

## ANALYSIS 7

WHY NOT HAVE A MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS?

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ECONOMY ON COURSE TO ACHIEVE 8-8.5% GROWTH BASED ON Q1 DATA

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CHINA TO HOST ASIAN GAMES IN 2023 AFTER COVID POSTPONEMENT

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KOLLYWOOD BEAUTY SAI DHANSIKA MAKES HER BIG SCREEN DEBUT IN TELUGU

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## COVID TRIPLES ACROSS EUROPE, HOSPITALISATIONS DOUBLE

The World Health Organisation said Tuesday that coronavirus cases have tripled across Europe in the past six weeks, accounting for nearly half of all infections globally. ospitalisation rates have also doubled, although intensive care admissions have remained low. In a statement on Tuesday, WHO's Europe director Dr Hans Kluge described COVID-19 as a nasty and potentially deadly illness that people should not underestimate. He said super-infectious relatives of the omicron variant were driving new waves of disease across the continent and that repeat infections could potentially lead to long COVID.

## RISHI SUNAK TOPS NEW VOTE TO EDGE CLOSER TO FINAL SPOT IN PM RACE

Rishi Sunak topped another round of voting on Tuesday to edge even closer to his place as one of two candidates who will go head-to-head to be elected the new Conservative Party leader and British Prime Minister, as Kemi Badenoch became the latest candidate to be out of the running. The British Indian former Chancellor received 118 votes in the fourth round of voting by his party colleagues, just shy of the 120-mark or one-third of Conservative Party MPs needed to confirm his place as one of the final contenders in the race to replace Boris Johnson.

## NO LINEAR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AIR POLLUTION AND LIFE EXPECTANCY

There is no linear relationship between air pollution and life expectancy as assumed in the Air Quality Life Index (AQLI) published by The Energy Policy Institute, University of Chicago (EPIC), the government has said. Union Minister of State for Environment Ashwini Kumar Choubey had told the Lok Sabha on Monday that there is no conclusive data available to establish a direct correlation of death exclusively due to air pollution. Earlier, BJD MP from Cuttack Bhartruhari Mahtab had asked if the government has taken note of recent studies that suggests air pollution in the country is likely to reduce the life expectancy of about 40 per cent of Indians by more than nine years.

## TWO STUDENTS SNATCH RS 40K FOR PAYING COMPETITIVE EXAM FEES, RENT

Two youngsters arrested for snatching a bag containing Rs 40,000 from a woman in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district have claimed that they committed the crime to pay the competitive exam coaching fees and house rent, police said on Tuesday. The accused duo had conducted a recce of banks before committing the crime on July 13 in Budhagar village, said Gosalpur police station in-charge HR Sinha. The incident occurred after a couple withdrew Rs 40,000 credited in their account under the Pradhan Mantri Awa Yojana (PMAY) from a bank in the village.

# Central panel for TS

To assess flood damage, submit report to Centre; Shah responds to Bandi, Chugh

K VENKATESHWARLU  
HYDERABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has directed officials to send a high-power committee to Telangana to assess the damage caused by the recent floods. The panel will come to the state and assess the damage due to the floods and thereafter submit its report to the Centre.

Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar met Amit Shah on Tuesday along with Telangana BJP affairs in-charge Tarun Chugh at the latter's chamber in New Delhi. They both explained to Amit the damage caused by the floods and the problems of the people. Amit immediately directed officials to send a high-power committee to Telangana.

Sanjay shared the matter through his Twitter account saying: "A high-power committee of the Union Home Ministry will visit Telangana to assess the damage caused by floods. Called on Home Minister Amit Shahji along with BJP General Secretary Tarun Chugh and briefed



them on the devastation in the state."

Sanjay also thanked Amit through his Twitter account, saying "Thank you Amit Shahji for patiently hearing us on the damage caused to houses, people and projects due to the floods and for expressing your deep concern about the natural tragedy. Thank you for understanding our concerns and for responding immediately."

It may be recalled that the week-long heavy rains created havoc in the State. Many low-lying areas were flooded and thousands of people have become homeless. Farmers suffered heavy losses due to the destruction of crops over lakhs of acres. The floods affected severely Adilabad, Warangal, Karimnagar, Jagtial, Mulugu, Bhadrachalam and Nizamabad districts.

## TRS, YSRCP join forces on fiscal position

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Members of Parliament belonging to TRS and YSRCP joined forces on Tuesday to slam the Centre at an all-party meeting on Sri Lankan economic crisis, following which the Union government's presentation, titled State's Financial Situation, was stopped. The Central government gave a power-point presentation on debts of Telangana and other States.

Officials of Union Finance Ministry made the presentation ostensibly on the financial health of States, but spoke of certain States' budgeted and non-budgeted borrowings to underline their fiscal stress.

TRS MPs termed it as politically motivated. Mithun Reddy of YSR Congress was reportedly the first one to raise an objection. Then TRS, DMK, Trinamool Congress MPs joined the league.

2

# Triangular fight likely to help TRS

SNCN ACHARYULU  
HYDERABAD

What TRS supremo Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao thought about the BJP's chances in Telangana is likely to reflect in the next Assembly elections. All recent election survey reports prove this.

KCR decided to give undue importance to the BJP to prevent the Congress from coming to power in the next TS Assembly elections. This will help the BJP to create the impression that it is the alternative to the TRS.

KCR knows that the BJP has no cadres and leadership across the state except in some areas. But the Congress has a strong network of party workers and leaders in almost all the 119 Assembly constituencies in TS.

If the BJP gains ground it will divide anti-TRS votes which would have gone to the Congress. If anti-TRS votes get divided it would certainly help the TRS. If all anti-TRS votes go to the Congress it can endanger the prospects of the TRS.

Keeping this in view KCR gave importance to criticising Telangana BJP President Bandi Sanjay Kumar



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in the beginning. The TRS leadership's aim in criticising the BJP was to create hype to damage the Congress.

If the BJP is in the same position as it was during the 2018 Assembly elections the Congress would have a good chance in the Assembly elections. The victory of the BJP in two Assembly by-elections after the 2018 Assembly elections has created hype in favour of the BJP.

In fact, in Telangana, there was a strong possibility of a direct fight between the TRS and the Congress. But now it has become a triangular fight between the TRS, the Congress and the BJP. In triangular fights, the ruling party will have an advantage if it happens to be the biggest of the three.

The BJP leadership wants to prevent the TRS from coming to power in the Assembly elections. The TRS leadership wants to prevent the Congress from coming to power. For this, the BJP leadership is using the Centre's power. But the TRS is using the BJP to achieve its target.

The latest election survey reports indicate that the BJP's vote share has substantially increased compared to what it was during the 2018 Assembly elections. The Congress is going to suffer a heavy loss due to this.

The BJP thought that it can prevent the TRS from coming to power but in effect, the BJP is likely to prevent the Congress from coming to power. So what KCR thought is likely to happen in the next Telangana Assembly elections.

# TRs and YSRCP spar over five villages

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Ministers exchanged barbs over the under-construction Polavaram Multipurpose Project across the Godavari River. The inundation of the Bhadrachalam Temple was their point of contention.

It started with Telangana Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar demanding that the five villages which were part of Bhadrachalam should be merged back into Telangana as every time there was

a flood it has become difficult for relief efforts to reach those five villages. The villages are the Etapaka, Purushottapatnam, Kannaigudem, Pichukalapadu and Gundala panchayats in Telangana.

"Earlier, Godavari flood flows used to have an equal inflow and outflow. But this time the outflow was slow. As we mentioned earlier, Telangana will see an uncomfortable situation due to the work on the Polavaram Project."

2

## NATIONAL PARTY AND ALTERNATIVE AGENDA

# TRs brass hazy on KCR's line of thought

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Despite all the hype around Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's imminent foray into national politics with 'an alternative agenda', most TRS leaders seem to be hazy about how the whole thing is going to pan out.

When approached for elaboration on the talk of a 'national party' or clarity on the specifics of its alternative agenda, TRS leaders restrict themselves to a few words, repeating ad nauseam: "The country needs an alternative agenda," "KCR will reveal his plans," and the like. No one is willing to commit on anything definite, beyond what has already been stated by KCR.

The only thing most of them say confidently is that the battle is against Modi and the BJP. But deep down they really do not know how they are going to execute it.

When some TRS leaders were asked what KCR meant by 'out-of-the-box' thinking in the context of his changing political paradigm, they beat around the bush, saying "it's unconventional thinking," or the idea is "to set an alternative agenda," and so on.

The only thing most of them say confidently is that the battle is against Modi and the BJP. But deep down they really do not know how

they are going to execute it.

TRS sources said that the Chief Minister was thinking about basic things like drinking water, nutrition, electricity and farming. They pointed out that, irrespective of an alliance with other parties, schemes like Dalit Bandhu and Rythu Bandhu would be proposed for implementation nationwide.

2

# Decision taken with all states onboard

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Facing criticism over GST on daily use items, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the 5 per cent tax is being levied on wheat flour and other items after nod from all states, including non-BJP ruled states.

## FINANCE MINISTER ON GST

Non-BJP ruled states of Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Kerala had agreed to imposing the 5 per cent levy, she said.

2



Rs 21,924 cr transferred to farmers under PM-KISAN P2



## PRICE RISE AND GST

# TRs MPs protest at Parliament

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TRS MPs staged a protest on Tuesday in Parliament against inflation, failure of the Centre in controlling price rise, GST and other issues. They displayed placards and raised slogans against the Centre and criticised its policies which are casting a burden on the poor and the middle class.

The Lok Sabha Members were led by Nama Nageswara Rao and Rajya Sabha Members by K. Keshava Rao, Chevela MP G. Ranjith Reddy blamed the Centre for adjourning the two Houses every day without allowing discussion on issues concerning the majority.

2

## NOT A SINGLE RUPEE THROUGH NDRF

# Telangana calls out discrimination

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana did not get funds from NDRF in the last five years although it suffered many natural calamities. As per data tabled in Parliament, not even a single Rupee was released for natural calamities after 2018.

This comes on a day when the Union Home Ministry decided to send a high-power committee to assess flood damage in the Godavari area. Many states



like Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka have got funds from the NDRF.

TRS said that the 2020 Hyderabad flood relief efforts also were not helped by Prime Minister Modi. Industries Minister KT Rama Rao said in a tweet, "Is this what 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' and cooperative federalism mean? Telangana has been reeling under heavy floods but not a single Rupee was given from the

NDRF after 2018! You did not send relief during the 2020 Hyderabad floods or the 2022 Godavari floods. Why?"

Across India, Rs 7,324 crore were released in 2021-22 and Rs 8,257 crore in 2020-21. "In 2020, a high power Central team assessed Hyderabad floods but till today not a single Rupee was given from NDRF. Meanwhile, Modi ji first announced Rs 1,000 crore for Gujarat and sent the assessment team later. This is BJP's flood politics," Krishnak Manne said.

## No bill on population control: Union Minister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is not contemplating any legislative measures for population control, Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar told the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. Responding to a question on whether the government has taken note of the statement by a Union Minister that a Bill will be brought for the purpose of population control, Pawar said the government seeks to stabilise population by 2045, in line with the National Population Policy 2000 and National Health Policy 2017.

2

## FAMILY PHILANTHROPISTS LAUNCH NETWORK

# Aim to raise US\$ 1 billion annually by 2030 for SDGs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Family philanthropists, including Premjis of Wipro, Nikhil Kamath of Zerodha, Nisa Godrej and Rohini Nilekani, on Tuesday announced a network, aiming to raise US\$ 1 billion for social causes annually by 2030.

Each member of the invite-only platform launched along with Dasra will contribute at least Rs 50 lakh per year, and the network aspires to have at least 5,000 members by 2030, as per an official statement. The network, christened 'Givingpi', aims to mobilise US\$ 1 billion annually for helping the country achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations, it said. At present, philanthropists,



including Aditi and Rishad Premji, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Manisha and Ashish Dhawan,

Nikhil Kamath, Nisa Godrej, Rajan Navani, Rohini Nilekani, Skoll Foundation, Tara Singh Vachani,

Dasra will contribute at least Rs 50 lakh per year, and the network aspires to have at least 5,000 members by 2030, as per an official statement.

The Givingpi network will provide philanthropy-focused offerings such as connections to credible NGOs (Non-Government Organisations) and trusted philanthropy advisors, peer networking, theme-based learning and collaborative funding opportunities while also mainstreaming the narrative around family philanthropy in India," the statement said.

Members of this community will share and learn from live experiences and insights, thereby accelerating their own giving journeys and collectively grow India's giving pie, it said.

Illustrating the possibilities for a network like it, the statement said

India has 113 billionaires and 6,884 ultra high-net-worth individuals and the same is expected to grow to 12,000 in the next five years, as per Bain and Company and Dasra's India Philanthropy Report 2021.

If these families are inspired to give in line with their global peers, family philanthropy could generate an additional annual investible corpus of Rs 60,000 crore to Rs 1 lakh crore for the development sector in India.

"Families are powerful constructs for driving social change but their giving gets overshadowed by CSR. Family philanthropy has tremendous potential that once unleashed can be transformative for India's development," Dasra's co-founder Neera Nundy said.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:  
Tithi: Saptami: Jul 19 07:50 AM  
to Jul 20 07:36 AM  
Ashtami: Jul 20 07:36 AM  
to Jul 21 08:12 AM

Nakshatram:  
Revati: Jul 19 12:12 PM  
to Jul 20 12:50 PM  
Ashwini: Jul 20 12:50 PM  
to Jul 21 02:17 PM

Rahukalam: 12:22 PM to 1:59 PM

Yamagandam: 7:32 AM to 9:08 AM

Varjyam: 10:03 AM to 11:44 AM

Gulika: 10:45 AM to 12:22 PM

Amritakalam: 10:23 AM to 12:01 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: NIL

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy  
Temp: 30°C  
Humidity: 76%  
Sunrise: 5:51 AM  
Sunset: 6:53 PM  
Updated: JULY 19, 2022 5:00 PM

# Jagan may go for early polls along with TS

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) lifetime president YS Jaganmohan Reddy may go for early elections in the state in view of the growing discontent among sections of the public over the style of his administration, which has started pruning the lists of beneficiaries of various welfare schemes.

Bent upon retaining power, the Chief Minister is showing party legislators the way to reach out to people and feel their pulse. He has already expressed his resolve to capture a total of 175 seats in the next elections to the AP's Legislative Assembly. His mind games since then are aimed at making the principal opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) diffident, despite the palpable anti-incumbency factor. In

fact, YSRCP is oozing confidence of winning even the Kuppam seat, represented by TDP supremo N. Chandrababu Naidu for 33 years. The reason for this level of confidence of Jagan is the outcome of the recent municipal elections that came in favour of YSRCP.

It is a different matter that voters may exercise their franchise differently for local elections, Assembly elections and the General Election depending on their priorities. It is possible that for the local bodies their selected representatives irrespective of their political affiliations. For example, during the 1996 Lok Sabha polls, there was a huge lead of 40,000 votes for Congress candidate Nandi Yellaiah in the Medchal segment that falls under the Siddipet LS seat. Medchal was

**Jagan is working to make TDP irrelevant post the 2024 polls. Besides, if TDP is defeated again in the 2024 elections, age factor would come into play rendering Naidu less appealing in future elections. In contrast, Jagan has made no bones about his resolve to rule AP for 30 years. Jagan wants to capitalise on the fact that he is 22 years younger than Naidu.**

then represented by TDP strongman and home minister in Chandrababu Naidu's cabinet in the combined state of Andhra Pradesh T. Devendar Goud. Political circles were stunned at the outcome and everybody thought that it was the beginning of the end of Goud's political career. But in the 1999 General Election, Goud emerged victorious, and continued in Naidu's cabinet with key portfolios.

YSRCP will be making history should it wrest the Kuppam seat from TDP. Losing the seat might pose serious challenge to the very existence of TDP in the state. So, Jagan is working to make TDP irrelevant post the 2024 polls. Besides, if TDP is defeated again in the 2024 elections, age factor would come into play rendering Naidu less appealing in future elections. In contrast, Jagan has made no



M D RATNA KUMAR  
Senior Journalist

bones about his resolve to rule AP for 30 years. Jagan wants to capitalise on the fact that he is 22 years younger than Naidu.

However, the growing discontent among people is causing concern in ruling party circles. MLAs, despite not being directly involved in the process of disbursement of huge funds

by the government to beneficiaries of various welfare schemes, are being made responsible for ensuring that the constituents vote for YSRCP. The government believes that 87% of families in Andhra Pradesh are beneficiaries of various welfare schemes, including 'Nava Ratnas'. The schemes are so designed that at least one member of each family is a beneficiary of one welfare scheme or the other. So, the Chief Minister thinks that MLAs could talk to the beneficiaries and ensure that they would vote for YSRCP. He has assured MLAs that he would bring money for the welfare schemes at any cost and disburse the funds by pressing the button.

