top layer among equals, that too in the name of protecting the latter? And from whom; one's own countrymen? Of course one remembers what happened at the Red Fort this day last year. But one also distinctly remembers that when former US President Bill Clinton



visited India towards the turn of last century, there was minimal inconvenience caused by the Secret Service people. They would diligently check all equipment besides mandatorily body-checking all incoming persons but they would never be overly intrusive. Why can't our security agencies be as professional? The only reason, it appears, is that they are still unsure of their own abilities; therefore, they'd rather issue advisories banning all sorts of items to a VIP venue.

There is no denying that any untoward incident on such a momentous occasion would come as a major embarrassment for the Government and the security establishment but another way of looking at it is, as some politicians have said in the past, women shouldn't venture out of their homes late at night because rapists are on the prowl. Well, rather than advising a well-meaning, perhaps late-working, woman to stay indoors, shouldn't the police rather focus on increasing its presence on the streets and aim for crime prevention rather than trying to solve it after their laxity has allowed it to be executed? Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana has informed that more than 27,000 personnel of the force have been deployed for security duty and anti-terror measures have also been intensified. Delhi Police is also getting assistance from 65 companies of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF). Anti-terror measures are intensified comprising of the checking of hotels, vehicles, blockades of several locations, among others. All of this is good, but the moot point is: Don't victimise innocent citizens. May hope and peace always be in the country! Happy Republic Day.

# The eternal flame can't be partial to our soldiers



ASHOK K MEHTA

The 'othering' of Indian soldiers in colonial times was the biggest disservice to the collective memory of the armed forces; it must be rectified now

In his book *Surrender at Dacca: Birth of a Nation*, Lt Gen JFR Jacob utilised one page to state: "The rifle and helmet that forms the centrepiece of the Amar Jawan War Memorial at India Gate once belonged to a soldier unknown to history who died on the battlefield on the outskirts of Jessore. There is no inscription on this monument." Then he recalls the legendary inscription at Kohima which, he says, is "appropriate for our jawans who laid down their lives in the rice paddies of Bangladesh: Let us not forget them".

India Gate and, under its canopy, the statue of the Unknown Soldier of 1971 war — called the Amar Jawan Jyoti — have become enduring symbols of nation's gratitude to the armed forces. Inside the India Gate arch are etched names of some Indian soldiers who fought in World War I and Third Afghan war — not the complete lineup of Indians who fought colonial wars of pre-Independence India. The National War Memorial that came up in 2019 recorded the names of all martyrs in wars, and internal stability operations after Independence. The 'othering' of soldiers in colonial times was the biggest disservice to the collective memory of the armed forces. The discrimination between British Indian Army and the Indian Army should have been challenged by Service Chiefs when Governments would ignore commemoration of battles fought by Indian troops abroad. Even now, the NWM has no place for the 'others' as India Gate was never an inclusive salute as it excluded those who fell in pre-Independence wars.

Thousands are buried across Europe, Middle East, SE Asia and N Africa. India's contribution to the Great Wars and other campaigns was outstanding. Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck said that Britain would not have won the wars without Indian Army's contribution. Even Prime Minister Winston Churchill praised the unsurpassed bravery of Indian troops. Of the 1.4mn Indians in World War I, 74,000 were killed and 64,350 wounded. About 2,200 decorations were



won by Indian soldiers. In World War II, 2.5mn took part; 87,000 were killed with 34,354 wounded. Including 18 Victoria Crosses, 4,000 decorations were awarded.

According to an Army source, the fusion of two flames and shifting the India Gate flame to NWM does not mean that the four urns surrounding the Unknown Soldier will be extinguished. One will continue to glow eternally, celebrating India's only military victory in 1,000 years. But there will be one NWM, not two. That still leaves several questions. Will one of the four urns continue to burn; will the tri-service guard remain under India Gate; will the statue of the Unknown Soldier be ultimately shifted to NWM? And who will occupy the vacated space. When the NWM was inaugurated, Government said the sanctity of the eternal flame will be maintained at India Gate. We are not sure. Last Sunday, the hologram of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was installed in the empty canopy near India Gate which once contained King George V's statue. Once his granite statue is sculpted, he will become the top contender for the space under India Gate. Prime Minister Modi said: "The heroes whose mem-

“THE MERGING OF FLAMES AND TRANSFERRING IT TO NWM IS 'OTHERING' SACRIFICES OF PRE-INDEPENDENCE ERA SOLDIERS. THEIR VALOUR MUST NOT ONLY BE ACKNOWLEDGED BUT A SUITABLE MEMORIAL BE ADDED TO THE NWM BY THE NEXT REPUBLIC DAY TO HONOUR THEM

ory was being erased post-Independence are now being revived. The country is correcting its mistakes." One hopes he will rectify the omission of the British Indian Army martyrs from the NWM.

Almost 90 per cent of military traditions and regimental ethos, ethics and values are drawn from pre-Independence period, including Beating Retreat, colour presentations, gallantry awards and battle honours. Nearly 80 per cent of our regiments were raised 150-200 years ago. Almost everything in the military is carry-over of British relics and traditions; we must accept it unhesitatingly. Regiments still celebrate battle honours and gallantry awards that were won in the Great Wars. But we are still arguing about renaming Aurangzeb Roads and railway stations. Britain ruled for more than a century and created an empire that stretched from Belize to Hong Kong, surpassing the conquest of even the Mongols.

Today, Britain's tiny military has lost none of its sheen though its empire is gone. The entire British Army has dwindled to smaller than our 43 Gorkha battalions. Still, the glory lingers on and will never extinguish due to

embedded traditions. India has a lot to learn from its military history. India this year will surpass Britain's GDP to become the fourth biggest economy. The process of Indianisation has been extremely slow and in the wrong areas.

Beating Retreat is a very solemn ceremony. Introducing Indian instruments and theatrics ill-fit this grand and somber ritual. Dropping the hymn *Abide With Me* with lyrics composed in the aftermath of India's humiliating defeat in 1962 is not an endorsing to the ceremony.

In erasing the past, the Government is committing the mistake of compartmentalising military history; then and now, theirs and ours. The merging of flames and transferring it to NWM is 'othering' the sacrifices of the pre-Independence era soldiers. Their valour must not only be acknowledged but a suitable memorial be added to the NWM by the next Republic Day to honour them.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### BUDGET FOR EQUITABLE ECONOMY

Sir — Never before has a Budget demanded greater insight, acumen and earnest pragmatism. This one must go far beyond juggling the ledger and marquee headings to invite kudos from the Dalal Street. It ought to be all about restoring lost employment in the middle, lower middle classes and daily wagers, besides creating fresh avenues. This economy was already on jobless growth for four years. From a pandemic peak in unemployment of near 14 per cent, we are at 7.9 per cent in December 2021. Compare this with 2017-2018, at 4.7 per cent. Between 2019-20 and December 2021, the manufacturing sector lost 9.8 million jobs, services sector 1.8 million.

But most worrisome should be the drop in salaried jobs, which points to an unstable economy starved of investment. Without new investments, India will not be able to generate the kind of employment it needs. Rising interest rates and a depreciating currency make it worse. The Budget needs to focus on these issues. These sectors are in dire straits; earlier due to demonetisation, now pulverised by COVID. One of the key objectives of this year's Budget ought to be on employment returning to the class that needs to reclaim its lost purchasing power.