Still, many of the MLAs are facing embarrassing moments when they meet people during their door-to-door campaign on the welfare schemes. In

NTR and Sri Satya Sai districts, MLAs preferred to book cases against those beneficiaries who had dared to question them on corruption, irregularities and removal of their names from the lists of beneficiaries of welfare schemes, including old age and widow pensions. This has attracted widespread criticism. Some of the MLAs lost their cool while talking to beneficiaries. Often the kith and kin of legislators also take part in these programmes and interact with people. At times, they also reacted in a harsh way. This has caused heartburn among people. Such incidents may mar the prospects of the ruling party.

Given the deteriorating fiscal health of Andhra Pradesh, there is no guarantee that the current welfare schemes will be continued after the next elections, regardless of who

comes to power. In this backdrop, Jaganmohan Reddy may decide to go for early polls in Andhra Pradesh, though elections in the state are scheduled for 2024. He may prefer to go to polls along with the neighbouring Telangana State, which is scheduled to go to polls in 2023. Mutual co-operation between the two ruling parties of AP and TS can be better handled if the two states go to polls simultaneously.

The Union government headed by Narendra Modi has to concede such a proposal for early polls in AP. He will consider the prospects of BJP in AP in the context of electoral adjustments with friendly parties. It depends on the relationship between Modi and Jagan. The Chief Minister, despite having a good rapport with Modi, may have to agree to conditions set by the Prime Minister as a BJP leader.

## Rs 21,924 cr transferred to farmers under PM-KISAN

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A financial benefit of Rs 21,924 crore has been transferred into bank accounts of 10.26 crore eligible farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme in this fiscal so far, the government said on Tuesday.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, a financial benefit of Rs 6,000 per year is provided to eligible farmer families, payable in three equal installments of Rs 2,000. The fund is transferred directly to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar, in a written reply to the Lok Sabha, said Rs 21,924 crore was transferred till July 17 of the ongoing 2022-23 financial year.

Out of which, Rs 5,063.25 crore was transferred to eligi-

ble farmers in Uttar Pradesh, Rs 2,053 crore in Maharashtra, Rs 1,684 crore in Bihar and Rs 1,680 crore in Madhya Pradesh so far this fiscal, as per the data placed in the Lower House.

During the launch year of 2020-21, the government had transferred Rs 55,101 crore to 9.71 crore eligible farmers under the PM-KISAN. In 2021-22 fiscal, Rs 66,483 crore was released to 10.64 crore farmers. Tomar said release of financial benefits under PM-KISAN is a continuous and ongoing process. The benefits under the scheme are released after the receipt of the correct and verified data from the respective state governments.

The PM-KISAN scheme covers all landholding farmer families, irrespective of the size of their landholding, subject to certain exclusion criteria related to higher income groups.

## TRS, YSRCP...

Continued from P1

The Centre said that the examples were used to highlight bad consequences of fiscal imprudence and the culture of giving freebies.

Opposition parties said that it was not the platform to discuss the fiscal condition of States. Apart from TRS, YSR Congress, DMK and Trinamool Congress strongly objected to the irrelevant presentation, which deliberately tried to highlight the fiscal condition of select States accusing them of borrowing beyond capacity.

TRS Parliamentary party leader K Keshav Rao, who attended the meeting, strongly objected to the presentation and the Centre's remarks on the fiscal condition of certain States. The TRS then demanded a discussion on the Centre's fiscal status.

## BJP plans public meeting in Warangal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP will organise a public meeting on the concluding day of the Praja Sangrama Yatra's third phase which will start on August 2 at Yadadri and end at the Bhadrakali Temple of Warangal by August-end.

The third phase of the Praja Sangrama Yatra will be held for 300 km for 20 days and 15 km per day.

BJP sources said the yatra will pass through Alair, Bhongir, Munugodu, Nakrekal, Thungathurthy, Jangaon Assembly constituencies in Bhongir Parliamentary constituency. However, the yatra will also go through Station

Ghanpur, Palakurthi, Parakala, Warangal East, Warangal West, and the Hanumakonda constituencies in Warangal Lok Sabha constituency.

The yatra will start after performing poojas to the Yadagiri Sri Laxmi Narasimha Swamy at Yadadri temple.

However, BJP sources said that the Yatra may take more days than scheduled time as the party is contemplating of touching more villages and thandas on the route the Praja Sangrama Yatra goes. The route map committee has been exercising on it to make the third phase Praja Sangrama Yatra more special.

## Oldies return to Congress

Party succeeds in bagging former MLA Praveen

K VENKATESHWARLU  
■ HYDERABAD

Once they were Congress leaders but most of them joined the ruling TRS and some joined the BJP. But now they are quitting the TRS and the BJP one after the other.

TDP leaders, who were in the TRS and the BJP are also joining the Congress. Even some TRS leaders are also joining the Congress after quitting the ruling party. The trend intensified after Rahul Gandhi's Warangal Declaration.

Recently, a former MLA and senior TRS leader, Nallala Odelu, joined the Congress along with his ZP chairperson wife Bhagyalaxmi in New Delhi in

the presence of AICC General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi.

Later, two former TDP leaders who had joined the BJP, Bandru Shobjarani and three-time MLA, Erra Shekar, joined the Congress giving a shock to the BJP leadership.

There is a big list of leaders who joined the Congress after quitting the TRS, the BJP and the TDP. They are Rangineni Abhilash Rao, Jagdeeshwar Rao, Gandra Sathyanarayana, and Thati Venkateshwarlu.

Former Congress leader and Minister, the late, P. Janardhan Reddy's daughter, TRS Corporator P. Vijaya Reddy, and Badangpet Mayor Ch. Parijatha Reddy joined the Congress after quitting the TRS.

### BJP shocked as Praveen Reddy joins Congress

HYDERABAD: The BJP is in shock as it is losing leaders who it thought will join it one after the other to its arch-rival Congress. BJP leaders were shocked first when the Nallala Odelu couple joined the Congress as it was thought that they would join the BJP. Now once again, the BJP got a shock as TRS leader, the former Husnabad MLA, Ailgireddy Praveen Reddy, joined the Congress on Tuesday. BJP leaders are holding talks to find out how they missed Ailgireddy Praveen Reddy as he had shown an interest in joining the BJP.

## Flood-ravaged dists in AP limping back to normal

PNS ■ ELURU

Giving a big respite to six districts, the inflows to the river Godavari have come down considerably and the normalcy is limping back in the flood-affected districts.

Though the flood water receded, slush accumulated in the houses in flood-hit villages. Victims were seen cleaning their houses in some areas where water receded substantially.

Though the flood water started receding on Monday, 30 villages in Konaseema district are still in knee-deep water. The flood victims were accommodated in the 74 relief centres in the district. Officials sources said that 22 villages have no power supply due to the uprooting of electrical poles and damage to the transformer.

The water level at the Dowleswaram barrage stood at 17.7 feet in the evening and 19 lakh cusecs of water were discharged downstream into the sea. The officials withdrew the third warning signal at the barrage with the receding of inflows on Tuesday.

According to official information, 165 villages in seven mandals were affected of which 143 villages were inundated by the floodwater affecting 69,112 people in the ASR district.

| CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Dressed/With Skin  | ₹308 |
| Without Skin       | ₹328 |
| Broiler at Farm    | ₹162 |

| EGG RATES ₹/100             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| HYDERABAD                   | 385   |
| VIJAYAWADA                  | 385   |
| VISAKHAPATNAM               | 410   |
| RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD) | ₹3.85 |

## ‘No bill on population control’

Continued from P1

Efforts of the government have been successful in reining in the growth of population, she said in a written reply.

Pawar said the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) declined to 2.0 in 2019-21, according to the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS 5), -- which is below replacement level -- while fertility rates in 31 out of 36 states and UTs were seen to have come down to the

replacement level fertility in the same survey.

Pawar further informed the house that modern contraceptive usage has increased to 56.5 per cent and the unmet need for family planning is only 9.4 per cent, according to NFHS 5.

She said that according to the Sample Registration System of the Census, the Crude Birth Rate (CBR) had declined to 19.7 per 1,000 people in 2019.

## TRS brass hazy on...

Continued from P1

Asked if they would contest as a separate party, the leaders had many answers. While one said, "Why not BRS," another said, "We will back a candidate who has the potential to defeat the BJP. They can be from our allies or independents. So, when we go to the people we will let the candidate be the face, while KCR will back the candidate with potential schemes if voted to power." TRS leaders are of the considered view that whatever be the direction that KCR takes, they will be with him as the country needs "progressive politics and development-oriented nationalism."

## TRS and YSRCP spar...

Continued from P1

He said that outflow was slow this time as the Andhra Pradesh government had finished fixing the gates of the Polavaram project and water levels may have been retained in those seven mandals, which were transferred to the neighbouring state from Telangana in 2014.

There is a chance that once the Polavaram Project is completed, water levels in Bhadrachalam will permanently remain at 45.5 ft. "So earlier also we had demanded that the height of the Polavaram Project must be reduced," he recalled.

The Andhra Pradesh government on Tuesday asked the former to avoid

creating "new disputes" between the two states.

Minister Botsa Satyanarayana said, "If those villages are merged with Telangana we will also ask for AP to be merged with TS as well. As AP's revenues have decreased will it now be merged with Hyderabad?"

AP Water Resources Minister Ambati Rambabu said, "The Centre has granted permissions for Polavaram after surveys. The Centre merged seven mandals from Telangana with AP because they faced the threat of submergence due to the multipurpose project. If we were to give back the five villages, will you give us Bhadrachalam back?"

"Telangana could find

out from the Central Water Commission whether the Polavaram Project will submerge villages in that state. There are no disputes between AP and Telangana now. Please don't try to create new disputes. If there is any problem, Chief Ministers of the two states will sort it out," Rambabu said.

Puvvada Ajay Kumar later issued a statement that his words were misunderstood and blown out of proportion.

"Ministers Botsa and Ambati Rambabu should talk to Jagan and hold talks with KCR also to ensure that the Badrachalam Temple of Lord Rama is not flooded again. I spoke on behalf of both the Telugu states," he said.

## TRS MPs protest at Parliament

Continued from P1

"Union Minister for Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal was creating confusion among farmers by asking them to grow paddy extensively citing good demand for rice in the international market. At the same time, the Centre is not buying the custom milled rice from Telangana for over six weeks now and there is uncertainty regarding the 90 lakh tonnes of paddy with the millers in Telangana now," said Ranjith Reddy.

## 66 TS villages atrocity prone

Continued from P1

As per the NCRB 2020 data, there were 1,727 SC atrocities cases and 543 ST atrocities cases pending at the end of the year 2020.

This info was revealed in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday. In Gujarat, the 11 districts of Mehsana, Ahmedabad (Rural), Junagadh, Kutch, Banaskantha, Kheda, Amreli, Rajkot (Rural), Surendranagar, Vadodara (Rural) and Bharuch have been identified as atrocity prone areas.

In Andhra Pradesh, 53 villages have been identified as atrocity-prone of which 47 are in East Godavari district, five in Kadapa and one in Srikalakulam.

Incidentally, in Bengaluru City also some areas have been identified as atrocity-prone. They are Sampigehalli Sub-Division in Bangalore City, Basavalingappa Nagar, Sampigehalli, Bagalur, Bandikodigetti village, Kothanuru Malleswaram Sub Division in Bengaluru, AK Colony and Bheemshakhi Nagar. The Minister of State in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Ajay Kumar Mishra said in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, "The responsibility of maintaining law and order and to protect the life and property of citizens including SCs/STs lies with State Governments. The States are competent to deal with such things.

## India's bioeconomy likely to touch US\$ 300 billion by 2030: Report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's bioeconomy is likely to touch US\$ 150 billion by 2025 and over US\$ 300 billion by 2030, a report said on Tuesday.

The India BioEconomy Report 2022, based on the data on biotech sector's contribution to the economy, has been brought out by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

The report said the country's bioeconomy has reached over USD 80 billion in 2021, registering a 14.1 per cent growth over USD 70.2 billion in 2020.

It said that India generated USD 219 million

of bioeconomy daily, adding USD 80.12 billion in 2021. On an average, at least three biotech startups were incorporated every day in 2021 (a total of 1,128 biotech startups set up in 2021) and the industry crossed USD 1 billion in research and development spending. "A trebling within a year from USD 320 million to USD 1.02 billion," it added.

On the vaccine front, India administered nearly 4 million doses of Covid-19 vaccines per day (total 1.45 billion doses given in 2021), the report said, adding that the country conducted 1.3 million Covid-19 tests each day in 2021 (total of 506.7 million tests).

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# Stop giving antibiotics to kids with fever, say pediatricians

SIDDHARTH KUMAR SINGH  
■ HYDERABAD

Most fevers among children can be taken care of with basic first aid. Parents themselves should stop giving antibiotics to their children, say pediatricians from the city.

Many children are getting affected with high grade fever this season. In fact, in some of them the fever is even touching 104 to 105 degree Fahrenheit. Dengue, flu and other viral infections like chicken pox and typhoid are the most common illnesses at this time of the year.

Dr Sivaranjani Santosh, chief pediatrician, Magnus Centre and Rainbow Hospitals said, "Antibiotics should not be prescribed except on a few occasional situations. Antibiotics can kill only those germs known as bacteria.

They are not the solution for most fevers. Parents should have a plan ready for appropriate temperature control.



Paracetamol given in a correct dosage should be the first step. A minimum of 4-hour gap is to be maintained between two doses. Ibuprofen should be kept as a backup. The dose has to be discussed with a pediatrician first. This medicine has to be used very carefully, only in situations when the fever is high even after taking paracetamol. Parents should note that Ibuprofen can cause severe

stomach acidity and can suppress platelets. None of these medicines should be given on an empty stomach or to a child who is vomiting."

The doctor further added that parents should ensure good liquid intake for the child. Glucose and sugar water should be avoided.

In fever, antibiotics need not be taken for months until it is clear cut dysentery, streptococ-

**The doctor further said that parents should ensure good liquid intake for the child. Glucose and sugar water should be avoided**

cal throat infection or typhoid. So, please don't unnecessarily start antibiotics for your child without doctor's advice. The side effects will create problems for the child, the doctor said.

If the fever is high or if it persists beyond three to five days, if the child has severe headache, persistent vomiting or if the child's intake of fluid has been compromised totally, then parents need to take the child to a pediatrician.

# 4,500 sanitation staff, 400 plus medical camps in flood-hit areas

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana has deployed 4,100 sanitation staff from other districts by the panchayat raj department while 400 sanitation staff from the municipal department were also drafted along with mobile toilets and emergency material.

Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar held a teleconference on Tuesday with District Collector of Bhadradi Kothagudem and other senior officials on the progress of relief and rehabilitation measures in the district. In all, 436 medical camps have been arranged in the district and no cases of dengue or malaria have been reported so far.

DMHO and malaria officers have been appointed in each mandal for supervising health services. Special focus is on pregnant women and those who require medical assistance have been shifted to nearby PHCs. Medical camps were arranged at all the rehabilitation centres. Power supply to be restored in all villages



**Special focus is on pregnant women and those who require medical assistance have been shifted to nearby PHCs**

by Tuesday night. People appreciated the government efforts on relief and rehabilitation activities.

One senior officer is appointed to every mandal for supervising the relief activities. Separate teams are constituted with medical, electricity and sanitation wings in every village to take up relief activities.

Panchayat secretaries have been appointed to every village for sanitation works. Senior IAS officers Rajat Kumar Saini, V.P.Gautham, Collector, Khammam are supervising all

relief and rehabilitation activities in the district along with the Director PR&RD, Director, Public Health and the District Collector.

Spl.Chief Secretary MA&UD Arvind Kumar, Secretary Disaster Management Rahul Bojja, Secretary PR&RD Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Secretary HM&FW SAM Rizvi, Director CCLA Rajat Kumar Saini, Bhadradi Kothagudem Collector Anudeep, DPH Srinivas Rao, Director PR&RD M.Hanumatha Rao, and other senior officials participated in the teleconference.

## TS EAMCET agriculture stream schedule released

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The TS EAMCET (Agriculture stream) and TS ECET exams which were postponed got a new schedule. The Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE) on Tuesday has decided to conduct TS EAMCET-2022 for the Agriculture stream on July 30 and 31, which was postponed on account of incessant rains in the state.

The examination is scheduled to begin at 9 am in the Forenoon Session (FN) and at 3 pm in the Afternoon Session (AN). All the candidates are advised to note the change in the revised schedule of the exam and visit the website concerned for downloading hall tickets immediately.

The TS ECET will be held on August 1, to begin at 9 am in the Forenoon Session (FN) and at 3 pm in the Afternoon Session (AN).

## Abandoned girl selected for USA programme

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A young girl Y Reshma has bagged an opportunity to pursue the course of her choice under the Community College Initiative Programme (CCIP) sponsored by the Department of State, United States of America.

She was studying BSC (CBZ) at SGCSR College, Rajam, Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh run by GMRVF, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of GMR Group. Reshma has cleared all the hurdles to participate in the CCIP this year.

Reshma hails from Menthipeta SC Colony of Rajam. Her father abandoned the family soon after her mother's death when she was less than an year old. She is now under the care of her grandmother, surviving on a senior citizen's pension. Reshma was selected under the GMRVF's Gifted Children scheme. The Gifted Children scheme seeks to



identify, encourage and financially support the education of underprivileged meritorious children from GMRVF's target communities to enable them to unleash their inherent potential.

Under the Scheme, selected children from underprivileged families are supported from school till they get their first job. Apart from joining them in quality schools and bearing their complete educational expenses, the Foundation also provides coaching, tuitions, counseling support to these children so that they can excel in their personal and professional lives.

## Cyberabad cops act against drug menace

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Control of drug menace has become the top priority of the Cyberabad police. Ever since DCP Shamshabad Jagadishwar Reddy took charge, special teams have been formed with law and order police stations in coordination with the Special Operations Team (SOT) and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotic Substances (NDPS) teams under the supervision of Cyberabad Police Commissioner Stephen Ravendra.

The police recovered several lakh of rupees in cash as well as seized bikes, cars, lorry and DCM vehicles used to carry drugs. Ganja weighing about 1,982 Kg along with 10 grams of cocaine amounting to Rs 5.1 crore was seized and a total of 61 drug dealer suspects were arrested and sent on judicial remand.

The biggest recovery made by the police was in May where the SOT Shamshabad Zone, along with staff of Shamshabad PS jointly intercepted a vehicle at Golconda crossroads.

# Telangana sees a rise in drug de-addiction cases

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana saw a rise in the number of drug de-addiction cases in the state. The number of drug addicts benefitting through various schemes has increased from 1,845 cases in 2017-18 to 6,620 cases in 2021-22.

According to the data from National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR), from the state of Telangana, 6,620 cases were registered in 2021-22 while Andhra Pradesh saw 15,295 cases being registered. The total number in India is 2, 85,559. In the same year, 16,503 cases were registered in Uttar Pradesh, 1,374 from Gujarat and 6,697 from Karnataka. The state with the highest cases was Madhya Pradesh with 48,929 registered cases.

The data was revealed by Union Minister of State for Social Justice and



Empowerment Narayanaswamy in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, in a response to a question asked on drug addiction in India. The minister also said that there has been a change in pattern of substance abuse as reflected in the National Survey on Extent, Pattern and Trends of substance use in India 2004 and in the comprehensive survey conducted in 2018.

Alcohol use was 21%, cannabis was 3% and opioid use was 0.7%, according to the 2004 survey. The 2018 survey

revealed that alcohol use among the age group 10-75 years is 14.6%, cannabis is 2.83% and opioids is 2.1%. The 2018 survey also showed that the estimated number of users for alcohol is 15 crore, cannabis is 2.9 crore, opioids is 1.8 crore and 9.4 lakh people use cocaine. The minister said that the government has implemented Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) scheme to address the problem of drug abuse in India. The scheme has been launched in 272 most vulnerable districts since August 2020.

# Outreach for bankers on pension scheme

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Pension Fund Regulatory Authority (PFRA), Government of India, has conducted an Outreach Programme for the Banks, LDMs in Telangana on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, AG Das, executive director of PFRA, explained that the Government of India, as a measure to create universal social security system for Indians, especially the underprivileged and unorganised sector workers, introduced Atal Pension Yojana and all Indian citizens aged between 18 years to 40 years are eligible to join the scheme. Under the scheme, an assured pension of Rs 1,000 to Rs 5000 will be provided to the subscribers on attaining the age of 60 years. He said that so far in Telangana State about 13.19 lakh citizens have subscribed to APY whereas 430 lakh citizens across India have subscribed to Atal Pension Yojana. Debashish Mitra, general manager of SBI and convener of SLBC, said that Atal Pension Yojana aimed at providing social security to the citizens in the old age. He said that during the FY 2021-22, banks in the State have enrolled 2.90 lakh subscriptions. He said that creating awareness amongst the general public is the key to increase the subscription base and banks in the State are creating awareness on the scheme through their financial literacy centres.



# Global Virtual Education Summit to boost NEP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Global Virtual Education Summit will be held as a boost to National Educational Policy (NEP) by International Network for Outcome based Education (INOBE) from August 12 to 14.

INOBE founded by Prof William Spady, (a world-famous sociologist, change leader and Alumnus Professor from Harvard University) is a team of highly dedicated

researchers, leaders, and educators established to keep the flame of authentic outcome-based education burning throughout the world for a sixth decade. That visionary flame continues to empower every learner and leader within INOBE's reach to develop the skills and attributes that elevate humanity and its evolving future. It is a corporate partner of the ACE, ASEE, AACSB, NSTA, NSA, IFEEs, AMEE, EPSI and affiliate of

several other prestigious regional and global organisations.

INOBE, USA, would be hosting the summit virtually with 32,000 registered attendees from 100 countries with 200 presentations.

The summit aims to provide a venue for all stakeholders of education around the world to gather and exchange practical and insightful experiences responsive to educational concerns of all times.



## 12 quintals of spurious seeds seized over 6 months

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As part of proactive policing to clamp down on the transportation and sale of spurious seeds, Cyberabad police has intensified the crackdown by increasing surveillance under the supervision of Cyberabad Police Commissioner Stephen Ravendra.

Over the past six months, the Cyberabad police has registered three cases against six persons where approximately 12 quintals of spurious seeds were seized amounting to approximately Rs 1.16 crore.

The first case was registered under Shadnagar PS after the SOT Shamshabad, along with Shadnagar police jointly conducted a raid and nabbed a habitual offender for transporting spurious cotton seeds.

# TRS govt is backing the jobless: Minister Sabita

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Education Minister Sabita Indra Reddy said that people say a lot to criticise the development carried out by TRS government, but the youth should understand them with their discretion.

The youth should think deeply about all the conditions after and before formation of the separate Telangana state. On Monday, the Minister, along with Local MLA Anjaiah Yadav, distributed free study material to 500 unemployed youths in Shadnagar under the memorial of the MLA's daughter late Jyothi.

Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy congratulated Anjaiah Yadav for carrying out distribution of free study material. Earlier, the Minister laid the foundation stone for development works under Mana Ooru - Mana Badi, Mana Basti Mana Badi programme at Timmapur and Kothur government



**The youth should think deeply about all the conditions after and before formation of the separate Telangana state**

schools. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the TRS is the only government that is providing many opportunities to the youth in the fields of education and employment. She said that while Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is taking steps with many lofty ideas, the TRS government under his leadership of Minister KTR is providing job opportunities in an unprecedented manner. On the one hand, the TRS government is the only

government which is inviting many industries and promoting investments in Telangana and setting up industries in many fields. Similarly, the government has also laid great emphasis on education. She said that the credit of establishing more than 1,000 gurukula schools belongs to the TRS government. The Minister said that their mission is to provide free education from KG to PG as expected by the Chief Minister.

The scholarship for foreign education is being given to make it accessible to poor people in particular, she added. She said that if the unemployed and students turn their labour into a weapon, success will become a slave. She also said that after Telangana formation, it is their government that is showing a golden future to the people in terms of water, funding, recruitment and jobs. "We are carrying out 12 types of work in 26,000 schools with a huge budget of Rs 7,289 crore.

# English Medium: Government schools ask for workbooks

DEEPIKA PASHAM  
■ HYDERABAD

The introduction of English medium has been flagged off in government schools under the Mana Ooru Mana Badi initiative by the state government. Though students are over-enthusiastic to learn in a new medium, they are lagging behind as they have only textbooks and not workbooks.

This was noticed in government schools of Malkajgiri mandal such as Mandal Parishad Primary School in Old Safilguda, Government Primary School in Neredmet and other nearby government schools.

The headmasters, on condition of anonymity, explained,

"We all have been implementing English medium. Our classes are from first to seventh but the output might have more impact with use of workbooks because these children are new to English medium. They have no private tuition after going home. Whatever it is we teach them. So, these workbooks will allow them to practice what we teach."

In addition, they said that they are voluntarily seeking help from NGOs because the government hardly gives anything and seeking these requirements will never be fulfilled.

Mandal Parishad Primary School in Old Safilguda has a total of 285 students and they walk barefoot. Schools have



been entrusted with only uniform material and tenders need to still reach them. When asked why students were not

given uniforms, the faculty said that during Covid nothing was provided. So, contractors who get Rs 100 per uniform are



taking time to give the orders.

Not pertaining to students, but vacant posts for faculty and tables, chairs for them are also on the necessary requirement

## POWER BILLS

# People told not to share bank details with unknown persons

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSSPDCL) on Tuesday warned the public that their employees will never ask for details of bank account/credit and debit card except the payment receipt bill.

This announcement was made by the Chairman and Managing Director TSSPDCL, G Raghuma Reddy after it was brought to his attention that some unknown persons are sending fraudulent messages to many consumers in the guise of collection of electricity consumption bills. The fraudsters were informing consumers that the bill pay-

ment is pending, threatening to cut off the power supply at night if they fail to pay the bill immediately. Taking advantage of the panicked customer, they were collecting details like bank account number, credit card, debit card and withdrawing money from the accounts of the customers.

In this regard, TSSPDCL said that they will never send website links through SMS/Message for payment of bills. The company will inform the details of current month bills and arrears through electricity bill. The consumers can also access the information of consumption and other details through the TSSPDCL website or Mobile App.

# Harish skewers Oppn for being insensitive to people's plight

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Minister for Finance T Harish Rao on Tuesday skewered the Opposition for being insensitive to the plight of the people caused by incessant rains and consequent flooding of low-lying areas.

But, the opposition, at the same time, has been slinging mud at the State government, he pointed out.

Harish Rao was laying foundation for several developmental activities in the district.

The Ministers, TRS MLAs and people's representatives were on the ground under the guidance of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao and worked shoulder to shoulder with officials and people in the flood-hit areas. But, the opposition leaders were conspicuous by their absence. They did not stir out of their houses. The Opposition leaders confined themselves to holding media conferences at their respective party offices, ' he observed, while speaking on the occasion.

Harish Rao further said the rains lashed the State witnessed unprecedented rain-fall. If the opposition leaders are really concerned about the



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao speaking at a meeting in Sangareddy on Tuesday

suffering of people, they should persuade the Centre to grant funds to the State. He wondered whether 'double engine sarkar' (government) meant abolishing welfare programmes and shutting public sector units.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for the stopping of freebies. It showed that the BJP government at the Centre intended to deprive the poor of welfare schemes like free rice distribution to the poor, Kalyana Lakshmi benefits and pensions, he pointed out. He recalled that the BJP government at the Centre waived Rs 12 lakh crore loans owed to the banks by fugitives like Nirav

Modi and Lalit Modi.

Telangana is the only State which has been implementing welfare schemes like pensions to 40 lakh persons. The government would sanction pensions to 10 lakh more persons in the coming two months, he said.

He promised to ensure that pensions and ration cards would be sanctioned to all eligible persons.

He revealed that a special development fund of Rs 50 crore was sanctioned for Sangareddy district to take up developmental works. The fund was sanctioned at the request of former MLA Chinta Prabhakar.

**Harish Rao said the government would sanction pensions to 10 lakh more persons in the coming two months. Telangana is the only State which has been implementing welfare schemes like pensions to 40 lakh persons**

Prabhakar brought to the notice of the Chief Minister the bad condition of roads. He directed the officials to lay roads and build drains, besides laying new pipelines to an extent of 36 km to provide drinking water connection to every household.

The government released Rs 500 crore for a medical college in the district and a 600-bed hospital will also be set up, he said.

Later, Harish Rao inaugurated a dedicated paediatric care unit in the government hospital. He visited various ward in the hospital and interacted with the patients.



## TRS leader's son dies in accident

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Regatte Dinesh Reddy, son of former Narkatpally MPP and TRS party senior leader Regatte Mallikarjun Reddy, died in a road accident on ORR at Pedda Golconda, near Shamshabad on Tuesday. Dinesh Reddy (30) died on the spot when the car in which he was travelling was hit by another vehicle. The car overturned. His body was shifted to Nalgonda after conducting a post-mortem at Osmania Hospital.

Telangana Legislative Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy, Minister G Jagadish Reddy, and MLAs expressed their condolences to the bereaved family. The family donated the eyes of Dinesh Reddy.

# BJP defaming Nehru family with baseless charges: Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Accusing the BJP Government at the Centre of targeting the Nehru-Gandhi family with baseless allegations, Congress MP Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy asked party cadres to participate in the nationwide protest on July 21 and July 22.

Congress President Sonia Gandhi will be visiting the Enforcement Directorate's office on July 21 as per the summons sent by the ED in the National Herald case.

Addressing a press conference through the Zoom App on Tuesday, Uttam Kumar Reddy alleged that the Centre was using its agencies, especially the Enforcement Directorate, to target opposition leaders.

He said the ED allegations of money laundering in the National Herald case were completely false. He said there was no basis for the ED or any other Central agency to question Congress President Sonia Gandhi or Rahul Gandhi.

He pointed out that the National Herald issue was a simple debt-to-equity conversion with absolutely no money transaction. Since no money was involved in the transaction, the question of money laundering does not arise, he said.

Uttam said that the BJP



Government has been using the ED to defame the Nehru-Gandhi family, demoralise Congress cadres and divert public attention from real issues like the rising inflation, China's intrusion into India etc.

He said that debt-to-equity conversion was a regular process which banks do frequently and that the Centre had revived the National Herald issue which was earlier closed.

"Congress leaders and cadres will never allow the Centre to harass Sonia. We will hold protests across the country on July 21 and 22 to express solidarity with our leader and also to convey the message that we will not bow down to the Modi Government," he said.

Calling Sonia one of the greatest leaders of the nation in this century, Uttam said that the Nehru-Gandhi family has made a lot of sacrifices for the

country. He said former Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi achieved martyrdom to preserve the nation's unity. Sonia gave up the PM's post although she had a chance to become the Prime Minister during the two terms of the UPA government from 2004-2014. The Nehru-Gandhi family has always served the country selflessly, he said.

"The people of Telangana support Sonia as she made our 60-year-old dream of Telangana a reality. She made a big political sacrifice by bifurcating Andhra Pradesh. Despite knowing well that the party will lose power in Andhra Pradesh, she created Telangana only to fulfil the dream of TS people. It was the political will of Sonia which created Telangana.

Therefore, we will stage a protest across Telangana against the BJP Government which is trying to defame her," he said.

Uttam pointed out that it was under Sonia's leadership that the Congress-led UPA government introduced revolutionary laws and measures like MGNREGS, the Food Security Act, the Right to Information Act (RTI), the Right to Education (RTE) Act, etc.

# Officials told to complete market construction speedily

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

District Collector S Venkata Rao on Tuesday directed the officials to speed up works on vegetable and non-vegetable market being constructed on the premises of old Roads and Buildings office.

The Collector was making a surprise inspection of the construction works of the vegetable and non-vegetable market. He directed Public Health Department Executive Engineer Vijay Bhaskar Reddy to deploy more workers to complete the project early.

He instructed the officials to give a contract for centering work to one of the Dalit Bandhu beneficiaries, who



Mahabubnagar Collector inspecting works on veg and non-veg market under construction in Mahabubnagar on Tuesday

opted for the centering unit. All centering works related to double bedrooms and other projects should be given to the Dalit Bandhu beneficiaries only, he said,

and added that it would help the beneficiaries secure work.

The Collector inspected the cement stock stored at the project site.

## Collector unhappy over tardy pace of school developmental works

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

District Collector S Venkata Rao on Tuesday expressed concern over the tardy progress of works taken up under the Mana Ooru-Mana Badi scheme. He directed and asked the Mandal Education Officers (MEOs) and Municipal engineers to speed up execution of the works. He paid a surprise visit to the government school in the Ramnagar area of the city on Tuesday and inspected the works taken up under the programme. He asked engineering officials and contractors to pay full attention to the execution of works. MEOs should monitor the progress on a day-to-day basis. The MEOs should ensure that the works are executed at a faster pace. If necessary, more and more workers should be hired to improve the speed.