R Narayanan | Navi Mumbai

### CONG'S DOWNSLIDE CONTINUES

Sir — In yet another severe setback to the Congress, which is struggling to keep its house in order ahead of the Assembly election in five States, Congress heavyweight and former Minister RPN Singh quit the party and joined the BJP. The resignation comes a day after the Congress named him among its list of star campaigners for the Uttar Pradesh polls. This is a body blow to Priyanka Vadra, leading the party from the front in UP. It is pathetic that party has remained clueless about internal bickering; it is completely out of sync with ground realities.

The party's central command, especially Gandhi scions Rahul and Priyanka,

## The eternal flame of patriotism



The recent merging of Amar Jawan Jyoti with the newly instituted flame in the imposing National War Memorial (NWM), which was dedicated to the nation on February 25, 2019, must not be seen through a political lens. In fact, it has given a definite shape to our independent existence where the sacrifice of every soldier is recognised. Covering an area of over 40 acres with names of more than 26,000 fallen heroes

etched in granite invokes deep memories that should serve as inspiration. History is replete with examples of countries erecting war memorials, thereby remembering the supreme sacrifices made by their jawans. They continually remind us that we exist as a free nation because of the sacrifices of these brave soldiers.

Considering that a memorial was constructed in 1921 by Edward Lutyens in the memory of soldiers who lost their lives in World War I and the Third Anglo-Afghan war, the names of a few British officers and soldiers also find mention there. It does not represent the sacrifices made by soldiers either during World War II or the wars fought by India since 1947. This anomaly was removed by setting up the NWM and now Amar Jawan Jyoti will serve as an integral part of it. The new memorial will infuse new vigour in all Indians and keep the fire of patriotism burning.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

are incapable of leading the party in situations that demand tactical strategies and smart moves. At the 2019 Congress Working Committee meeting, RPN Singh was the only Team Rahul member to point out that personal attacks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi had boomeranged. But instead of evaluating the point, the Gandhis began distancing him. It only implies that the party brass needs only yes-men around them. The murky state of affairs suggests its downfall is getting accelerated by the day.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

### ACCOLADES FOR SMRITI MANDHANA

Sir — Cricket is a game of luck, so winning an award in a calendar year solely depends on lady luck. India women's cricket star Smriti Mandhana won the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year in style despite stiff competition. Pakistan dominated the men's awards with two coveted prizes. However, it was Joe Root, despite his side not faring well at

the international level, who bagged the Men's Cricketer of the Year award. Mandhana, who also made it to the ICC T20 Women's Team of the Year, piped fellow nominees Tanmay Beaumont and others in a tight contest.

The southpaw had won the award in 2018 as well when she was also named Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year, making her only the second women's player to win the highest individual distinction in the overall category. Virat 'King' Kohli was nowhere near the top in the charts this time. The Indian team lost to Pakistan and New Zealand and the captain wanted to save his neck and preferred Ashwin to win the next three games. Anyway, it was a solace that Smriti Mandhana got the better of the other competitors and kept the Indian flag flying at the international level.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

Just like you came forward for the cleanliness drive, do the same for the Vocal for Local campaign.

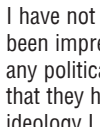


Prime Minister — Narendra Modi



I congratulate Justice Ayesha Malik on becoming the first woman judge of the Supreme Court.

Pakistan PM — Imran Khan



I have not really been impressed by any political party, that they have an ideology I can blindly follow.

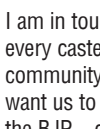


Actor — Raveena Tandon



I am truly honoured to receive the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year 2021.

Indian opener — Smriti Mandhana



I am in touch with every caste and community. They want us to defeat the BJP... change is inevitable.

Samajwadi Party chief — Akhilesh Yadav



The display of the unique culture of each state brought to Delhi parade with their floats and dances might create the sense of the new nation in the Union of States. It is time that the Centre and the states come together and evolve a good selection process without any heartburn.



# Job postings in Travel & Tourism sector sees 4 pc rise in Dec

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The travel and tourism industry, one of the hardest hit by the pandemic in the country, is on the path of recovery and registered a 4 per cent year-on-year growth in job postings during December 2021, according to a report.

According to a report by Monster Employment Index, the travel and tourism industry saw a steady increase in job postings post the second wave and reached an absolute high in July (with 16 per cent growth) and showed a steady state of revival until November 2021.

This growth could be attributed to the emergence of 'revenge travel trends' and 'staycations'. However, on a sequential basis, the Indian tourism industry witnessed a 1 per cent decline in job postings with the advent of the third wave, consequent travel restrictions, and safety norms.

The report is based on data from the Monster Employment Index, a broad and comprehensive monthly analysis of online job posting activity conducted by Monster India.

"The Indian travel and tourism industry has truly paved its way to revival in 2021, as compared to the previous



year, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic," Monster.com, a Quess company, CEO Sekhar Garisa said.

Garisa further said that "while the new Omicron variant impacted the growth of the sector in December 2021, the industry is expected to account for about 53 million jobs by 2029, as per industry reports."

It is also encouraging that the Ministry of Tourism and the Indian government have taken several steps in the past year to strengthen the hospital-

ity and tourism industry in India, helping employers gain momentum in the space, he added. As per Monster.com data, the top job roles in demand across the travel and tourism industry included sales associates, chef and engineers - software, electrical. Job roles such as travel agents and housekeeping staff followed close behind. City specific trends for the industry indicate that on a month-on-month basis, tier II cities such as Chandigarh, Baroda and

Coimbatore reported maximum increase in job postings standing tall against the waves of pandemic, followed by Pune.

On the contrary, cities such as Hyderabad, Kochi, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Delhi and Kolkata witnessed a decline, followed by Chennai, Bangalore, and Mumbai which noted a 1 per cent dip in job posting activity, owing to the third wave of the pandemic and the surge in Omicron cases in the country, the report said.

## German business confidence perks up after 6 months

PNS ■ BERLIN

Business confidence in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, has picked up unexpectedly after a six-month slide, a closely watched survey showed Tuesday. The Ifo institute said its monthly confidence increased to 95.7 points in January from 94.8 in December.

Economists had forecast another slight dip to 94.5. The index was led higher by much-improved expectations for the next six months. Managers' assessment of the current situation, the other element of the survey, worsened slightly.

Ifo said that manufacturing sector managers' confidence increased significantly, with supply bottlenecks easing slightly. It said service sector managers also were more optimistic and that "the tourism industry is looking forward to a promising summer" — although, for the moment, hospitality "remains stuck in crisis." Germany is seeing sharp increases in new coronavirus infections as the highly contagious omicron variant takes hold, though so far that hasn't been accompanied by a massive rise in hospital admissions.

## FRL independent directors turn down Amazon's bailout offer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Independent directors of Future Retail Ltd (FRL) have turned down Amazon's offer of financial support to the company through a deal with private equity firm Samara Capital, saying the offer is "plainly an attempt to buy the FRL assets on the cheap".

FRL's independent directors had last week asked Amazon if the e-commerce giant was willing to give a long-term loan to avoid default on repayment of Rs 3,500 crore loan due on January 29. Amazon replied that it was willing to financially assist Future Retail through the Samara Capital deal but the retailer must shelve Rs 24,713 crore deal with Reliance.

The independent directors of FRL, in a letter on Tuesday, said it is now clear that Amazon's letters were "just a game of smoke and mirrors". "Accordingly, we will not be assessing any proposals from you, until an actual solution which meets FRL's capital requirements and addresses concerns of its stakeholders, in a legally-compliant manner, is tabled," said the letter, a copy of which was seen by PTI.

Amazon had told FRL that Samara Capital remains interested in buying out the debt-

strapped retailer's businesses such as Big Bazaar for Rs 7,000 crore, and had asked FRL to provide its financial details to Samara Capital for the private equity fund to conduct expedited due diligence.