# Now, migrant labourers from UP are engaged in TS farmwork

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRICILLA

Agriculture labourers from Telangana State used to migrate to neighbouring States or other places in the past in search of a livelihood. While thousands of migrant labourers are home-bound now, a group of farmworkers, too, have arrived from Uttar Pradesh in Vemulawada mandal to work in paddy fields.

With the State witnessing a 30 per cent increase in cultivation of agricultural crops, several areas are experiencing shortage of labour for sowing or paddy transplantation. Overall, crop cultivation has reached 1.44 crore acres in Telangana. The migrant labourers from Uttar Pradesh arrived in Vemulawada mandal 15 days ago. They are



Labourers from Uttar Pradesh working in paddy fields in Rajanna Siricilla district

being engaged in paddy transplantation. The farmers heaved a sigh of relief following the arrival of farmworkers from UP. There is an acute shortage of agriculture labourers in the mandal. The paddy acreage in

Telangana has seen record growth. Paddy was cultivated in 63 lakh acres last year. The labourers from Uttar Pradesh work in batches of 15-20, charge Rs 5,000 and complete transplantation in 8 acres a day.

## Acharya calls for export of cotton, red chilli from Warangal dist

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Telangana Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief advisor B P Acharya has called for exporting the cotton and red chilli grown in the district. Addressing industrialists, businessmen and traders at a meeting held at the Collectorate under the aegis of the Telangana Chamber of Commerce and Industry here on Tuesday, he called for providing training to the ITI and other technical courses' students for helping them get jobs faster. He explained various higher education opportunities available through Indo-German technical education programme. He asked the officials should conduct awareness programme for trade and commerce circles to encourage them to take part in the training programme for sale of industrial products of the district through portals like amazon.com.

# Minister offers Bonalu to Goddess Pochamma, Seetala Devi

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Minister for Excise and Sports V Srinivas Goud on Tuesday presented silk clothes to the Goddesses at Pochamma Devi temple and Seetala Devi temple at Ravindra Nagar area in the town on the occasion of Bonalu festival.

He was taking part in the official Bonalu festival celebrations as chief guest. Offering Bonalu to the deities, he prayed for the mercy of the deities so that everyone would prosper.

Earlier, the Minister went in a procession from Ram Mandir crossroads to the Pochamma Devi temple along with the devotees and presented the silk clothes.

Later, the Minister performed bhumi puja for the construction of a room for giving shelter to the temple priest



Minister for Excise V Srinivas Goud going in a procession to offer Bonalu to Goddesses Pochamma, Seetala Devi in Mahabubnagar on Tuesday

at a site opposite to the temple. MUDA chairman Ganji Venkanna Mudiraj, local councilor Vedavrat, temple committee president Shravan

Kumar, Endowments assistant commissioner Srinivasa Raju, former municipal vice-chairman Ramulu and others were present.

## Kagool expands Hyderabad centre, scales up India investments

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

UK-based data analyst and ERP specialist consultancy company Kagool on Tuesday announced the expansion of its Hyderabad operations by acquiring additional office space at Kapil Towers building at Nanakramguda, Gachibowli. Dan Barlow, CEO of Kagool Group, inaugurated the new 17,000 sq ft office space capable of accommodating 200 employees.

Speaking on the occasion, Dan Barlow said, "The expansion of Hyderabad operations is in line with our stated aggressive growth plans for India involving investments, footprint expansion and shoring up bench strength. The Hyderabad centre expansion comes close on the heels of opening Kagool's centre in Pune this week and the two initiatives keeps us on track of achieving targeted



"We see significant growth opportunities in this region to support our global customer base and Kagool has upwardly revised its projected investments in India expansion plans to \$ 8 million over the next three years. Our 160-seater Pune centre will go live from August 1 this year and is in alignment with our aim of becoming 2,000-strong company in India by 2025.

We will foray into more Indian cities during this period," Dan Barlow added.



Suryapet District Superintendent of Police S Rajendra Prasada and the police officers showing the ganja seized in Suryapet on Tuesday

## Suryapet Police arrest 4 persons, seize 325 kg ganja

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Garidepally and Nereducharla police in Suryapet district arrested four persons and seized 325 kg of ganja on Tuesday. The police said that those arrested hailed from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The police also seized two cars, too, from those arrested, according to District Superintendent of Police S Rajendra Prasad.

Rajendra Pradesh told reporters that the Suryapet police during the last one week seized one tonne of ganja and arrested 25 persons on the charge of smuggling the contraband into the State.

The Superintendent of Police said the district police had tightened the security to prevent smuggling and peddling of ganja and drugs in the district. Following the instructions from the Chief Minister, the district police had intensi-

fied the drive to check vehicles on the national highway. The drive yielded rich dividends, he said.

The smugglers have been buying ganja at the Andhra-Odisha border at a low price and selling it at a higher price in the State and smuggling it to States like Uttar Pradesh, he said. He complimented the police for successfully preventing the smuggling of contraband into the State.

# Collector stresses need to strengthen Anganwadis

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

District Collector P Udaya Kumar on Tuesday directed village-level officials of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Panchayat Raj, Medical and Health Department and DRDA to work in coordination with each other. He stressed the need to strengthen Anganwadis, which, he said, are a boon to expectant and nursing mothers.

He was discussing the activities to be taken up all through the year at a planning meeting held here on Tuesday for the development of Anganwadi Centres in the district (1131). He desired that each Anganwadi Centre should become a health centre. With the help of modern technology, the services for nursing and

expectant mothers should become transparent. Anganwadi teachers should sensitise the villagers about services being rendered by the Anganwadi centres to the target groups and take steps to expand the services.

He distributed 100 vegetable crop seed packets to Anganwadi centres so that they prepare food with the locally produced vegetables and serve it to children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Nutrition gardens are developed at Anganwadi centres and also at the homes of expectant and nursing mothers and food is being prepared and served to target groups using vegetables and green and leafy vegetables grown in these gardens.

He announced that the dis-



Nagarkurnool Collector P Udaya Kumar at a review meeting on in Nagarkurnool on Tuesday

trict has been selected as a pilot to implement an awareness programme for parents on the problems being faced during the growth of children.

Later, he visited the local Anganwadi centre and

enquired from the children about the quality of food being served to them. He went through the books in the Anganwadi library.

Women and Child Welfare Department official T U

Venkata Lakshmi, Additional DMHO Venkata Das, MPDO Ramakrishna, Village Sarpanch Srinivas Reddy, panchayat secretary Lakshman Naik, Indian Institute of Public Health Society mem-

**He distributed 100 vegetable crop seed packets to Anganwadi centres so that they prepare food with the locally produced vegetables and serve it to children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.**

bers Srinivas, Palem Krishi Vigyana Kendram scientists, ICDS Kollapur officials, Vivekananda Welfare Society representative, expectant mothers, nursing mothers, people of the village and others were present.

## 'How will you get back the 7 mandals merged with AP?'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress party had warned long ago that two lakh acres and some villages will be submerged if the Polavaram project is built, according to Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday.

He recalled that the Congress had passed the Bill by removing seven mandals from the State Reorganisation Bill. The seven mandals were merged with Andhra Pradesh after the division of the State when the TRS was in power. Recalling that the TS Assembly had passed a resolution unanimously appealing to the Centre not to merge the seven mandals with AP,

Bhatti asked the TRS government whether it had sent the resolution to the Centre or not. 'Why didn't the TRS stand up for the seven mandals? Why didn't the TRS government take an all-party team to New Delhi on the issue? Why did the TRS government fail to object when AP constructed coffer dams for Polavaram projects?' he asked and added that the TRS government must explain how it will bring back the seven mandals. He recalled that former Maharashtra Chief Minister Fadnavis had objected when 3,000 acres in his state were submerged and asked KCR how he could accept the submersion of two lakh acres in Telangana.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Justice denied!

121 tribals rotted in prison for a crime they did not commit. Time for judicial reforms is now.

The acquittal of all 121 tribals in a five-year-old Naxal attack case in Dantewada is a sad commentary on policing and the justice system. A designated National Investigation Agency (NIA) court said on Friday, “No evidence or statements recorded by the prosecution was able to establish that the accused were members of the Naxal wing and were involved in the crime. No arms or ammunition seized by the police were proved to be found from the accused.” Yet, the unfortunate 121 had to rot in jail for five years; 13 of them will remain behind bars on other charges. Naxals, also called Maoists, on April 24, 2017, attacked the 74th battalion of the Central Police Reserve Force (CRPF), killing 25 troopers, including an inspector-rank officer. Chhattisgarh Police’s shoddy investigation proved to be painful for the accused but also for the fallen CRPF personnel who were denied justice.



Imagine spending five years in some dingy hole for having done nothing; over a hundred people had to undergo that ordeal. Just because a bunch of cops didn’t do their jobs properly. And even if they were incompetent or worse, why did it take over five years to get the accused out of prison? Couldn’t they be bailed out earlier? The plight of the accused tribals has underlined, for the nth time, the gulf between political rhetoric and ground reality.

Tribals, like Dalits and some other communities, are the people for whom our political masters’ hearts bleed all the time—or so they claim. No speech is complete without the expression of concern for these groups. The reason Draupadi Murmu has been chosen as a candidate of the ruling National Democratic Alliance for the Presidential election is that she is tribal. This is not to suggest that she doesn’t deserve to become the head of the state; she has been a senior leader and served as governor of Jharkhand. Hers is an inspirational story, but unfortunately, she has been chosen, and even some non-NDA parties are supporting her, because of her tribal credentials.

Tokenism plays a role in every democracy, but when this role becomes excessive, statecraft gets vitiated and large sections of society suffer. The political class keeps increasing its emphasis on identity politics and symbolism (like appointing people based on their caste and community). A concomitant development is less interest in governance. The poorest of the poor suffer the most because of the lost focus on governance. Like the 121 tribals. “Five years of their lives were wasted behind bars and they were brought to court hearings only twice during the trial when it is mandatory to produce the accused in person in every hearing. Bail was denied in the designated NIA court at the district level as well as the high court,” Bela Bhatia, a human rights activist and one of the defense lawyers in the case, told the media. Indeed it is about time we initiate comprehensive police and judicial reforms.

### PICTALK



A Heinz ketchup bottle sign, that was part of Heinz scoreboard, is removed from the newly named Acrisure Stadium

## Legislators grow up please!

The conduct of Kerala legislators leave much to be desired. They need to behave in the house.

Dignity, decency, and decorum are the basic elements of proceedings in parliament as well as legislatures, the temples of democracy. How the lawmakers behave and what they speak in the Houses are the benchmarks of the country’s culture. If this is taken in its true spirit, the behavior of the members of the Kerala Legislative Assembly lies in a quagmire. Viewers were alarmed and frightened when they saw the hooliganism by elected members vandalizing the Speaker’s podium and destroying costly equipment like computer and television screens inside the House.

The video of a minister in the present government demolishing and pulling down the Speaker’s chair went viral as the then Opposition tried to block the then finance minister K M Mani from presenting the budget. The Government had to cut a sorry figure when even the Supreme Court dismissed its petition to withdraw the criminal complaint filed by the legislature secretariat against the members who perpetrated the ruckus inside the House.



If one took recourse to the view that the unfortunate events dating back to 2015 were a once-in-a-lifetime incident, the recent events that took place in the House prove that the members are out not to remove the blot on the face of democracy. The sights of Opposition and Treasury benches raising slogans against each other may be a unique event in other States but not in Kerala. It has become a regular feature as the ruling CPI(M) and Congress fight it out in the House as part of political one-upmanship. Last week saw yet another shocking event as a CPI(M) member belittled and ridiculed K K Rema, an opposition MLA. “You have become a widow because of fate. You alone are responsible for it,” said M M Mani while speaking in the House. The language of Mani, a former minister, pained many people as Rema’s husband T P

Chandrasekharan, was a CPI (M) leader who was murdered in a gruesome manner by his party leaders. When CPI leader Annie Raja bemoaned the quality of Mani’s words, he turned against her and used invectives against her. Political parties that were at the forefront to challenge the Lok Sabha Speaker’s decision to categorize certain words as unparliamentary have a responsibility to set a trend in parliamentary discourse. The Congress and the CPI (M), the saviors and guardians of secularism should show the world that they are serious in their opposition to BJP’s Hindutva politics. Otherwise, it will end up as Gushthi in Kerala and Dosthi in Delhi. It does not synch well.

# Indian democracy: work in progress?

The British democracy shows maturity in the testing times while we in India are still amateurish in our approach.



BHOPINDER SINGH

Boris Johnson’s confessed hero, Winston Churchill, once said, a lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on, and it worked well with the blustering buffoonish act of Boris, till the sheer quantum of lies in the age-of-rage imploded the ‘BoJo’ party! Knives didn’t come out from the Labour benches, but in a typically British

way of democracy as Churchill had forewarned, ‘The opposition occupies the benches in front of you, but the enemy sits behind you. BoJo was ousted by his party colleagues. Britain will soon have its fourth Prime Minister in a row, from the same political party i.e., Conservatives in power since 2010! Unlike India, where leadership cults ensure that the electorate elects ‘leaders’ (who outsize parties), in more mature democracies like Britain, the electorate elect parties. In 2016, after six years of continued Prime Ministership (including winning the first Conservative majority since 1992), David Cameron left 10 Downing Street owing to the non-legally binding result of Brexit at the age of 49 – his famous last words at retiring from active politics, ‘I was once the future! Cameron’s successor and Brexit position rival, Theresa May, soon took over.

There was no overt bitterness between the two and certainly no manipulation of intra-party intrigues by the outgoing Cameron – the Conservatives stayed put, and the intra-party rivals moved on. Soon the hot potato of Brexit proved too much for Theresa May too, as she found herself facing no-confidence motions from her party colleagues. By May 2019, May announced, ‘it is now clear to me that it is in the best interests of the country for a new Prime Minister to lead that effort, and in a move that may seem shocking in the Indian context, May relegated herself to the role of a ‘backbench’ MP to ‘devote her full time to her constituency of Maidenhead. May paved the way for her party’s Brexit rival, the posh Etonian with laddish charms, Boris Johnson. But for occasional disagreements



with the BoJo government on matters of conscience and principles, May faded out gently with no rancor, bad blood, or political ambition to unseat BoJo. For all its fallibilities, the culture of internal democracy is still alive and kicking in British politics. There are no such parallel instances of internal political ‘confidence votes’ or gracious acceptance of the end of the individual political journey, in the Indian context – our political leaders are superhumanly deified, they remain infallible and essentially, forever.

Whenever political parties implode (as they did recently with the BoJo dispensation), there is no talk of the creation of a new party by disgruntled elements, no sheepherding of Parliamentarians in a resort or anti-defection clauses. The party (in this case, Conservatives) is visibly over and above the individuals who lead the same, and the DNA of internal democracy ensures the criticality of accountability and responsibility, on all leaders – no one is beyond questioning.

The same seamless shift in leadership took place in the opposition Labour ranks with the exit of Jeremy Corbyn and the subsequent ascendancy of a rival from within, Keir Starmer. Idle talk of dis-

INDIA SHARES SO MUCH IN COMMON WITH BRITAIN WITH ITS WESTMINSTER STYLE OF DEMOCRACY, AND YET, SO MUCH DIFFERENCE.

ciplined/loyal soldier of the party’ or vacuous concepts like ‘high-command’, simply does not exist. Boris Johnson’s resignation speech said it all, ‘the herd is powerful and when the herd moves, it moves and my friends in politics no one is remotely indispensable, and our brilliant and Darwinian system will produce another leader equally committed to taking this country forward, and so the political curtains come down on the once-indefatigable, BoJo, at just 58!

Now, in what might seem like a dangerously divided house to the Indian political sensibilities, there are over ten serious contenders to Conservative leadership, and none of them pertain to the previous leaders like May and Cameron. The diversity of their individual positions on issues like Brexit, tax and spending, culture wars, NHS, etc., is staggeringly different. No wild attributions of unnecessary extremities like ‘anti-national’ are at play.

Even for a traditionalist party like the Conservatives, the contender’s list is composed of diversities of ethnicities, religions, and colors that truly depict the multiculturalism of Britain, which was once prided by democracies like ours and was starkly

missing in democracies like Britain. Times have changed. In such moments of precarious health and uncertainty within the Conservative ranks, the principal opposition party i.e., Labour, is only making perfunctory noises of ‘Labour is ready for government’, but unlike our instinct of political machinations and manipulations, no efforts to ‘win’ over elected members towards their ranks, is initiated. British citizenry will simply not accept such selfish ‘rattling’ of individuals, owing to the change of political fortunes for political parties.

The ensuing British political drama is also a lesson in the limits of populism and verbiage that is directed solely at the ‘past’ and ‘others’, as the restless British citizenry demands hard results and promised transformation. The distraction of real issues, as perfected by the gift of the gab leaders like Boris Johnson was exposed by his party and the people, and not so much by the opposition ranks. India shares so much in common with Britain with its Westminster style of democracy, and yet, so much difference.

(The author is former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Island and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### HUMILIATION FOR GIRL STUDENTS

Sir — Examination centers are like temples as the place decides the future of students appearing for the examination. Proper checking and scrutiny are done in these centers before entering the hall and during the examination as well. Both male and female students are checked and counter-checked to prevent unethical practices, which include copying as well. In the Thiruvananthapuram examination center girl students appearing for the NEET examination were subjected to scrutiny, which included removing their inner wear to complete the formalities.

It is indeed a violation of human rights and needs to be taken seriously with a detailed inquiry. It is most unfortunate and not heard of in any civilized society. Such incidents should not happen in the future. The morale of the girl students as their confidence level must have nose-dived just before the exam not to speak of the humiliation they must have endured. It is a humiliation that will not be tolerated by girl students and their parents.

C.K. Subramaniam | Mumbai

### FOUR-DAY WEEK IS NOT PRACTICAL

Sir — The idea of a four-day work week has been going on for some time now across the globe. The debate first started in Germany when IG Metall, Europe’s largest trade union, envisaged this concept in 2020. Germany has the lowest rate of working hours in a week at 34.

Though the four-day work week concept has become the latest buzz across the world, especially after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, with employees being joyous about spending an extra day on leisure activities and recovering from the weekly work stress, this theory is virtually impossible, especially in a big country like India where the labor class forms a huge chunk, and who contribute towards better and increased productivity at the workplace.

Also in manufacturing sectors, which need to be operated round-the-clock, the concept of a four-day work week is impractical. Implementing a four-day work week

### Suffering from ‘Bulldozer Raj’



A demolition drive was conducted by the Khargone district administration after Madhya Pradesh’s home minister Narottam Mishra said, “Jis ghar se patthar nikle hain, unko hi pattharon ka dher banayenge (The very houses used for stone pelling will be reduced to piles of stone). Following this, the district administration went on a demolition spree and razed down at least 16 houses and over 2 dozen shops citing ‘illegal encroachment’. The BJP, meanwhile, projected it as an ‘action against rioters’. “My name is Haseena and my house was bulldozed by the government... they have destroyed everything,” said Haseena Fakru, whose house, which was built under the flagship scheme Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) of the central government, was demolished in Khargone, MP.

Haseena’s house was razed down a day after communal clashes broke out in the region on 10 April. “After our house was demolished,

is not all that easy as it requires the right support, technology, and workplace culture. Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

### DEFLECTIONS INSULT VOTERS

Sir — The defection by elected members has become a routine affair nowadays throughout our country, which is indirectly insulting the voters’ decision and damaging the tenets of democracy. Therefore it is the need of the hour to apply the anti-defection law strictly, which has been amended in past. Moreover, if an elected member defects he should be disqualified immediately from the seat and be banned from contesting the election for at least TWO TERMS. Such practice will save the vot-

ers’ rights and the democratic value. S.M.Arif Hussain | Hyderabad

### PRESIDENT OF NEW INDIA

Sir — The candidature of Draupadi Murmu as the presidential candidate is laudable one. Wow, this is India, where we embrace and respect every community. Representation of an Adivasi woman to India which is in its Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav a splendid 75 years of independence is a remarkable achievement. Her win would indicate the feeling of the new vibrant India. The nation welcomes her to the grand chair as the first citizen of this nation.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

In addition to the conventional security challenges, there are new frontiers as well which need to be addressed.



Prime Minister —Narendra Modi



British MP —Jeremy Corbyn

He has created poverty, inequality and insecurity. That is Boris Johnson’s legacy.



Another blow to the Indian Film Music Industry! Our dear Bhupi uncle the legendary singer Bhupinder Singh is no more! May God bless his soul with eternal peace

### Singer

—Dr. Jaspinder Narula



Indian Cricketer —Virat Kohli

Modi government has betrayed India’s army and India’s security. In 20 years, India’s army will be halved...no money for army



Rajya Sabha MP —Sanjay Singh, AAP

FIRST COLUMN

PERILS OF CHILDREN ON RAILWAY PLATFORM

Children who lived off at rail platforms face harsh realities



MAMUNI DAS

The Covid-19 pandemic had left a telling impact on the street children, particularly those who lived off the railway platforms. The children are coming back to the railway platform after they had left following the shutdown of the train operations and excessive restrictions afterward for the entry and exit at the stations. The overall trend was echoed by Railway Children India (RCI), which works with street children and communities around stations, including running initiatives like funding the operation of toll-free, helpline booths for children. "The number of children being rescued is nowhere near to the pre-lockdown era (as of July 2021). From 500 children every month in pre-lockdown to not more than 100 or maximum of 120 a month (in July 2021) to 250 a month in December 2021," Navin Sellaraju, CEO, RCI, said, based on the experience at about 10 stations of Indian Railways.

Another NGO working in Central India explained that it saw a much lesser number of children being rescued since the Covid-19 struck. The trend of drop in the number of children surprises Sellaraju a bit, who knows that the root causes that were forcing children onto platforms or getting trafficked have not changed. "Rather, COVID-19 made the circumstances of those children more difficult. Most of the children that RCI rescued were from unemployed families, small farmers, and vegetable vendors," Sellaraju said.

Sellaraju reckons stringent screening at entry-exit points at large railway stations, higher restrictions, and a drop in running unreserved coaches (the railway only restarted operating these in 2022), which are easy to access for the children may have led to an overall drop in the numbers of children found on platforms in the concerned time-periods. Other stakeholders feel many children have changed their mode of transport from trains to buses, and so have traffickers, who lure children into different cities. Also, traffickers are engaging in newer methods in the post-pandemic time.



A stakeholder from Salaam Balak Trust, a charity that works with street children, including children in contact with railways, explained, "Such children can be broadly grouped into those who lived around stations and came to stations for some time to earn their living; those who were lost while traveling in trains and those who used trains to escape difficult family situations, including poverty. With trains and stations closed for a good part of the year (2021), naturally, there were no new arrivals. However, those who stayed with families near stations stayed with their families; and the rescued kids who were there in our shelters stayed put in the shelters."

But almost all stakeholders agree that the pandemic-induced conditions have made the children more vulnerable to adversities, including trafficking. Even according to official numbers shared by the Railway Police Force (RPF), the children rescued from traffickers at railway stations saw an increase in 2021. About 492 children were rescued from trafficking in 2021, up from 181 in 2020, 361 in 2019, and 367 in 2018.

The pandemic led to the death of parents, illnesses, and job losses, pushing families to poverty, and prompting an increase in child labor, said an International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNICEF report of 2021, estimating that in early 2020, 160 million children (one in ten children globally) were involved in child labor. Stakeholders agree that there's a need for the social inclusion of such vulnerable children who are in contact with the railways at its stations or premises and those who are on the streets be provided with identity cards. (Concluded)

(The author is a journalist.)

# Why not have a ministry of Religious affairs?

Indians' concept of religious tolerance does not necessarily involve the mixing of religious communities.



PRASHANT TEWARI

For quite some time, opinion makers from different quarters have been asking the Narendra Modi government to scrap the Ministry of Minority Affairs and replace it with a new Ministry of Religious affairs. There is a great deal of justification for such a demand. India is a growing international power, and the identity of India can be secured globally by presenting its culture and religion from a global perspective. The proposed Ministry of Religious affairs could be headed by a practicing spiritual leader to propagate the face of India's spiritual strength.

India has all along respected all religions, but major religious groups see little in common with Hinduism and want to live separately. A learned spiritual leader at the head of the proposed ministry could bridge this gap and integrate the communities together.

In the West, some people could argue that Hinduism is an old-styled religion with a huge baggage to reconcile with the contemporary world. Modernity, which emphasises the relegation of religion firmly to an individual's private life, is a challenging idea for any culture. In India, it faces a particularly unusual problem: the persistence of numerous traditional and religious practices means that religion and modernity have to cohabit here in a complex, plural, transient, and historically evolving relationship.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has already passed a resolution seeking an "immediate scrapping of both the Minority Commission and the Minority Affairs Ministry" as the "very idea" of these institutions "gives credence to a separatist mindset."

The resolution noted that "the Jihadis and Missionaries are not the persecuted but the persecutors," and "with the help of the Minority Commission, separate Ministry, they gather sympathy and carry out their anti-Hindu and anti-national activities." It said that the National Human Rights Commission is "more than enough to take care of the rights of all citizens of the country."

It contended that "the Minority Commission creates a false feeling that the Muslim and Christian communities are being persecuted," whereas "the reality is that it is they who are responsible for the persecution of not only Hindus but on other minority communities like the Sikhs and the Buddhists."

The main functions of the Ministry of Religious Affairs should be:

a) Extending overall co-operation in implementing development activities, providing grants, taking initiatives for resource mobilization, introducing online registration, and utmost use of ICT in religious affairs management;

b) Assisting research and publications in the field of religion, and providing cooperation in the management of charitable institutions;



INDIANS SEE RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AS A CENTRAL PART OF WHO THEY ARE AS A NATION. ACROSS THE MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS, MOST PEOPLE SAY IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO RESPECT ALL RELIGIONS TO BE 'TRULY INDIAN'

(The writer is a regular columnist of The Pioneer)



c) Arranging and participating in international conferences, seminars and dialogues on matters relating to religions and religious affairs and establishing connections and improving relations, and signing contracts, agreements, conventions with different countries and international organizations/institutions;

d) Conducting various programmes in the religious and educational institutions for social development, conducting research and strengthening anti-terrorism campaigns, religious values, integrity, brotherhood, and communal harmony;

d) Providing grants-in-aid including reforms of different religious organisations and institutions, matters relating to moon sightings and celebration of important religious festivals; and supporting the destitute people for their rehabilitation with financial assistance.

More than 70 years after India became free from colonial rule, Indians generally feel their country has lived up to one of its post-Independence ideals: a society where followers of many religions can live and practice freely. India's massive population is diverse as well as devout. Not only do most of the world's Hindus, Jains and Sikhs live in India, but it also is home to one of the world's largest Muslim populations and to millions of Christians and Buddhists.

Indians see religious tolerance as a central part of who they are as a nation. Across the major religious groups, most people say it is very important to respect all religions to be "truly Indian." And tolerance is

a religious as well as a civic value: Indians are united in the view that respecting other religions is a very important part of what it means to be a member of their own religious community.

These shared values are accompanied by a number of beliefs that cross religious lines. Not only do a majority of Hindus in India (77%) believe in karma, but an identical percentage of Muslims do, too. A third of Christians in India (32%) - together with 81% of Hindus - say they believe in the purifying power of the Ganges River, a central belief in Hinduism. In Northern India, 12% of Hindus and 10% of Sikhs, along with 37% of Muslims, identify with Sufism, a mystical tradition most closely associated with Islam. And the vast majority of Indians of all major religious backgrounds say that respecting elders is very important to their faith.

Yet, despite sharing certain values and religious beliefs - as well as living in the same country, under the same constitution - members of India's major religious communities often don't feel they have much in common with one another. The majority of Hindus see themselves as very different from Muslims (66%), and most Muslims return the sentiment, saying they are very different from Hindus (64%). There are a few exceptions: Two-thirds of Jains and about half of Sikhs say they have a lot in common with Hindus. But generally people in major religious communities see themselves as different from others.

Moreover, Indians generally stick to their own religious group when it comes to their friends. Hindus overwhelmingly say that

most or all of their close friends are also Hindu. Of course, Hindus make up the majority of the population, and as a result of sheer numbers, may be more likely to interact with fellow Hindus than with people of other religions. But even among Sikhs and Jains, who each form a sliver of the national population, a large majority say their friends come mainly or entirely from their small religious community.

Indians, then, simultaneously express enthusiasm for religious tolerance and a consistent preference for keeping their religious communities in segregated spheres - they live together separately. These two sentiments may seem paradoxical, but for many Indians, they are not. Indeed, many take both positions, saying it is important to be tolerant of others and expressing a desire to limit personal connections across religious lines. Indians who favor a religiously segregated society also overwhelmingly emphasize religious tolerance as a core value.

In other words, Indians' concept of religious tolerance does not necessarily involve the mixing of religious communities. While people in some countries may aspire to create a "melting pot" of different religious identities, many Indians seem to prefer a country more like a patchwork fabric, with clear lines between groups. Most Hindus in India say being Hindu, and being able to speak Hindi are very important to be 'truly' Indian.

Against this backdrop, the time has come to scrap the Ministry of Minority of Affairs without any further delay and create a unifying Ministry of Religious affairs.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

...THE CENTRAL DRUG STANDARDS CONTROL ORGANISATION, NEVER APPROVED THE 'PRECAUTIONARY DOSES' THAT PM MODI FLAGGED FOR ROLLOUT.  
—LAWYER AND POLITICAL ACTIVIST PRASHANT BHUSHAN



200 CRORE VACCINATIONS IN JUST ONE AND HALF YEARS. THIS REFLECTS THE WILL AND MIGHT OF NEW INDIA UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF PM NARENDRA MODI.  
—HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH

# Unplanned population growth will result in chaos

The government needs to weigh the pros and cons of population growth and choose the right path

Is the population a boon or a bane for India, and will we be able to convert its human resources to productive use? Experts say it could be a boon but only if the people are involved in regulating it.

The topic has come to focus as India will be the world's most populous country in 2023, surpassing China. According to the latest World Population Prospects report, it may go up to 1.429 billion next year when China's would be 1.426 billion.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres released the UN report on the world population day this week and said that by November 15, it would reach an eight billion global population mark. It could grow to 8.5 billion in 2030 and 10.4 billion in 2100,



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

Those who support population growth believe that it would supply low-cost labour, a valuable resource for India. They say it is positive, resulting in higher incomes and wages and excellent export potential. India's population is young and multitalented, so it could be more productive.

Historically, it took many centuries for the global population to reach one billion. In 2011 it reached the seven billion mark and tripled between 1950 and 2020. (Source: UN DESA) From 23 crore Indians in 1901, the population growth was slow until 1951. In the next five decades, it shot up three times. The 2001 population census recorded 1.02 billion (102 crore).

Globally, there are about 1.2 billion Hindus. India, which

has a population of 1.4 billion, has 80 per cent Hindus. The BJP leaders are concerned about the declining population of Hindus and the increasing number of Muslims.

Those who oppose population rise argue that an accelerating trend means more people to feed and provide clean water, electricity, and adequate social services like education and healthcare. It also means a significant environmental impact.

Secondly, India's economy was already showing signs of weakness before the Covid-19 crisis. A new report from the McKinsey Global Institute identifies a reform plan for the next 12 to 18 months. "If India does not create enough jobs and its workers are untrained, its demographic dividend may

become a liability. And education and skill development will be the biggest enablers for reaping this dividend," the report said.

Thirdly, 'demographic dividend' is a result of investment in quality education, healthcare, and employment generation, and how best we deal with aging, disease, and disability.

Fourthly, children have lost almost two years of education due to the pandemic. The gap needs to be addressed. There should be more budget allocation for health and education, as seen as lacking during the pandemic crisis.

India's efforts to curtail population growth began relatively early and were the first to launch a national family planning programme in 1952. And since then, there have been

many attempts to contain the growing numbers.

The "family planning" programmes became coercive and controversial in 1975 when Indira Gandhi declared a state of Emergency. In April 1976, the government adopted an "integrated" approach to family planning that incentivised contraception and sterilisation. Since then, the subject has been a no-no for politicians, and the family planning department has been renamed family welfare.

In his Independence Day address on August 15, 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought the issue to the national focus. He extolled the virtues of small families; he wanted the "uncontrolled growth" to be checked. According to BJP insiders, discussions are going

on to prepare a new population policy before the next general elections in 2024. Some BJP-ruled states like UP have already taken measures to regulate the population acceleration. Now is perhaps the time for formulating policies to contain it.

A national commission, set up by former prime minister AtalBihari Vajpayee in 2000, also recommended constituting population regulation laws.

Parliament has also been demanding regulation from time to time. Lawmakers from both the houses and from different parties have, till now, proposed 35 Private Bills.