The independent directors said the price of Rs 7,000 crore is "significantly below the amount needed to discharge FRL's total liabilities".

"...FRL's Bank liabilities and part of the committed vendors payments till just March 2022 itself aggregate to Rs 12,027.31 crores. When seen in the context of the financials of the Reliance transaction by way of the Scheme of Arrangement, your offer is plainly an attempt to buy the FRL assets on the cheap," the letter stated.

The letter also noted that the independent directors of FRL had accepted the transaction with Reliance as it addresses

the needs of funds to pay off public sector bank lenders, suppliers of goods and helps FRL to meet almost all FRL's liabilities, and in the process helps protect the investment of small shareholders and jobs of over 25,000 employees.

Copies of the letter were also sent to Enforcement Directorate, Sebi, Competition Commission of India, lenders like State Bank of India, Union Bank of India and Bank of Baroda as well as FRL Board of Directors. Terming the comparison between Reliance's offer and proposed transaction with Samara Capital as "misplaced", the independent directors said the Scheme of Arrangement with Reliance Retail will be a court-approved transaction, and has already received the approvals of various regulators, including SEBI and CCI and that it is fully-compliant with Indian laws.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Hero Electric partners with ALT Mobility to deploy 10,000 Hero Nyx



Hero Electric on Tuesday said it has partnered with ALT Mobility, a dedicated platform for leasing of electric vehicles for the logistics market, to deploy its electric two-wheeler Hero Nyx. Under the collaboration, the companies will work with logistic aggregators and fleet operators to deploy 10,000 Hero Nyx electric scooters by 2023, Hero Electric said in a statement.

"This association will aid us in enabling carbon-free mobility in the logistics market and cater to consumer needs of last-mile delivery offered by ALT Mobility," Hero Electric CEO Sohinder Gill said. With the changing market scenario and increased preference for the electric vehicle, there is a crucial need to boost EV adoption, he said. "We are witnessing more and more businesses opting for cleaner solutions to reach their consumers. At Hero, we strive to provide 360-degree solutions to our B2B customers through our strong network presence across India," Gill said. ALT Mobility CEO Dev Arora said the company conducted extensive tests on the ground and spent several months with the Hero Electric team before building its conviction that the Hero Nyx EV is a bankable vehicle for intensive logistic operations. ALT Mobility offers two and three-wheeler electric vehicles on monthly subscription to fleet operators. They cover the financing, road tax, auto insurance, and service and spare costs of the EVs.

### Sebi introduces framework for Special Situation Funds

Capital markets regulator Sebi has introduced the framework for Special Situation Funds (SSFs) that will invest only in stressed assets. The move assumes significance against the backdrop of continuing efforts to address the issue of stressed assets in the banking system. SSFs have been introduced as a sub-category under Category I Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), Sebi said in a notification on Monday. SSFs will invest only in stressed assets such as stressed loans available for acquisition in terms of RBI norms or as part of a resolution plan approved under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. These funds will also invest in security receipts issued by Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs), securities of companies in distress and any other asset/security as may be prescribed by the board from time to time. "Each scheme of a special situation fund shall have a corpus as may be specified by the Board (Sebi)," the regulator said. Further, SSFs will accept from an investor, an investment of such value as specified by the regulator.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA**  
**PANCHAYAT RAJ ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL OFFICER, PR REGION - NIZAMABAD**  
E-Procurement short tender Notice No: 10-467 to 413/2021-22 Dt: 22.01.2022  
No. of works/07 Name of the works: Construction Community Hall, Sakhi Centre, Addl Class rooms, Land development beautification, Electrifications in Nizamabad and Kamareddy Districts and total ECV: 366.98 lakhs tenders invited undersigned. Tenders can download the tender schedules from 25.01.2022 10.30AM onwards and last date is (7) working days from date of publishing of each BTT in online. All further details can be seen on the website <http://e-procurement.marketplace.in> or [www.tender.telangana.gov.in](http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in)  
NO-NOTED/PC/CL/ADV/1/2021-22 Dt: 25-01-2022 Sd/- Regional Officer, PRED, Nizamabad

**NIZAMABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
**Tender Notice No: ME/NMC/29/2022, Dated: 25-01-2022**  
Tender is invited for 17Nos Works i.e., Engaging of Labour for Ward and Watch for TKHH and Other Developmental and Maintenance Works in NMC Last Date for Submission of Bids, Dt: 31.01.2022 @ 5.00 PM. For further details see on e-procurement platform i.e <http://tender.telangana.gov.in>. For Further Details, Contact : 7815957049. Sd/-  
DIPR.No.20536-PP/CL/Adv/1/2021-22 Commissioner NMC

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
NIT NO.5862-S/SD 2021/2021-22 E-Procurement Notice Dated: 21.01.2022  
Name of the Work: Annual Desilting of Kallakurda Nala (MECHANICAL), Annual Desilting of Nallas and Storm Water Drains in Ambekar Nagar (Mechanical), Annual Desilting of Nallas and Storm Water Drains (Manually) in 148-Rampuspet, Annual Desilting of Picket Nala from SP road to STP Plant, Annual Desilting of Kallakurda Nala from Nature Cure Hospital/VIA Hanuman Temple (Mechanical), near Begumpet Hoover and under verds, variant motors to Panchsagar Extension RAILWAY TRACK (Mechanical), Annual Desilting of Dwarakadas Nala, Prakash Nagar Extension Nala (Sewerage) and Old Customs Nala (Mechanical), Annual Desilting of Nallas and Storm Water Drains manually in 148-Begumpet, Annual Desilting of Hissam Gani Nala by Manual, Annual Desilting of Nala in East-Memmedol, West Memmedol in 150-Mondla Market, Beautification of road cuttings done by water works department, Electrical department at Prakash Nagar Extension, Panchsagar Extension, Westdwarakadas Nala (Sewerage), Annual Desilting of CC road by VDDC at old Customs Basthi Community Hall Junction, Laying of CC road by conventional method in internal lane of Mathanagar at (a) 1-10-387/1716 to 1-10-387/1720, b) 1-10-387/1716 to 1-10-387/1701B, Construction of RR drain and laying of video road at Mathanur Samudra apartments 1-8-337/A/CC at Adilnagar colonies, Laying of CC road at Bhagyalaxmi nagar near temple and its internal Laying of Footpath and providing Railing near FOB at St. Ann's High School, Secunderabad in ward 150-Mondla Market under Circle 30, Begumpet, Secunderabad Zonal, GHMC, Estimate Amount in Lakhs : 254.00. Bid Document Download Start Date & Time: Bid Submission Closing Date & Time : 22-01-2022 4.00 PM to 22-01-2022 4.00 PM. Name & Address Officer Cell No: E.E Circle-30, GHMC, Sec-30, Cell No:9498907050. Further details can be seen at e-procurement @ <https://tender.telangana.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, DIPR.No.20521-PP/CL/Adv/1/2021-22 Circle-30, Begumpet.

## Akasa Air take off likely in late May or early June; to further democratise air travel: CEO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Seeking to further democratise air travel with dependable and affordable services, airline Akasa Air is aiming to start flights in late May or early June after getting its first Boeing 737 MAX aircraft in April.

Bullish on the long term growth potential of the country's civil aviation sector, ace investor Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed carrier is looking to have 18 planes in its fleet by the end of March 2023.

Despite COVID clouds continuing to cast a shadow on the airlines, Akasa Air CEO Vinay Dube is more than optimistic as he asserted that "if you look at the long term future of commercial aviation in India, it is as exciting as anywhere in the world".