The RSS, the parent organisation of the ruling BJP, has also advocated a uniform population policy. In his usual address to the RSS workers on

the last Vijayadasami Day, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said, "A population policy keeping in mind the next 50 years should be formulated, and it should be implemented uniformly for everyone."

The family planning budget is only a meager 4 per cent of the health budget, and India spends only 1.5 per cent on birth spacing methods. We need to invest more in the health and education sectors.

Analysts believe population growth can be a double-edged sword, and the country needs to maximise its potential. The government needs to weigh the pros and cons of population growth and choose the right path. Unplanned growth will only result in chaos.

**MONEY MATTERS**

## Around 1,000 passenger complaints received against Air India in 3 months

Around 1,000 passenger complaints have been received against Air India during the last three months related to various issues, including refund of fares, overbooking of flights, and staff behaviour, Minister of State for Civil Aviation V K Singh said on Monday. The Tata Group on January 27 took control of Air India after winning the bid for the airline on October 8 last year. Ministry of Civil Aviation has been receiving grievances related to air transport, including Air India, on the various issues such as refund of fares, flight issues, staff behaviour, baggage issues, overbooking of flights, etc.," Singh said in his written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha. Around 1,000 such complaints were received against Air India during the last three months, he mentioned. Aviation regulator DGCA on June 14 said it imposed a fine of Rs 10 lakh on Air India for denying boarding to passengers holding valid tickets and thereafter not providing mandatory compensation to them.



## RBI imposes curbs on 2 co-op banks; customers cannot withdraw funds

Customers of Karnataka-based Sri Mallikarjuna Pattana Sahakari Bank Niyamita and Maharashtra-based Nashik Zilla Girma Sahakari Bank will not be able to withdraw funds from their accounts with the RBI imposing restrictions on the lenders. The restrictions have been imposed on the two cooperative banks by the Reserve Bank of India in wake of their deteriorating financial positions. The restrictions on Sri Mallikarjuna Pattana Sahakari Bank Niyamita, Maski (Karnataka) and Nashik Zilla Girma Sahakari Bank, Nashik (Maharashtra) will remain in force for six months, as per two statements issued by the central bank. In the case of Nashik Zilla Girma Sahakari Bank, the RBI said 99.87 per cent of the depositors are fully covered by the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) insurance scheme. Also, 99.53 per cent of the depositors of Sri Mallikarjuna Pattana Sahakari Bank Niyamita are fully covered by the DICGC insurance scheme.



## Bank of Maharashtra shares gain after Q1 earnings

Shares of Bank of Maharashtra gained 1.50 per cent on Tuesday after the firm reported a more than two-fold jump in net profit in the June quarter. The stock gained 1.50 per cent to settle at Rs 16.90 apiece on the BSE after a firm start in early trade. During the day, it went higher by 2.10 per cent to Rs 17. On the NSE, it advanced 1.50 per cent to Rs 16.90. In volume terms, 9.05 lakh shares were traded on the BSE and 67.90 lakh shares on the NSE during the day. On Monday, state-owned Bank of Maharashtra reported a more than two-fold jump in net profit to Rs 452 crore in the April-June quarter, helped by a healthy net interest income and improvement in asset quality. The lender had reported a net profit of Rs 208 crore on a standalone basis in the year-ago quarter of the fiscal 2022. Net Interest Income (NII) rose by 20 per cent to Rs 1,686 crore as compared to Rs 1,406 crore in the first quarter of FY22. Net Interest Margin (NIM) improved to 3.28 per cent from 3.05 per cent.



# Economy on course to achieve 8-8.5% growth based on Q1 data

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance ministry on Tuesday said that the economy is on course to achieve projected 8-8.5 per cent growth based on high-frequency indicators for the first quarter of the current fiscal.

The Economic Survey tabled in the Parliament on January 31, 2022 projected the real GDP during 2022-23 to grow at 8.0-8.5 per cent.

"Since then, sustained growth momentum has been observed in several High Frequency Indicators (HFIs), indicating that the projected growth path is on course in the first quarter of FY 2022-23," minister of state for finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply to Rajya Sabha.

IMF in its April 2022 update of World Economic Outlook, has also projected India's real GDP growth at 8.2 per cent in 2022-23.

To ensure continued growth



momentum, he said, the government has taken several steps to address high inflation imported from abroad.

These include cut in excise duty on petrol and diesel and special excise duty/cess on the export of petrol, diesel and aviation turbine fuel that are likely to alleviate inflationary pressures, he said.

Further, he said, to rein in inflation, RBI in its June

Monetary Policy Committee meeting hiked the repo rate by 50 basis points, on top of the earlier hike of 40 basis points in May 2022.

On the impact of geopolitical tension on Indian economy, he said, Russia-Ukraine war has led to global supply disruptions resulting in steep increase in global commodity prices, including prices of crude oil, gas, edible oils and fertilizers,

among others.

The government is closely monitoring the global price movements and their impact on India's economy through trade, he said.

Recently, prices of various commodities, including edible oils, metals and crude oil, have stabilised. Many central banks including the US Fed have also tightened their monetary policy to tackle inflation. The RBI and government is closely monitoring the situation and stand ready to take appropriate action, he said.

As per provisional estimates of annual national income 2021-22, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at current prices for 2021-22 stood at Rs 2,36,64,637 crore, he said in another reply. Using the implied exchange rate for India for 2021-22 from World Economic outlook (WEO) of April 2022, the GDP for India at current prices stood at USD 3.2 trillion in 2021-22, he said.

## Rupee rises 6 paise to close at 79.92 against US dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee recovered from its all-time low of 80.05 to close 6 paise higher at 79.92 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, tracking its regional peers and a positive trend in domestic equities.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened lower at 80.00 against the greenback and fell further to an intra-day low of 80.05.

The local unit recouped losses later and settled at 79.92 (provisional), registering a rise of 6 paise over its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee for the first time declined to the low level of 80 against the US dollar in intra-day spot trading before ending the session 16 paise lower at 79.98 amid a surge in crude oil prices and unrelenting foreign fund outflows.

"The Indian rupee broke the level of 80 after many days' failed efforts by the dollar bulls amid higher crude oil prices.

# CAG : Review spectrum pricing mechanism for captive users

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has pulled up the telecom department for not finalising policy on spectrum assignment for captive uses and flagged the absence of spectrum price review for captive users administratively.

In its report titled 'Management of spectrum assigned on the administrative basis to government departments/agencies', the CAG asked the Department of Telecom (DoT) to review the spectrum pricing mechanism for captive users to incentivise ministries, departments and agencies, and for maintaining spectrum management discipline.

"They may consider differential pricing, depending on the features and usage of various spectrum bands," the CAG said in a report tabled in Parliament on Monday.

It noted that despite receiving a legal opinion (July 2021) on its own reference, regarding the method for allotment of



spectrum for captive uses, including government departments, the department had not finalised the policy for allotment and assignment of spectrum for captive uses/other commercial services with the approval of the Digital Communications Commission. The DCC is the apex body for telecom policy formulation. DoT had also not reviewed the pricing of spectrum assigned for captive users administratively, on formulae basis since 2012, though a Committee had recommended for a periodical review of the

pricing policy in 2013," the CAG report said.

There was no differential pricing for spectrum, depending on features and usage of various spectrum bands assigned to users, it observed.

"DoT may devise a policy on allotment and assignment of spectrum for captive users/other commercial usages in alignment with statements made in NDCP 2018 (National Digital Communication Policy) and end adhocism in allotment of spectrum to government departments/ agencies," the report said.

## Investment via P-notes drops to Rs 80,092 cr in June; volatility

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Investment in the Indian capital markets through participatory notes (P-notes) declined to Rs 80,092 crore till June-end, making it the lowest level in 20 months, on aggressive rate hike by the US Federal Reserve. With the continued global uncertainty and volatility, experts believe that investment through P-notes will be volatile in the near future.

P-notes are issued by registered Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) to overseas investors who wish to be a part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly. They, however, need to go through a due diligence process.

According to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) data, the value of P-note investments in Indian markets -- equity, debt, and hybrid securities -- stood at Rs 80,092 crore at June-end compared to Rs 86,706 crore at May-end.

# Higher power demand necessitated coal imports: R K Singh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Addition of 28.6 million consumers under the Saubhagya scheme, good infrastructure and perked up economic activities post COVID-19 pushed up power demand and necessitated coal import, Parliament was informed on Tuesday.

In a written reply to Rajya Sabha, Power Minister R K Singh said electricity demand has gone up exponentially because of the economic growth post pandemic, the addition of 28.6 million consumers under the Saubhagya scheme and strengthening of the transmission and distribution system, which necessitated coal imports.

He pointed out that the domestic coal production has increased.

The all-India coal production (for all categories of consumers) in 2021-22 was 778.19



million tonne (MT) in comparison to 716.083 MT in 2020-21.

In current financial year (up to June 2022), the country produced 204.876 MT coal as compared to 156.11 MT during the same period last year, he stated. Considering high demand of domestic coal in thermal power plants and the level of coal stocks in the

plants, Ministry of Power on April 28, 2022 issued advisory to generating companies to import coal for blending at the rate of 10 per cent of their requirement.

This would ensure availability of adequate stock in the power plants to cater to their demand during monsoon when the domestic supply of coal reduces.

## Canara Bank raises Rs 2,000 cr by issuing Basel III compliant bonds

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Canara Bank on Tuesday said it has raised Rs 2,000 crore by issuing Basel III compliant additional tier I bonds this month.

The bank came out with the issuance of Rs 2,000 crore of additional tier-I bonds on July 15, 2022.

"The bank received total bid amount of Rs 5,719 crore, out of which full issuance of Rs 2,000 crore was accepted at 8.24 per cent," Canara Bank said in a regulatory filing. The state-owned lender said it issued 2,000 bonds to 21 allottees on July 19, 2022. The non-convertible, perpetual, taxable, subordinated, fully paid-up secured Basel III compliant additional tier I bonds carry coupon at 8.24 per cent per annum.



## Patanjali Foods to soon reduce prices of palm, sunflower and soyabean oil

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Patanjali Foods Ltd will soon cut prices of soyabean oil, sunflower oil and palm oil by Rs 10-15 per litre to pass on the benefits of fall in global prices, a top company official said.

Earlier this month, the food ministry had directed edible oil companies to reduce prices of edible oil in line with the fall in global rates. Following the Centre's direction, Mother Dairy has reduced prices by up to Rs 14 per litre and Adani Wilmar by up to Rs 30 per litre. "We are going to reduce prices of palm oil, sunflower oil and soyabean oil by Rs 10-15 per litre each in a day or two. But in the last 45 days,

the total reduction will be Rs 30-35 per litre," Patanjali Foods CEO Sanjeev Asthana told PTI. The effective reduction in the last 45 days, including the proposed Rs 10-15 per litre cut, would reach to Rs 30-35 per litre, he said, and pointed out that its competitors have not taken similar cuts in the last one and half months. Asthana highlighted that the global prices have come down by 15-20 per cent but said the market is very volatile.

Patanjali Foods, erstwhile Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd, sells its products under brands like Ruchi Gold, Mahakosh, Sunrich, Nutrela, Ruchi Star and Ruchi Sunlight.

## R1 RCM to recruit 3,000 people by Dec

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Technology-driven solutions provider and revenue cycle management company, Nasdaq-listed R1-RCM, Inc on Tuesday inaugurated its new office in the city and has drawn up plans to add 3,000 people by end of the year, according to a top company official. The company currently has presence in New Delhi National Capital Region, Hyderabad and Bengaluru with an employee base of over 13,000. R1RCM Executive Vice-President-Global Operations and India Country General Manager, Abhijeet Pawar said, "India has always been mission critical for R1RCM. A hotbed of cross functional talent, the country has played a vital role in our growth as an organisation over the past decade.

# India's passenger vehicle exports jump 26 pc in Apr-Jun

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's passenger vehicle exports rose by 26 per cent in the first quarter as compared with the April-June period of last fiscal which saw disruptions due to the

second wave of COVID-19.

As per the latest data released by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), passenger vehicle shipments rose to 1,60,263 units in the April-June period of this

fiscal as compared with 1,27,083 units in the same quarter of 2021-22. Passenger car shipments saw an 88 per cent year-on-year growth at 1,04,400 units while utility vehicle exports rose 18 per cent to

55,547 units during the period under review, SIAM data showed.

Export of vans declined to 316 units in April-June as compared with 588 units in the same period of the last fiscal.

## Benchmarks rebound from initial losses, climb for 3<sup>rd</sup> day

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity indices overcame a wobbly start to clock gains for the third session on the trot on Tuesday, propped up by banking, metal and energy stocks amid a mixed trend in global markets. A recovery in the rupee

also bolstered sentiment, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 246.47 points or 0.45 per cent to settle at 54,767.62 after starting the trade on a weak note. In a volatile session, the benchmark hit a high of 54,817.52 and a low of 54,232.82 during the day. On similar lines,

the broader NSE Nifty climbed 62.05 points or 0.38 per cent to close at 16,340.55. Axis Bank topped the Sensex gainers' chart, spurring 2.35 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv, SBI and Bharti Airtel.

# 39 new societies registered after creation of coop ministry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 39 new multi-state cooperative societies have been registered since the formation of a separate cooperation ministry in July 2021, Union minister Amit Shah informed Parliament on Tuesday.

Out of 39 cooperative societies, a maximum of 17 are in Maharashtra, followed by Uttar Pradesh (5), Kerala (4), Gujarat (3), New Delhi and Manipur (2 each) and Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (1 each), according to the data placed before the Lok Sabha.

Shah, in his written reply to the Lok Sabha, said 39 new cooperatives have been registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act as of June 30 this year after the creation of a new cooperation ministry.

A total of 1,508 multi-state cooperatives are registered in the country as of June 30, 2022. Out of which, 81 are under liquidation, the cooperation minister said.

"As per record, eighty-one multi-state cooperative societies are under liquidation in which process of winding up has been initiated," Shah added.

As and when instances of irregularities in any multi-state cooperative society come to notice, action is taken under the relevant provisions of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, and rules made thereunder, he said.

In order to make 8.55 lakhs of Primary Cooperatives economically vibrant, the minister, in a separate reply, said the government has adopted a multi-pronged approach by initiating various steps.

To revitalize the cooperative sector, a centrally-sponsored



project 'Computerization of Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS)' has been approved with a budgetary outlay of Rs 2,516 crores for digitalization of 63,000 functional PACS which are the grassroot level economic entities of the three-tier rural cred-

it structure. This project will bring transparency and efficiency in their operations in a big way, he said.

In order to diversify the business activities of PACS and make them vibrant multi-purpose economic entities at Village/Panchayat level, the

**Shah, in his written reply to the Lok Sabha, said 39 new cooperatives have been registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act as of June 30 this year after the creation of a new cooperation ministry.**

minister said that "draft model Bye-Laws" are also being prepared in consultation with the state governments, national cooperative federations and all other stakeholders.

These Draft Model Bye-Laws contain various provisions for bringing professionalism, transparency and

accountability to their operation. PACS are registered and administered under the respective State Cooperative Laws.

The ministry is also formulating a new scheme titled "Cooperation to Prosperity" for all round development of cooperatives at all levels in consultation with all the stakeholders.

For modernizing and professionalizing education and training in the cooperative sector, Shah said steps are being taken to reorient the training and educational Cooperative Institutions in consultation with all the stakeholders, leading to the overall development of the vital sector of the economy resulting in the creation of huge job opportunities as well.

The government is also formulating a new national-level policy for cooperatives, he added.