Interacting with PTI on a video call, Dube said the Indian aviation pie is growing and the idea of Akasa Air

is to look through what we are currently facing. "This is temporary. This too shall pass".

The civil aviation space, especially the airlines, has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and as the emergence of the Omicron variant has dealt another blow to the recovery path of the sector.

Akasa Air, which will take off as a low-cost carrier, has placed an order for 72 Boeing 737 MAX planes, which are fuel efficient. To begin with, Akasa Air will have services from metros to Tier II and III cities. There will also be flights

from metros to metros so that the aircraft is moved around the system, Dube noted.

Being professionally-managed, competitive cost structure, customer satisfaction, employees being happy and airline being financially healthy will be among the key elements for Akasa Air. "We hope to get our first aircraft in the second half of April, the first commercial flight in late May or early June... we are working with the government, DGCA to go through all of the requirements that are there," Dube said.

## Power trade volume rises 37pc to 27.6 BU at IEX in Dec

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Power trade volume at Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) rose 37 per cent year-on-year to 27.6 billion units (BU) in the December quarter, mainly due to higher electricity consumption.

"During the quarter (October-December), volumes on the Exchange grew by 37 per cent YoY (year-on-year) with 27.6 BU volumes traded versus 20.1 BU in Q3 FY21.

"The growth in volumes was driven by a substantial increase in electricity consumption as well as the resurgence of trading in RECs and ESCERTs," an IEX statement said.

According to the statement, the real-time market continues to be one of the fastest-grow-

ing electricity market segments on the exchange, achieving a growth of 70 per cent y-o-y, with 4.8 BU of volumes traded during the quarter.

The green market, including the day ahead and term ahead market, cumulatively traded 1.2 BU during the quarter and contributed 5 per cent to overall electricity volumes.

## ESIC scheme adds 10.28 lakh new members in November

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Around 10.28 lakh new members joined the ESIC-run social security scheme in November 2021 against 12.39 lakh in the previous month, official data showed on Tuesday, giving a perspective on formal sector employment in the country.

The latest data is part of a report released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). Gross new enrolments with Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) were 10.78 lakh in April, 8.91 lakh in May, 10.68 lakh in June, 13.42 lakh in July, 13.47 lakh in August and 13.57 lakh in September 2021, the latest data showed.

June, July and August figures show an increase in enrolments after easing of COVID-induced restrictions by states post the second wave of the pandemic that hit the country

in mid-April last year.

The NSO report showed that gross enrolments of new subscribers with ESIC were 1.15 crore in 2020-21, compared to 1.51 crore in 2019-20 and 1.49 crore in 2018-19.

From September 2017 to March 2018, around 83.35 lakh new subscribers joined the

ESIC scheme.

The report said gross new enrolments with ESIC from September 2017 to November 2021 were 5.93 crore.

The NSO report is based on the payroll data of new subscribers of various social security schemes run by ESIC, the Employees' Provident Fund

Organisation (EPFO) and Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

It has been releasing such data of these bodies since April 2018, covering the period starting from September 2017.

According to the report, net new enrolments with retirement fund body EPFO stood at 13.95 lakh in November 2021, up from 11.10 lakh in October 2021. It showed that from September 2017 to November 2021, around 4.88 crore (gross) new subscribers joined the Employees' Provident Fund scheme.

The report, titled 'Payroll Reporting in India: An Employment Perspective - November 2021', said since the number of subscribers is from various sources, there are elements of overlap, and the estimates are not additive.

## Infosys partners Tennis Australia to drive new digital learning

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



IT major Infosys on Tuesday announced a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) collaboration with Tennis Australia to drive new digital learning and accessibility initiatives for under-represented communities.

This programme is part of Infosys and Tennis Australia's Digital Innovation Partnership, which was recently extended until 2026, a statement said.

"As Infosys continues to enhance digital experiences for tennis fans, players, coaches and the media at AO (Australian Open) 2022, beyond the court, the company is embarking on a journey to leverage these capabilities to also have positive community impact," it added.

As a partner committed to the sport in the Australia New Zealand (ANZ) region, Infosys

has worked with Tennis Australia for initiatives such as the Aces for Bushfire Relief in 2020 and building an AO Virtual Hub in 2021 to enable tournament access digitally in a pandemic-affected year.

In this five-year collaboration, Infosys and Tennis Australia will focus on using technology for good with a vision to enhance accessibility, learnability and inclusivity on and beyond the court, the statement said.

The partnership starts with enhancing the Tennis Australia Leadership programmes, to engage and empower the leaders of tomorrow to help make positive change in their communities, it added.

Infosys will provide its next-gen digital learning platform, Springboard, to help enhance the leadership programmes via power learnability with richer leadership development con-

tent, digital learning, and driving inclusivity with mentorship.

By leveraging the Infosys Tennis Platform for tournament experiences and Infosys Springboard for digital inclusion, the partnership will continue to bring the sport closer to people and people closer to equitable outcomes, serving the shared vision of "tennis for

everyone", the statement said.

"We are incredibly proud to be working in close collaboration with Tennis Australia on a number of new digital accessibility and learning initiatives. When we renewed our Digital Innovation Partnership at the end of last year, we agreed that the next phase in our relationship would be to jointly build programs that have a larger

positive impact on our community," Andrew Groth, Executive Vice President and Region Head (Australia and New Zealand) at Infosys, said.

He added that this collaboration will play a role in bridging the digital accessibility gap and bring learning pathways to the disadvantaged.

Korey Allchin, Director of Partnerships and International Business at Tennis Australia, said the extension of the partnership with Infosys will also include programmes that enable a more equitable community. "We are working together to build more accessible digital experiences for everyone who engages with the Australian Open and our sport. Infosys Springboard will also give our leaders of tomorrow an opportunity to expand their learning through a state of the art digital learning environment," Allchin added.

## Maruti Suzuki Q3 net profit falls 48 pc to Rs 1,042 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country's largest car-maker Maruti Suzuki India on Tuesday reported a 47.82 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 1,041.8 crore for the December 2021 quarter, mainly due to the ongoing semiconductor shortage and increase in commodity prices.

The auto major had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,996.7 crore in the October-December period of the last fiscal, Maruti Suzuki India said in a regulatory filing.

The consolidated revenue from operations declined marginally to Rs 23,253.3 crore in the third quarter, compared to Rs 23,471.3 crore a year ago, it added.



## In a relationship? Know how to keep your sense of self

**Y**ou're in a relationship with someone you love, and you often find yourself altering to suit them. You could start wearing their clothing, eating their cuisine, and even taking up their hobbies... sound familiar? When we're in partnerships, maintaining a feeling of "self" may seem paradoxical. We find ourselves wanting to do all possible to make our partners content and happy with us. While this is a normal aspect of every relationship, it's vital not to lose sight of who we are in a relationship since it may make the experience more satisfying for both parties. It is also beneficial to your mental health and spiritual well-being because it may aid in

a relationship, it is important to maintain your sense of self. This means that you need to spend time on your own, be independent and not depend on your partner for everything. A relationship is a two-way street. It's important to maintain your sense of self while being in a relationship. This is because you want to feel good about yourself and not just be the other half of someone else. Remember the journey to more self-love is love itself. **Balance found in self:** Relationships of any magnitude require a balance between the parties involved. We can start by being honest with ourselves and our partner about what we want and need from the relationship. We should also try to set some boundaries for ourselves and our partners so that we know where the line is drawn. Lastly, it is also important to have a strong support system outside of your relationship so that we



the restoration of self-confidence while embracing individuality. Devina Kaur, Radio host and Producer speaks on three leads to keep your sense of self when you are in a relationship: **Revealing your sense of self:** The first step to keeping our sense of self in a relationship is to focus on what we are good at and what we enjoy doing. Our sense of self should be rooted in our ability to be divinely empowered by our own identity. We should not be so hard on ourselves and should stop comparing ourselves to other people. Revealing our sense of self can include taking care of our bodies and mind by eating healthy and exercising regularly. We can also take care of our mental health by talking to professionals about how we are feeling when things get tough for us. This will help us feel more satisfied with our lives and will make it easier for us to be happy with ourselves. **Empowerment in your independence:** When you are in

don't get lost inside it. It is important to maintain your sense of self while being in a relationship. There are many ways that you can do this, but one of the most effective ways is by finding an activity that interests you, spending time in knowing the ever-changing you, and then practicing radical self-acceptance. You want to feel good about yourself and not just be the other half of someone else. Embrace the power that lies within your individuality.

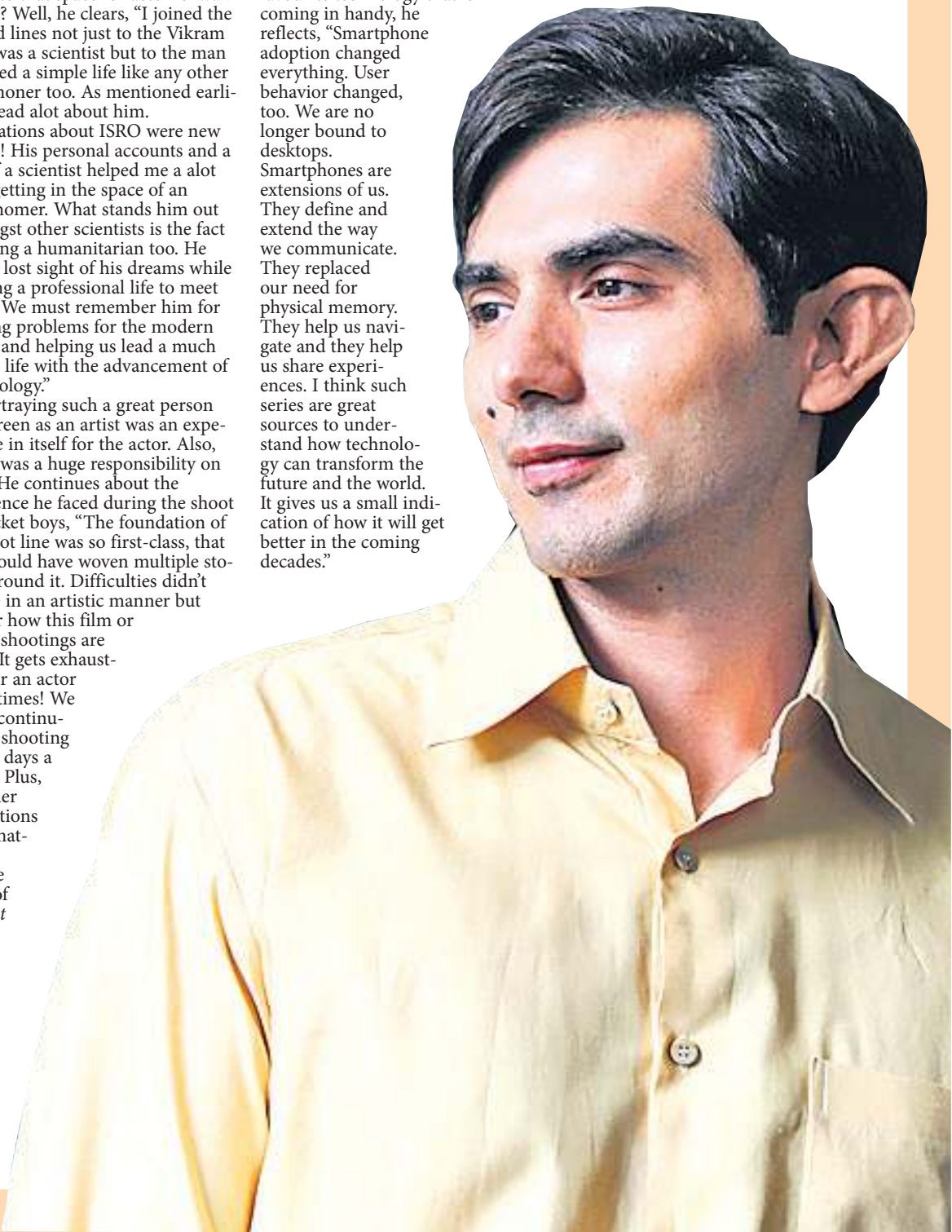
# Meet the reel life Vikram Sarabhai

SHIKHA DUGGAL

**S**onyLiv has finally shared the trailer for their upcoming series, *Rocket Boys*. The series stars Jim Sarbh as pioneering nuclear physicist and astronomer Vikram Sarabhai. We had the prerogative to speak to actor Ishwak, who's fully into Vikram Sarabhai mode these days. He exclusively speaks to us, "I was craving to play the part of Vikram Sarabhai. The plot came across to me as a very 'humanistic' story. I could feel the script of *Rocket Boys*. I researched about the knitty gritty details on how a scientist would be in those times. From his upbringing, education to his value system — I was supposed to consume it all. He was a Gandhian, it was important for me to know about his intellectual side. As we were shooting scene by scene, it seemed more palpable. Acting in cosmos and celestial spaces was different ball game altogether!" Showing how Vikram and Homi first met, became friends and guided India into taking its first steps towards becoming a nuclear superpower, this interesting show on cosmos is directed by Abhay Pannu! The actor continues to utter, "While shooting for *Rocket Boys*, it never occurred to me to associate with my characteristics of Vikram Sarabhai to make it easier but to be aware of the personality of Vikram Sarabhai was. He is a notable figure, an achiever and I never had similar experiences as compared to him. There was always a huge dissimilarity between a succeder and common man. But it was pleasing to know about the scientific aspects of this country, what was the foundation built upon and what role did Dr. Sarabhai played in it." The series will dwell deeper into their personalities and lives to understand their greatness and relevance in today's time. It will show how the two great physicists turned their dreams into reality and made great scientific discoveries. It also stars talents like Regina Cassandra, Rajat Kapur, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Saba Azad, and Arjun Radhakrishnan in piv-

otal roles! To act and behave like an astronomer, was it too difficult to get into that space for actor Ishwak Singh? Well, he clears, "I joined the dotted lines not just to the Vikram who was a scientist but to the man who led a simple life like any other commoner too. As mentioned earlier, I read alot about him. Revelations about ISRO were new to me! His personal accounts and a life of a scientist helped me a lot into getting in the space of an astronomer. What stands him out amongst other scientists is the fact of being a humanitarian too. He never lost sight of his dreams while leading a professional life to meet ends. We must remember him for solving problems for the modern India and helping us lead a much easier life with the advancement of technology." Portraying such a great person on screen as an artist was an experience in itself for the actor. Also, there was a huge responsibility on him. He continues about the resilience he faced during the shoot of rocket boys, "The foundation of the plot line was so first-class, that one could have woven multiple stories around it. Difficulties didn't arrive in an artistic manner but rather how this film or show shootings are held. It gets exhausting for an actor sometimes! We were continuously shooting seven days a week. Plus, weather conditions also matters." The idea of *Rocket Boys*

revolving around science and technological advancements urged us to ask Ishwak Singh on his most favourite technology that is coming in handy, he reflects, "Smartphone adoption changed everything. User behavior changed, too. We are no longer bound to desktops. Smartphones are extensions of us. They define and extend the way we communicate. They replaced our need for physical memory. They help us navigate and they help us share experiences. I think such series are great sources to understand how technology can transform the future and the world. It gives us a small indication of how it will get better in the coming decades."