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
Old Name  
**SHERIPALLY NARASIMHA REDDY**  
New Name  
**SHERUPALLY NARSIMHA REDDY**  
H.No.2-86, Vemulaghat Village of Thoguta Mandal, Siddipet District

**GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
**SHORT 'E' PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**  
Tender Notice No.12/SEIP-C, NAREZ/GHMC/2022-2023 Dt: 19.07.2022  
Name of the Work: Laying of Cement Concrete Pavement (VDOCC) for road widening from Patel Nagar STP (Ch: 0.00) to D-main in Uppal (Shagun) Layout (Ch: 2+762) Estimated Amount: ₹15.00 Crores. Start date & time for Receipts of Bids: 20-07-2022 4.00 PM; Last date & time for Receipts of Bids: 05-08-2022 4.00 PM; Name & Address Office & Cell No.: D/o Superintending Engineer (Projects-C, NAREZ), GHMC, 9999900406. Further details can be seen at 'Procurement' @ www.tender.telangana.gov.in. Or can be contact Office of the Superintending Engineer (P-C, NAREZ), GHMC in office working. Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Projects-C, NAREZ), GHMC. R.O. No: 4850-PPCL/ADVT/1/2022-23, Dt: 19.07.2022

**SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LTD.**  
**E-TENDER NOTICE-01/2022-2023**  
Tender Specification No: T-41/22-23 of SEIP/MDK for carrying out repairs to failed 1-phase and 3-phase distribution transformers of all capacities available at Ramayampet spm of Medak circle. Sale of Bids starts from Dt: 20.07.2022 at 10:00 Hrs and ends on Dt: 22.08.2022 at 12:00 Hrs. Last date for submission of bids is Dt: 22.08.2022 at 15:00 Hrs. and opened on Dt: 23.08.2022 at 15:00 Hrs. Further information can be obtained from website www.spsouthernpower.com & www.tender.telangana.gov.in Phone: 08452-221442 & 7901093668, 7901677780. Sd/- Superintending Engineer, R.O. No: 4822-PPCL/ADVT/1/2022-23, Dt: 19.07.2022 Operation Circle: Medak, TSSPDCL

**HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
Sourajyashri Commercial Complex, Airport, Hyderabad - 50  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Planning Department  
File No.48666A/15MDP/1506/2021  
It is to inform that, M/S. Emerald Constructions filed an application for approval of revised final layout with open plots in Sy.No.486P/4/466P of Rajpote Village, Ibrahimpatnam Mandal, R.R. District in an extent of 49673.05 Sq.mts with minor changes to the earlier approved draft layout in File No.019153/SM/DT/1168-HMDA/11012019, L.P.No.0011068/GP/SHMDA/2019, Dt.07.05.2019. Therefore the plot owners/Purchasers/Agreement holders of Layout permission in Sy.No.486P/4/466P of Rajpote Village, Ibrahimpatnam Mandal, R.R. District may file their objections/suggestions in writing if any within 15 days to the office from the date Publication of this notice. If no objections/suggestions are received within the above period the request of the applicant for revised final layout permission in Sy.No.486P/4/466P of Rajpote Village, Ibrahimpatnam Mandal, R.R. District will be considered based on the material papers available with this office. Sd/- For Metropolitan Commissioner/ Director (Pg.-I) DMR No.426-PPCL/AGENCY/ADVT/1/2022-23

## ‘Dark characters are my type’

The Pioneer connects with Rushad Rana for a candid-chatty interview about his recently released *Miya, Biwi Aur Murder*, and *Juda Hoke Bhi*, his comeback with *Anupama*, and a lot more.

TEJAL SINHA

No matter what the medium or the role is, an actor should be able to ace all of them. Today, we have with us one such actor, who has not only made a name in the television industry but was also part of some amazing films. Let's give you all a hint. He is all over the internet as Anupama's ex-husband.

He is none other than Rushad Rana, who is currently seen in MX Player's *Miya Biwi aur Murder*. He is seen playing the character of Abbas Bhai, a character that is very different from his real life.

Taking us through his character, he says, "This is the most challenging role I think that I have ever come across. What makes it very challenging is also that in this, they have entirely changed my look, making me look like a drug lord. They were clear that my character needed to look deadly and dreadful to the people. A lot of transformations have gone through, and a lot of changes have been made to this character physically. These changes were made in a



series of sessions that were held with Sunil Manchanda sir, the producer, the director, and the creative team, and every time they kept adding things to my look to make me look dreadful or scary. It was a result of a lot of days of sheer hard work, which got Abbas Bhai alive and made this character more relatable for the people now."

His characters have made a special place in the hearts of his fans and other audiences, whether he worked with the King Khan of Bollywood in *Mohabbatein* to *Dor* to *Calendar Girls* or in television shows ranging from *Hip Hip Hurray* to the recent *Anupama* and *Kumkum Bhagya*.

Out of the uncountable and memorable characters that Rushad has played, he has got some of his favourites, and they are, "My all-time favourite character will always be Raghu, who I played in *Hip Hip Hurray*, where I started my career. That, for me, is like that first love of yours that will always be special for you. I did a role with Nagesh

Kukunoor, sir, long back in 2006 for the film *Dor*. That is also something that is going to be something memorable and special. Recently, what I have done in *Aashram* is that people are loving my part. I play an integral part in the story. Last but not least is Abbas Bhai in *Miya, Biwi, aur Murder*."

After the pandemic, he made a comeback with the most talked about show in town, *Anupama*. The show proved to be that golden opportunity, opening many more doors for him.

"I think *Anupama* really has proven to be a lucky show for me because as soon as I did *Anupama*, a lot of things came into my kitty. Also, the kind of recognition that I got for *Anupama* has been wonderful. People know me and call me Anirudh now. They call me Anupama's ex-husband (he laughs) and that is what my identity has become. The character was written so well that he had those slightly sarcastic touches. That actually made it fun for the audience

to watch," he says.

What was the major difference he found in being able to work in television shows, films, and even web series? He says, "If you ask me what I enjoy more, then I would say, everything has its own pros and cons. On TV, there is sustainability; you know there is a job for you practically. You are seen and appreciated by people almost every day. On the web, it is obviously short-lived. You work on a project and release it, and it's done. That is it for you. You have to wait for something new to come your way. But talking of the process, I think web and films have much more time to prepare for your character. You have the luxury of preparing your role and working on your character that you don't get on television. On television, everything is instant. You get the script, you memorise them, and everything just has to be done on the same day."

While people generally find dark characters as negative roles and like how they say 'Vamps', for Rushad, he would like to play more of the dark characters. He continues, "I would like to work on more shows like *Miya, Biwi, aur Murder*. That is exactly the kind of genre that I like to work on. I like gritty thrillers and dark comedies. I like playing dark characters, so I am hoping that Abbas opens up new doors for me to do those kinds of roles." Lastly, there have been talks that Rushad has been keeping him away from the silver screen for his own reasons. However, looks like there's no truth behind the misconception.

"For a simple reason that I have to say, there are not many offers on the silver screen. I have in fact done a film last year which has released on July 15 *Judaa Hoke Bhi*, Vikram Bhatt's comeback film. I have played a pretty important part in the film and apart from that I have been giving auditions and hoping for a new one in the pipeline very soon. Comparatively, there's more work in OTT than in the films. I think because I have done quite a lot of work in OTT and I have received a lot of responses for OTT," he signs off.



## Methi and amla for healthy hair

Ayurvedic scriptures like Charak Samhita and Sushrut Samhita, suggest herbs for achieving healthy, strong and well pigmented hair. These herbs are known as Keshya and its nutrient dense properties make it an essential part of Diet and Lifestyle. Amla and Methi are two such herbs that are easily available, can be used in many ways.

Shreedha Singh, Co-Founder T.A.C, The Ayurveda Co, guide us to understanding more about these herbs and choosing the right hair-care products as per your concerns.

Amla is known as 'Amalaki' in the Ayurvedic texts and its latin name is *Embellica officinalis*. It is rich in Vitamin C and minerals like phosphorus, iron and calcium which provides intense nutrition to the hair. The active compounds present in the fruit, find its usage as dried powder of the pulp known as Churna, cooking the fresh pulp in the form of Murabba for daily consumption in diet, using the fruit to make a specialised Ayurvedic hair oil and preparing herbal hair rinse by soaking the fruits in water, using this for hairwash.

### Benefits of Amla-

**Hair growth:** Amla contains phytonutrients, vitamins, and minerals that aid in improving scalp circulation and promote healthy growth. Collagen protein is also produced by amla's vitamin C. This promotes both volume and length growth of the hair.

**Prevents frizzy hair:** Amla can help in avoiding dryness, restoring moisturiser and eliminating dead cells from hair and scalp. It contains important fatty acids that support healthy hair growth and give hair shine.

**Helps fight dandruff:** The major component of Amla, Vitamin C, performs multiple functions and assists in dandruff reduction by preserving the health of the scalp. It works as a mild exfoliator and helps the scalp become clearer.

**Controls hair damage:** Consider amla to be nature's sunscreen for

your hair since it helps shield it from the sun's damaging rays. Calcium and tannins are abundant in amla. Tannins are a naturally occurring vegetable source of polyphenol, which binds to the keratin proteins in the hair and assist them in strengthening and shining the strand.

Methi seeds are known as "Methika" in the Ayurvedic texts and its latin name is *Trigonella foenugraecum* which is rich in flavonoids, saponins and proteins all of which are essential nutrients for repairing and strengthening the hair. This is a must use ingredient for preparing Hair oils, Hair packs and Hair rinses as it helps in repairing the damaged hair, dandruff, infections and promotes healthy hair growth.

### Benefits of Methi-

#### Reduce hair loss:

A natural emollient lecithin that deeply nourishes and hydrates your scalp and hair is present in fenugreek. Additionally, by giving substantial nourishment, it strengthens your hair from the roots up. As a result, it effectively manages hair shedding.

#### Revives damaged hair:

The protein and amino acids included in fenugreek aid in healing the hair shaft when it has been harmed by dryness, heat style, chemicals, UV damage, or colour treatments. It promotes thicker hair growth by enhancing cuticle integration in the hair shaft.

#### Prevents premature greying:

You can effectively combat premature greying issues, thanks to the high iron and potassium content of fenugreek. The optimal melanin formation in your hair follicles naturally gives your hair the black colour.

#### Improves shine and texture:

The mucilaginous fibre found in fenugreek is very effective at absorbing moisture. Fenugreek assists in preserving the moisture in your hair strands enhances shine and gives your hair a softer texture.

## Game of Numbers

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Some people say that believing in lucky and unlucky numbers is superstitious, what do you think? Well, the concept of numerology is said to have originated from the civilisations in Babylonia and Egypt. People in those days from the ancient civilisations believed that numbers had true powers and that they had the essence of the divine which led humans to know more about life and god.

Taking this a one step ahead, we spoke to a numerologist who suggested us on how to select the right name for a newborn not with the help of an alphabet this time, but a digit.

Shweta Surekha, the numerologist said, "For parents, their newborn is like a treasure. And

why not? God has given you a precious gift of life that you must value. In order to make their children happy, parents often buy expensive gifts for them. But do you know what is the best gift you can give to your child? The best gift for your child is the name that you give him/her. It is important to select a lucky name that will be compatible with the date of birth of your child. So, there should be harmony between the name and the date of birth."

Another wave of numerology started in Greece by the Greek philosophers especially Pythagoras, who is considered to be the father of numerology in the modern day because of the amount of knowledge that he had gathered and shared. The numerologist continued on sharing some tips on how to name your newborn on the basis of a number, "To calculate

the lucky name number, you must know the psychic number and destiny number of your child. A lucky name will be one, which is compatible to both; psychic number and destiny number of the baby. Let's take an example where psychic number is 2 and destiny number is 8. Now, number 2 and 8 both are not friendly to each other. They are anti-numbers. So, in this case it becomes more important to select a name number which is friendly to both these numbers. If we select number 1 as name number, then it is friendly to both numbers 2 and 8. Similarly, 6 is also friendly to both 2 and 8. So, we can select any name, whose number either comes to 1 or 6."

Even according to Pythagoras, numbers play an important role in identifying the nature of anything. Furthermore, as he was also more

inclined towards mathematics, he considered numbers to be an authentic and a practical source to know the absolute truth. However, in spite of this, people were still not aware of the magic that one can create with numbers, and the state church was always against it as well.

She continued, "You can give your child a great start in life by choosing a name that reflects the positive qualities associated with the numerical value of the name. The name of person is a personal mantra by which individual will be called during his life. The name can be one that supports or does not support person's karma.

This is one of the biggest responsibilities of parents in front of their child."

Although some sceptics and non-believers found this difficult to accept the fact that there can be a rational explanation behind this notion, numerology saw a boom in the latter part of the years. Moreover, till now, a lot of research has been done which can easily prove that numbers play a vital role in everyone's life and that each number has a specific meaning.

"Numbers have a deep and impactful connection with everything in the universe. There are certain characteristics of numerology associated with this science. A value can be placed to each alphabet and letter. So, every name has a number value which plays a vital role in influencing the relationships and fate of an individual. Based on your baby's name and the number value attached with it, your baby's life changes radically," she added.

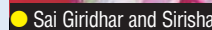
There are other types of numerology as well, depending on when they were discovered and how they were used. But, the Chaldean Numerology is one of the oldest forms of numerology. Unlike the Pythagorean system where alphabets determine the calculations, this form of numerology is based on the vibrations that each letter emits, which in turn, helps in further calculations. The Kabbalah Numerology is

associated with the Hebrew culture where the name of the person is taken into consideration in the process of calculations rather than the date of birth, which does not hold much importance.

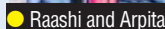
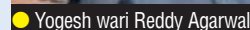
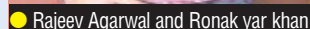
Then, the Tamil Numerology originated from the southern part of India. This form of numerology considers three essential aspects with each individual while the calculation is made. These are the Psychic Number, Destiny Number, and the Name Number.

Lastly, we have the Western Numerology and was discovered by none other than Pythagoras himself. In this form of numerology, each letter in the alphabet is assigned a specific numerical value which further helps in the process of calculation. So you see, the personality that we carry and in knowing the relationship between the numbers and the incidents that have either taken place or may take place in the future is all the 'khal' of numbers."

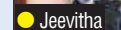
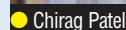
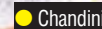




**P**roMantra Synergy Solutions, celebrated its 19th annual day at Le Meridien Hotel in Gachibowli, Hyderabad. The new logo of ProMantra was also launched during the event.



**S**ocialites Raashi, Arpita and Sofiya along with others, graced the launch of a swank new bar and kitchen, 75 Degree West, near Gandipet road at Kokapet.



## ARCHIE



WHEN ARE YOU GOING BACK HOME, UNCLE MAX?

TOMORROW. IS THAT SOON ENOUGH?



THIS WILL BE OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY WITHOUT MY HUSBAND, WALTER

IT MUST BE HARD FOR YOU. I'M SO SORRY, AGNES

THANKS, HELEN

WHAT HAPPENED TO WALTER, ANYWAY?

I ATE HIM

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HEY, WANT TO GO TO A MOVIE WITH ME?

NO, SORRY, I HAVE A THING.

OH YEAH? WHAT THING?

I WISH I HAD THE TIME TO BE PATIENT.

GOOD TASTE.

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WWW.GINGERMEGAS.COM

**MR. TUNEL... WHY WOULD YOU RELEASE SUBJECTS FROM THE RESEARCH FACILITY?!**

**BUT THIS ONE IS ELEVEN!**

**EVEN?**

**E.L.B.**

A 15x15 crossword puzzle grid. The grid contains black squares in the following positions (row, column): (1,3), (1,4), (1,6), (1,7), (1,10), (1,11), (1,13), (1,14), (1,15), (2,2), (2,3), (2,4), (2,5), (2,6), (2,7), (2,8), (2,9), (2,10), (2,11), (2,12), (2,13), (2,14), (2,15), (3,1), (3,2), (3,3), (3,4), (3,5), (3,6), (3,7), (3,8), (3,9), (3,10), (3,11), (3,12), (3,13), (3,14), (3,15), (4,1), (4,2), (4,3), (4,4), (4,5), (4,6), (4,7), (4,8), (4,9), (4,10), (4,11), (4,12), (4,13), (4,14), (4,15), (5,1), (5,2), (5,3), (5,4), (5,5), (5,6), (5,7), (5,8), (5,9), (5,10), (5,11), (5,12), (5,13), (5,14), (5,15), (6,1), (6,2), (6,3), (6,4), (6,5), (6,6), (6,7), (6,8), (6,9), (6,10), (6,11), (6,12), (6,13), (6,14), (6,15), (7,1), (7,2), (7,3), (7,4), (7,5), (7,6), (7,7), (7,8), (7,9), (7,10), (7,11), (7,12), (7,13), (7,14), (7,15), (8,1), (8,2), (8,3), (8,4), (8,5), (8,6), (8,7), (8,8), (8,9), (8,10), (8,11), (8,12), (8,13), (8,14), (8,15), (9,1), (9,2), (9,3), (9,4), (9,5), (9,6), (9,7), (9,8), (9,9), (9,10), (9,11), (9,12), (9,13), (9,14), (9,15), (10,1), (10,2), (10,3), (10,4), (10,5), (10,6), (10,7), (10,8), (10,9), (10,10), (10,11), (10,12), (10,13), (10,14), (10,15), (11,1), (11,2), (11,3), (11,4), (11,5), (11,6), (11,7), (11,8), (11,9), (11,10), (11,11), (11,12), (11,13), (11,14), (11,15), (12,1), (12,2), (12,3), (12,4), (12,5), (12,6), (12,7), (12,8), (12,9), (12,10), (12,11), (12,12), (12,13), (12,14), (12,15), (13,1), (13,2), (13,3), (13,4), (13,5), (13,6), (13,7), (13,8), (13,9), (13,10), (13,11), (13,12), (13,13), (13,14), (13,15), (14,1), (14,2), (14,3), (14,4), (14,5), (14,6), (14,7), (14,8), (14,9), (14,10), (14,11), (14,12), (14,13), (14,14), (14,15), (15,1), (15,2), (15,3), (15,4), (15,5), (15,6), (15,7), (15,8), (15,9), (15,10), (15,11), (15,12), (15,13), (15,14), (15,15). The numbers 1 through 19 are placed in the starting squares of the words.