# Find the best resin gift for your dog!



**T**his is a season to give all the special people in our life a gift from the heart. But not just the people in our lives, but pets too! There are so many great projects to create to give your furry friend some extra love. They often communicate their love through small gestures like a snuggle etc. As loyal and selfless our pets are, we all know they sometimes need extra love and pampering. They truly are a blessing and the best gift that Santa gave us! Let's spare some extra time to gather up some gifts for them. **Feeding station:** Being an animal lover, feeder and rescuer I always wanted to create a special range of products for pets. One of them is a feeding station. If we can have designer tableware why should our furry friends be left behind? A beautiful wooden feeding station has been created

using resin to give an ocean effect. Its food-grade colour and resin are safe and non toxic for our pets. **Resin name tags:** A beautiful resin name tag is a wonderful way to adorn your pet and it also works as an identity tag since one can have the name of the pet on one side and a parent's number and other details on the other side. This ces in handy if your pet is lost, the finder can contact you. **Paw key chain:** A beautiful paw key chain can be a perfect gift for an animal lover. Beautiful photo-frames can be created for your four-legged babies to celebrate their love for you. Resin is not only to make river tables or wall arts but can also be used to create bespoke pet-friendly gifts for your furry friends and pet lovers too. A beautiful tombstone can be created for the pets who have crossed the rainbow bridge. An impres-

sion of a paw of your pet who has passed away can be preserved for life in Resin, this way he will always be holding your hand till you meet again. Resin products are the perfect companion for you and your wagging buddy, as they are durable, water resistant and are fairly unbreakable. The non toxic material makes it a healthier choice for your pet's health, and can save you from buying plastic and thereby help you lead a sustainable and climate friendly lifestyle. Whenever your pet drools or spills some kibbles and food you can easily clean the resin ware and save yourself from seeing a messy floor or rug. Your dog might not be able to thank you for these gifts but will surely make you giggle and smile when s/he will associate the resin products with you.

(The writer, Madhvi Adalja, is a resin artist)







# Saana Kastam will be my first & last attempt at a special number: Regina

SHIKHA DUGGAL

When the leading soprano Samantha Ruth Prabhu signed her first special song in Allu Arjun's *Pushpa: The Rise*, it became the talk of the town! Multiple actresses had become a synonym for 'item songs' at one point in this entertainment fraternity, but today times have changed. Item songs are now professed as special songs and there are mainstream actresses coming to defend them from the forefront!

And, the latest one to be added in the list is *Saana Kastam*'s leading lady Regina Cassandra, who already entertained the mass audiences with

her first and last special song opposite Megastar Chiranjeevi. Typically, a special song is accompanied by a dance sequence where an actress, who's dressed in revealing attire, does hypnotic dance moves but *Rocket Boys* fame Regina refuted this and asserted, "When I disclosed this news to one of my close friends that I'll be grooving to *Saana Kastam* in *Acharya* alongside Chiranjeevi, in my whole excitement I started screaming that I'll be performing an item song and my friend goes 'why are you calling it an item song!' If it was some years ago, it was the case that special dance numbers were called as item songs and affirmed to be embarrassing. I swayed and spinned to *Saana Kastam* and didn't identify myself with an

object of desire at all. Call it an item, special or celebration song — the terminology doesn't matter to me as an actress but what holds relevance for me is whirling with the best. This wasn't the first time I was offered a special dance number, I took it up because I was grooving with a megastar like Chiranjeevi. *Saana Kastam* was my first and last attempt at a special number."

Now that her desire is fulfilled, the actress said, "My knack is fulfilled now, I danced my heart out in *Acharya*'s special number and it went viral too. Comprehensively, a special song has added more gravitas to my portfolio as an actress. It didn't embarrass me. From past so many years, there were rumours meandering on Regina doing an item song, and finally I did it!"

On the work-front, Regina Cassandra has a busy 2022, with a few movies like *Borrrder*, *Soorpanagai* and *Acharya*, and three Hindi OTT shows!



## Huge village set for Nani's *Dasara*

**D**asara, directed by newbie Srikanth Odela, starring natural star Nani, is set in a community near the Singareni coal mines in Godavarikhani. Keerthy Suresh portrays the female protagonist in *Dasara*, which will see Nani in a rough *avatar*. The motion poster released recently gives a glance into the story's rural setting.

According to the most recent reports, producer Sudhakar Cherukuri is spending a fortune to build an opulent set. We hear that over Rs 12 crore is being spent to build an opulent village set on the

outskirts of Hyderabad, where they will film a few key scenes starring Nani and other supporting actors. The artwork is being overseen by *Shyam Singha Roy*'s art director. Sources say, the forthcoming film is based on true events that occurred in a hamlet near Godavarikhani. Srikanth Odela is also from the same area. The majority of the filming will take place on the village set. Roshan Mathew, a Malayalam actor, has been brought on board to perform the pivotal parts. Apart from the principal performers, the film also has Samuthirakhani, Sai Kumar, and Zarina Wahab in key parts.

## SVP's 1st single to be out on V-Day



**T**he makers of the upcoming commercial movie have decided to put an end to the long wait, as they had planned to make an announcement regarding the same, on January 26, on the occasion of Republic Day, along with an exciting poster from the movie.

Popular musician S.S. Thaman, who is in charge of the movie's music, has tweeted that the fans will not get disappointed, as the first single from *Sarkaru*

*Vaari Paata* will be a sure-shot chartbuster. Dropping a hint on his Twitter handle, Thaman wrote, "#FEB14th". Mahesh Babu's love interest will be acclaimed actress Keerthy Suresh in this upcoming movie. Parasuram Petla, the director of *Geetha Govindam* fame, has helmed the movie, which is billed to be a political drama with commercial overtones.

Earlier, the makers of *Sarkaru Vaari Paata* had promised to give back-to-back updates from the movie, but Mahesh Babu got tested positive for Covid. Despite being postponed a couple of times now, the movie is still one of the most awaited movies of the season. *Sarkaru Vaari Paata* is jointly produced under the banners GMB Entertainments, Mythri Movie Makers, and 14 Reels Plus.

## Shivatmika to be seen as a basketball player?

**D**r Rajasekhar is coming up with a new film *Shekhar* and his fans and well-wishers cannot wait to see the angry young man on big screens. Directed by Jeevitha Rajasekhar, the film has the couple's elder daughter Shivani Rajasekhar playing a key role, while the younger daughter Shivatmika Rajasekhar is producing it. The happening family recently appeared in Suma Kanakala's entertainment show *Cash*. Speaking at the game show, Shivani Rajasekhar spilled the beans about her sister's next. The actress said Shivatmika will be seen as a basketball player in her next, for which the *Dorasani* girl underwent profes-

sional training. However, no official confirmation regarding the same has been made yet. While other details are not revealed yet, it is to be seen with whom the actor will be pairing up this time.



## Priyamani is an 'anxiety creating' homemaker

**A**ctress Priyamani, who stole the show with her subtle performance in *The Family Man* series, is back with another thrilling concept in Telugu. Titled *Bhama Kalapam*, the teaser featuring Priyamani was released by actress Rashmika Mandanna recently.

"Anupama's character gives us anxiety. What's your reaction? This fascinating tale of a dangerous housewife Premieres February 11 #ADeliciousHomeCookedThriller #PriyaMani," the makers wrote, as they shared the teaser.

The teaser introduces the curious homemaker Anupama (Priyamani), who earns the wrath of the other residents of her neighbourhood, for peeping into everyone's lives.

She also causes anxiety to her husband with this curiosity about others' lives. Tamil actor John Vijay seems to have an important role as well, as he is seen discussing Anupama's dangerous side.

Presented by *Dear Comrade* fame Bharat Kamma, the next web original film by Aha, *Bhama Kalapam* marks Priyamani's Telugu OTT debut. Named Anupama,

Priyamani's role in *Bhama Kalapam* blends thriller elements with entertainment. Helmed by Abhimanyu Tadmireti, the series is billed to be a comedy thriller where a criminal investigation is a key track. With music by Justin Prabhakaran, the Aha original has cinematography by Deepak Yeragera and editing by Viplav Nyshadam. Mark K Robin has composed the BGM, while the dialogues are penned by Jay Krishna. *Bhama Kalapam* will premiere on Aha on February 11.





# Rohit fit to lead India against WI

Bhuvneshwar and Ashwin, after their indifferent performance against SA in their 0-3 ODI series defeat, will come under scanner

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's white-ball captain Rohit Sharma is "fit" and ready to lead the side against the West Indies in a six-match white-ball series starting February 6 with the three ODIs in Ahmedabad. However, the team selection meeting, which is set to happen this week, will be an interesting one as some senior players like Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Ravichandran Ashwin, after their indifferent performance against South Africa in their 0-3 ODI series defeat, will come under the scanner.

But Rohit is ready to lead the side after a left hamstring injury ruled him out of the South Africa tour. The T20 matches against the Caribbean team are set to be held from February 16 to 20 in Kolkata.

"Rohit is fit and available for the series against the West Indies," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"By the time, the West Indies series starts, it will be more than seven and half weeks of rehabilitation and recuperation for Rohit.

"He is already training in

Mumbai and is expected to be in Bangalore for the fitness test and get a formal okay from the National Cricket Academy," the source informed.

## ROHIT SET TO BE NAMED TEST CAPTAIN TOO

It is almost certain that for the time being, Rohit will be named the Test captain although BCCI will be looking at other options considering his workload and the responsibility that comes with leading India in two back-to-back World Cups in 2022 and 2023.

It is understood that KL Rahul's first stint as captain hasn't gone as per expectations and for now, he will have to remain an apprentice under Rohit till he is seen to be ready to lead the national team in near future.

Under Rahul, India lost all four international games in South Africa and for men who matter in Indian cricket, he hasn't exactly come across as a proactive captain.

It is understood that Rahul's performance as Lucknow Super Giants captain will be keenly monitored

during this edition of the IPL.

## HARDIK PANDYA'S COMEBACK



Hardik Pandya has been bowling in the nets and even though it is not clear whether he can bowl full tilt but Venkatesh Iyer's relative

ROHIT WILL BE NAMED THE TEST CAPTAIN ALTHOUGH BCCI WILL BE LOOKING AT OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERING HIS WORKLOAD AND THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT COMES WITH LEADING INDIA IN TWO BACK-TO-BACK WORLD CUPS IN 2022 AND 2023



## BUMRAH MIGHT BE RESTED

Jasprit Bumrah's workload management is paramount for this current Indian team and there is a possibility that he might be rested for the six matches.

This is after Bumrah played all six games in South Africa which, which included three Tests and three 50-over games, and sent down the highest number of overs (104.5 overs in Tests and 30 in ODIs).

However, Bhuvneshwar, whose form has tapered off, might be dropped while Ashwin might get one more series as the South Africa white-ball leg was his comeback in ODIs.

The likes of Avesh Khan and Harshal Patel could once again make it to the T20 team.



# You can't win every game, it's a temporary phase for Team India, says Ravi Shastri

PTI ■ MUSCAT

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri does not see any reason to press the panic button after the team's shocking Test and ODI series loss to an under-strength South Africa as he believes it is a "temporary phase" and the side will tide over it soon.

In the backdrop of Virat Kohli's departure as captain from all formats, India, under stand-in skipper KL Rahul, were blanked 0-3 in the ODIs to cap a forgettable tour to South Africa.

India had earlier suffered back-to-back defeats in Wanderers and Cape Town to lose the Test series 1-2. At the end of that series, Kohli stepped down from captaincy in the

longest format, marking the end of an era in Indian cricket.

"If you lose one series, you people start criticising... You can't win every game, there will be wins and losses," Shastri, who ended his tenure after the T20 World Cup in UAE last year, told PTI on the sidelines of the ongoing Legends League Cricket.

The ODI series defeat in South Africa was their first after Kohli was sacked as skipper in the 50-over format in December last year.

Shastri said he did not follow a single ball of the South Africa series but refused to believe that the standard has dropped.

"How can the standard go down suddenly? For five years,



you have been number one side in the world," he asserted.

Keeping in mind the T20 World Cup in Australia in October, India have a packed white-ball calendar and will be hosting West Indies, Sri Lanka and South Africa this year.

With IPL being a 10-team affair this time, the home season would stretch till June before the Indians leave for England to play the final Test of a series that was halted midway last year due to a COVID-19 outbreak, followed by three T20Is and 3 ODIs.

Shastri maintained that there's nothing to worry about and dismissed the recent setbacks as a temporary phase.

"When you have a win ratio of 65 per cent over the last five years, what is there to worry about? What is there to worry about, our rival teams should worry," he said.

Kohli announced his decision to quit as Test skipper a day after the team lost 1-2. Shastri such decisions should be respected as it boils down to

individual choice.

"It's his choice. You have to respect his decision. There is a time for everything. A lot of big players in the past have left captaincy when they felt they wanted to focus on their batting or on their cricket.

"Whether it's (Sachin) Tendulkar, (Sunil) Gavaskar or (MS) Dhoni. And, it's Virat Kohli now."

Asked whether his body language has changed following the captaincy saga, Shastri said: "As I said, I've not followed a single ball in the series. But I don't think there will be too much change in Virat Kohli."

"I took a break after seven years in the game, been part of the team, One thing is very clear, I do not wash dirty linen in public.

# Focussed on winning Asian Games to qualify for Paris Olympics, youngsters will get opportunities: Sreejesh



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh on Tuesday said the Indian men's hockey side's main focus is qualifying for the Paris Olympics by winning the Asian Games this year besides giving opportunities to youngsters.

He said that a lot of youngsters will be given opportunities in a hectic year for the team in which it will compete in marquee events like the Commonwealth Games and Asiad.

The Tokyo Olympic bronze medal-winning side will begin the year with the FIH Hockey Pro League, starting next month.

"After every Olympics we plan for next four years. So after Tokyo we have already started planning for the Paris Olympics," Sreejesh said during a virtual media interaction.

"There are a lot of changes that are going to happen in the team (for Paris), lot of new comers are going to be added into the core group," he added. Sreejesh is a part of the International Institute of Sports Management's initiative in which 18 of the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics medallist have come together to recite the national anthem in a video, which was released on Monday. Asked if it is the right time to groom youngsters with the Paris Olympics only two years away, Sreejesh said with several fixtures line up, it will be good to give the junior players a chance.

"I didn't say we will get a lot of the youngsters straight into the team but their addition in the core group will give them more opportunity. We are starting this year with the Pro League before Asian Games and CWG."

"We will get almost 16 matches and most probably Asian Cup will be there and that is the platform where we can try out the youngsters, give them opportunities to play tournaments," Sreejesh added.



# Made the announcement too soon: Sania Mirza on her retirement

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Indian tennis star Sania Mirza, who recently announced that 2022 would be her last season, says she had made the announcement too soon and was "regretting" it since she was being asked about it all the time.

Mirza's swansong appearance at the Australian Open ended with a quarterfinal loss to local pair Jaimee Fourlis and Jason Kubler in the mixed doubles event here.

"I am not actually thinking about that at every match that to be honest very, I think that I made the announcement too soon to be very honest, I am kind of regretting it because that's all I am being asked right now," Mirza said when asked whether her outlook towards tennis and the Tour has changed considering it was her last season.

The 35-year-old, who is India's most accomplished woman tennis player, having won six Grand Slam titles, including three mixed doubles trophies, was speaking on "Extraa Serve" on Sony Sports Network.

Mirza, who hails from Hyderabad, maintained that she plays tennis to win matches.

"I am playing tennis to win matches and until I play, I am going to try and win every match I play, so it (retirement) is not something that is on my

mind constantly.

"I enjoy playing tennis, I have always enjoyed it, win or lose, and I still have the same outlook to it, I give my 100 (per cent), sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't but I am still in it 100 per cent for the rest of the year and I don't want to really think about what's going to happen at the end of the year..." elaborated Mirza.

On the game, which she and Ram lost, Sania said that it wasn't the best of their matches.

"It happens, you don't have a great day once in a while and it is unfortunate when it happens in a (Grand) Slam.

"But I guess we were not able to string it together, both of us and in the end, we were in it in the second set but we didn't take our chances and that's it, at least I could have played better, but that's how it goes, it happens sometimes," said Mirza.

Mirza on January 19 had announced that she will hang up her racquet at the end of 2022 season as her body was "wearing down" and the motivation and energy for everyday grind was not the same anymore.

She had made the retirement announcement after losing the Australian Open women's doubles first round with partner Nadia Kichenok. They lost to Slovenia's Tamara Zidansek and Kaja Juvan.

# Barty beats Pegula to reach semis in Australia

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Top-ranked Ash Barty moved into the Australian Open semifinals with a 6-2, 6-0 win over No. 21 Jessica Pegula.

The 2021 Wimbledon champion is aiming to become the first Australian woman to win the Australian Open since 1978.

She will next face 2017 U.S. Open runner-up Madison Keys for a place in the final. It's Barty's second trip to the semifinals at Melbourne Park — she lost to eventual champion Sofia Kenin in 2020.

She says "I've grown as a person. I've grown as a player. I feel like I'm a more complete player."

Keys is back in the last four for the second time after losing to Serena Williams in the semifinals in 2015.

Barty saved the only break point she faced against Pegula and converted five of the nine chances she had to break serve.

Keys beat French Open champion Barbora Krejickova 6-3, 6-2 in the opening match on Rod Laver Arena on Day 9.

# Lack of red-ball cricket hampering players' skills already: Jaydev

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Saurashtra skipper Jaydev Unadkat feels the players' skills against the red ball have started diminishing and potential cancellation of a second consecutive Ranji Trophy season will be a "great loss" for domestic cricket in India.

After the COVID-19-forced cancellation of Ranji Trophy last year, a first in the tournament's rich history, the postponement of the current season due to the third wave of the pandemic has left many players worried. The premier tournament was supposed to begin on January 13 and lead pacer Unadkat and the rest of the Saurashtra players had started their preparations to defend the maiden title they won back in March 2020.

'Players' skills are being hampered' It felt like a different ball game altogether at the camp with players only used to white ball cricket for the last two seasons.

"Two years in a row would be a great

loss. One year itself was a great loss. When we started our pre-season camp before the eventual postponement, it felt like a whole new game," Unadkat told PTI.

Leaving the ball, bowling with pace and bowling long spells. All that had gone out of the picture. It is going to be difficult if it doesn't happen this year too.

"I hear that BCCI is keen on staging it. If the virus situation doesn't become threatening, we can have it in February with a stricter bubble and more vigilance," said the left-arm pacer who picked a record 67 wickets in a memorable 2020 season. If February is not possible, then the BCCI must start the next season with Ranji Trophy, feels the pacer who has played one Test, 7 ODIs and 10 T20Is for India.

"For batters, even when I was batting I left the first ball alone it felt very different to be honest. I had not left a ball in two years of my batting practice. Probably the same for all batters barring the openers who were doing it even in one-dayers.

# Djokovic could play in France under latest vaccine rules

AP ■ PARIS

Top-ranked player Novak Djokovic could be allowed to defend his French Open title under the latest COVID-19 rules adopted by the French government, even if he is still not vaccinated when the clay-court Grand Slam starts in May.

Djokovic was deported from Australia and barred from playing in the Australian Open this month for not meeting the country's strict COVID-19 vaccination rules.

It initially appeared that the Serb tennis star would not be welcomed at Roland Garros either under a new law intended to exclude the unvaccinated from stadiums, restaurants, bars and other public places.

As questions quickly arose about Djokovic's status in France following his deportation from Australia, Sports Minister Roxana Maracineanu previously said that as soon as the law was passed the country's vaccine pass would become compulsory to enter



stadiums, theater or exhibitions, "for all spectators, practitioners, French or foreign professionals."

But the vaccine pass is not restricted to vaccination.

Under the law that took effect on Monday, anyone who has proof they tested positive within the previous six months is exempt from having to show

a vaccine pass. That suggests Djokovic could play in the French Open in May and June, the next Grand Slam tournament, because he has said he tested positive in mid-December.

The French sports ministry was not immediately available to answer questions from The Associated Press on Djokovic.

# Shafali Verma regains top spot among batters in ICC T20 ranking



PTI ■ DUBAI

India's teen sensation Shafali Verma on Tuesday moved up one place to regain her position at the top of the ICC Women's T20I rankings for batters while her opening partner Smriti Mandhana dropped a spot to fourth.

In the bowler's rankings, the top three remained unchanged with England's Sophie Ecclestone and Sarah Glenn occupying the first and second spots respectively while the third place stayed with South Africa's Shabnim Ismail.

India's Deepti Sharma gained one position to displace Australia's Megan Schutt from the fourth place.

The all-rounders' rankings didn't see much change either with Sophie Devine and Natalie Sciver holding on to their first and second places respectively.

Deepti Sharma again gained one place to third. Pakistan's Nida Dar and Thailand's Nattaya Boochatham also climbed up two places to the ninth and 10th positions, respectively, while Australia's Ellyse Perry went down four positions to go out of the top 10.

against Australia in the first T20I of the Women's Ashes recently while Australia's Tahlia McGrath gained 29 places in the rankings to rise up to 28th. McGrath remained unbeaten on 91 off just 49 deliveries to chase down a target of 170 against England in Adelaide.

In the bowler's rankings, the top three remained unchanged with England's Sophie Ecclestone and Sarah Glenn occupying the first and second spots respectively while the third place stayed with South Africa's Shabnim Ismail.

India's Deepti Sharma gained one position to displace Australia's Megan Schutt from the fourth place.

The all-rounders' rankings didn't see much change either with Sophie Devine and Natalie Sciver holding on to their first and second places respectively.

Deepti Sharma again gained one place to third. Pakistan's Nida Dar and Thailand's Nattaya Boochatham also climbed up two places to the ninth and 10th positions, respectively, while Australia's Ellyse Perry went down four positions to go out of the top 10.