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

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

## Rules

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

**ACROSS**

- 1 An eight-legged creature  
3 Small mark  
7 Opposite of succeed  
8 Well-mannered  
10 Spectacles  
13 Largest  
16 A stringed instrument  
17 Floppy  
18 Uncommon  
19 An imaginary fire-breathing monster

**DOWN**

- 1 Not in danger  
2 A frozen drip  
4 Twosome





## Akshay, Samantha Unleash Laugh Riot In Third Episode Of *Koffee With Karan*

**A**s Akshay Kumar and Samantha Ruth Prabhu are set to grace the upcoming episode of the seventh season of popular chat show *Koffee With Karan*, the two are expected to unleash a laugh riot on the show given Akshay's quick wit and Samantha's sense of humour.

The third episode's teaser hints at a lively potboiler of glamour, secrets and witty one-liners delivered by the two celebrated guests. Akshay Kumar makes his entry in true *Khiladi* fashion, carrying the show's debutant Samantha Ruth Prabhu in his arms. The episode marks his third appearance on the show.

Touching upon the controversial Chris Rock-Will Smith Oscars slapgate, show host

Karan Johar candidly asked the *Khiladi* of Bollywood, "What would you do if Chris Rock made a joke about Tina?" To this, the show veteran pragmatically replies, "I would pay for his funeral," he says while suggesting that no one gets to mess with his wife Twinkle Khanna.

For Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who makes her debut on the show, the host cleverly weeded out her preference for the best dancer in the industry by asking, "If you had to host your best friend's bachelor party, which two Bollywood hunks would you hire to dance?" To this, the leading lady in a heart-beat said, "Ranveer Singh, Ranveer Singh."

The new episode of *Koffee with Karan* Season 7 will drop on

Disney+ Hotstar on Thursday at 7 p.m.



## Kollywood beauty Sai Dhansika makes her big screen debut in Telugu

SHIKHA DUGGAL

**M**aybe the story of *Shikaaru* may not be new to Telugu audiences, but the lead heroine Sai Dhansika is a newly discovered gem here now.

As said in promotions, the movie is an out-and-out comedy with a message. Those haven't gotten the chance to grab it on big screens can now stream it on Aha Video from July 29 and audiences roar Dhansika to be a reliable debut here in Tollywood. So we didn't wait a second and got into a call and know what's the actress upto currently.

The Kollywood beauty told, "The true art of storytelling involves writing active characters who engage the audience. It makes us care what is happening

in the story. Of course script, locations, lighting choices, visual effects, camera movement and placement and strong cinematography all go to telling the best story possible. So, medium isn't a thing to bother these days. Films are coming my way no matter whatever is happening outside but, yes we can sense OTT platforms are a helping hand in saving cinema. A small budget film now can be streamed on OTT or new topics can be explored. Perspectives are changing on the couch."

Telling us about what went behind the camera on the movie sets, she excitedly tells, "We couldn't stop laughing, there was a laughter riot that followed on the sets. I was always on my toes to fit into my role because this girl has a plight of pity that's following her. I watched a lot of comedy movies before fitting myself into the plot. I understood on the sets how any moment life can have it's own ups and downs and we have to rectify accordingly.

Before, signing this project, I was apprehensive of whether I'll be able to pull a comical role but *Shikaaru* diminished this dilemma in me. I am ready to take on more such roles now."

The set culture was pretty much same to her, and she says this

with a reasoning that was, "I am born in Thanjavore and settled in Chennai then I had my Telugu friends even there. I noticed people here enjoy massy films more. While doing multilingual films, it made me realise one set culture can be extremely easy to go, other can be rigid and another one can even go to bossy levels."

She strongly feels it was the ideal time given by pandemic to us that we went on a journey of traverse, "We were desperate to sit on our couches and watch something atleast and that led people to survey into regional films as well. Earlier, I had only seen two Korean films but today I know each and every Korean release that's all set to roll. It was an eye-opener for me that we have stupendous content outside India too, and you can just have it in your mind with some help of subtitles. International films were a much needed craving in pandemic. It really changed the preferences."

Sharing her association with Hyderabad city, she speaks, "Weather is too good here, I would love to move in here. I am not promoting at the moment but it's a reality. There is some another level of cinema that goes crazy down with the fans here. Everyone is making their own perceptions of *Shikaaru* by the way, & this film will signify that communication can break any barriers & we can come out of entangled issues."

Sai Dhansika is all set to make her debut in the Telugu film industry and shared with us some exclusive tidbits related to the movie and behind the scenes



## Motion Poster Of Telugu Political Thriller *Sasana Sabha* Released

**T**he unit of director Venu Mandikanti's racy political thriller, *Sasana Sabha*, has released the motion poster of the film, featuring actors Rajendra Prasad, Indra Sena, Aishwarya Raj Bhakuni and Sonia Aggarwal in the lead.

Actress Sonia

Aggarwal tweeted the link to the motion poster on Twitter saying, "Assembly begins."

The film, a pan-Indian political entertainer, has been produced by Thulasi Ram Sappani and Shanmugam Sappani, popularly known as the Sappani Brothers for the production house, Sapbro Production Private Limited.

The unit claims that the movie's subject will be apt for present-day society. The film, the unit says, will deliver an important message to society but without getting preachy.

The film will simultaneously be made in Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Malayalam and Hindi, and will have musical score by Ravi Basrur of *KGF* series

and *Salaar* fame.

Aishwarya Raj Bhakuni plays the female lead of *Sasana Sabha*. Veteran actor Rajendra Prasad, Sonia Aggarwal and Prudhvi Raj will be seen playing pivotal roles in this film.

Actress Hebah Patel will be making a special appearance in a dance number in this film.



## *Pushpa* star to unveil Indian flag in the US

**A**ugust 15 is almost right the corner and people of the country are all set to celebrate the 75th Independence Day in a memorable manner. The Government of India headed by PM Modi has been conducting various events paying floral tributes to the freedom fighters across the country for the last one year with 'Azadi Ka Amrit

Mahotsav'. In the meantime, Icon Star Allu Arjun according to sources will be unveiling the tricolor on August 15 in the USA. This has been thrilling all the fans of Icon Star. The Federation of Indian Associations New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut is hosting an event celebrating the occasion and Allu Arjun will lead India's Independence Day parade.

He will be sharing the event along with guests including New York City's Mayor Eric Adams and others. Shankar Mahadevan and Kailash Kher will also be present at the event. The organisers are also planning to create a Guinness World Record by following it up with the events like 'Most Different Flags Flown simultaneously' and the 'Largest Ensemble Damaru'.

## *Acharya* brings more troubles for Koratala Siva

**C**hiranjeevi and Ram Charan starrer *Acharya* ended up as one of the biggest flops of the Telugu cinema. The investors have been demanding a refund as they lost big amounts. Koratala Siva who took the responsibility of the business has been pooling the funds.

Chiranjeevi and Niranjan Reddy did their parts after the release. Koratala Siva sold off the non-theatrical rights for record prices and the payments are yet to be received by the director. Gemini TV acquired the satellite rights of the film for Rs 15 crores and

the tv channel is yet to honor the payment. Koratala is waiting for the payment from Gemini TV to clear other dues. Gemini TV is not ready to pay Rs 15 crores for the satellite deal. As the film received poor response and reviews, Gemini will have to struggle to recover its investment. They are not ready to buy the satellite rights and the channel has two options for Koratala: either sell the satellite rights to another channel or revise the satellite deal for Rs 7.5 crores. Gemini TV wants their advance back if Koratala Siva wants to sell the satellite rights for a new channel.



# CHINA TO HOST ASIAN GAMES IN 2023 AFTER COVID POSTPONEMENT



AFP ■ KUWAIT CITY

China will host the 2022 Asian Games in autumn 2023, organisers said on Tuesday, after postponing the event in Hangzhou because of Covid-19.

The Games were originally scheduled for September this year, but organisers postponed them in May as China tried to stamp out a large Covid resur-

gence in several parts of the country. The event will now be held in Hangzhou from September 23 to October 8 2023, the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) said. Hangzhou lies less than 200 kilometres (120 miles) from the country's biggest city Shanghai, which endured a months-long lockdown earlier this year as part of the ruling Communist Party's

zero-tolerance approach to the virus. The OCA said on Tuesday that the new dates were chosen to avoid "conflict with other major international sporting events". The Hangzhou organising committee vowed to "present a wonderful and marvellous sports and cultural event with Chinese characteristics", in a statement

confirming the new dates. China is the last major economy committed to stamping out domestic spread of the virus through harsh lockdowns, mass testing and strict controls on international travel. But that has hurt the country's international sporting ambitions, with the world's most populous nation cancelling or postponing almost all events since the

start of the pandemic, with the exception of this year's Winter Olympics in Beijing. The World University Games, scheduled to begin in June in Chengdu and already delayed from last year, have also been postponed again, until 2023. The Asian Games typically attract over 10,000 athletes from across the region. Sports under zero-Covid

Organisers said in April that Hangzhou, a city of 12 million in eastern China, had finished constructing 56 competition venues for the Asian Games and Asian Para Games. Hangzhou will be the third city in China to host the continental competition after Beijing in 1990 and Guangzhou in 2010. Some events are also expected to be held in other provincial cities including Ningbo, Wenzhou, Huzhou, Shaoxing and Jinhua.

Almost all international sport has ground to a halt in China since Covid emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan in late 2019. The Beijing Olympics was an exception but was held in a "closed loop" with everyone inside it -- including athletes, staff, volunteers and media -- taking daily Covid tests and not allowed to venture into the wider city or have contact with the public. The Chinese government has touted the zero-Covid strategy as proof that it values human life above material concerns and can avert the public health crises seen in many Western countries. Covid restrictions around the country eased slightly this summer as case numbers from the earlier Omicron-driven outbreak dwindled. But a rising wave of fresh infections this month have led to new restrictions in parts of the country, with millions of people receiving orders to stay home over the weekend.



## Los Angeles Olympics to begin July 14, 2028

AP ■ LOS ANGELES

The 2028 Los Angeles Olympics kicked off a six-year countdown with the announcement of the dates for the Games' return to the city.

The opening ceremony will be July 14. Competition will run through July 30. The Paralympic Games will be Aug. 15-27.

"This milestone makes the games real for every athlete actively training for their LA28 dream and the fans who follow the journey," said LA chief athlete officer Janet Evans, a five-time Olympic medalist swimmer.

Los Angeles previously hosted the Olympics in 1984 and 1932.

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach was on hand for the announcement. He visited future venues and met with LA28 leadership.

"I have been really impressed by the progress and creativity of the LA28 team," Bach said.

"They are using the power of the Olympic Games to inspire young people to get involved in sport."

The Games will use existing stadiums and venues across the region. The organizing committee said 15,000 athletes are expected to compete in both the Olympic and Paralympic games.



## Spurs sign Middlesbrough defender Spence

AFP ■ LONDON

Tottenham signed Middlesbrough defender Djed Spence on Tuesday in a deal that could rise to a reported £20 million (\$24 million).

Spence agreed a five-year contract with Tottenham after impressing during a loan spell with Championship side Nottingham Forest last season.

The 21-year-old right-back's initial price is believed to be £12.5 million but that could rise to £20 million if add-on clauses are reached. Spence shot to prominence as Forest won promotion to the Premier League via the second tier play-offs last term.

He made 46 appearances, scoring three goals in a season that culminated

with victory over Huddersfield in the play-off final at Wembley.

Tottenham boss Antonio Conte has been on a major recruitment drive since leading his team to Champions League qualification via a top four finish in the Premier League.

The addition of Spence follows Conte's moves for Ivan Perisic, Fraser Forster, Yves Bissouma, Richarlison and Clement Lenglet.

London-born Spence came through Fulham's academy before moving to Middlesbrough in 2018, with his time at the Riverside Stadium disrupted by a host of managerial changes.

His temporary switch to Forest kick-started his career, earning him England Under-21 recognition in March and now a dream move to Tottenham.

# Sable finishes disappointing 11th in 3000m steeplechase final in World Championships

PTI ■ EUGENE

India's Avinash Sable finished 11th in the final of the men's 3000m steeplechase event with a disappointing show on the fourth day of competitions at the World Championships here.

The 27-year-old Sable clocked 8:31.75, way below his season's and personal best of 8:12.48, which is a national record.

It was, however, the slowest 3000m steeplechase final race in World Championships history with all the three medal winners clocking way below their season's and personal best. The runners ran a tactical race with medal in mind.



Morocco's Olympic champion Soufiane El Bakkali, who has a season leading time of 7:58.28, won the gold, clocking 8:25.13, while Ethiopia's Lamecha Girma (SB: 7:58.68), who won silver in both the Tokyo Games and last World Championships, finished second in 8:26.01.

Kenya's defending champion Consensus Kipruto (SB: 8:08.76) was third with a time of 8:27.92. Kipruto had won gold in the last edition with a time of 8:01.35.

Sable had qualified for the final after finishing third in heat number 3 and seventh overall with a time of 8:18.75.

He had finished 13th in the last edition of the champi-

onships in Doha in 2019 with the then national record time of 8:21.37.

The Indian Armyman from a village in Maharashtra's Beed district was at 14th spot at the 1km mark with a time of nearly 3 minutes (2:59.46) and remained there at the 2km mark with 5:53.72.

He moved up to 12th in the last lap and to 11th in the final 100m stretch.

Sable, who has earlier served at the Siachen Glaciers before taking to athletics, has been on a national record breaking spree in recent times. His latest best was 8:12.48 when he finished fifth at the prestigious Diamond League Meeting in Rabat last month.

## Harshada clinches Gold medal at Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fast-rising Indian lifter Harshada Garud won the women's 45kg gold at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championship in Tashkent.

The 18-year-old claimed the yellow metal with an aggregate of 157kg (69kg+88kg) on Monday. The total effort was four kgs better than her junior world championship title-winning lift of 153kg (70kg+83kg), which she had recorded in May.

Soumya Dalvi bagged the bronze in the 45kg youth event.



The youth world championship bronze medalist heaved 145kg (63kg+82kg) to make the podium.

In the men's 49 kg youth event, L Dhanush won the bronze in the snatch section with an 85 kg effort.

However, the Indian finished fourth overall with a best effort of 185kg (85kg+100kg).

Medals are awarded separately for snatch, clean and jerk, and total lift in continental and World Championships. But, just one medal - for total lift - is awarded in the Olympics.

## 11 players selected to join NBA Academy India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

11 players from ACG-NBA Jump 2022 will receive full scholarships to attend NBA Academy India, an elite basketball training center for the top prospects from across the country. From July 14-16, the ACG-NBA National Tryout was conducted at Jaypee Greens, Noida, bringing together 30 of India's most promising young players.

The ACG-NBA Jump 2022 National Tryout marks the culmination of a nationwide talent search which tipped off on May 21, 2022, at Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi, and visited six cities across India - Delhi, Kottayam, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai. Currently in its sixth edition, the program saw participation from more than 1,600 aspirants.

Following are the selected prospects for the NBA Academy India: Harjeet Singh (Patiala), Tajinder Bir Singh (Jalandhar), Abhimanyu G (Chennai), Lavish Khanchi (Panipat), Jatinder Hooda (Haryana), Mayank Chaudhary (Meerut), Mohammad Ishan (Jaipur), Guremaninder Singh Sandhu (Panipat), Vedansh Ranot (Mohali), Arshneil Dhalliwal (Chandigarh), Dorian Lal Sangma (Aizawl).

ACG-NBA Jump is India's first national basketball scouting program that provides aspiring basketball players from across the country with a platform to compete alongside one another, showcase their skills and receive additional basketball development opportunities. As part of the NBA and ACG's commit-

LAUNCHED IN 2015, THE 2022 EDITION OF ACG-NBA JUMP MARKS THE FIRST TIME THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN HELD SINCE 2020.

ment to grow basketball in India, the program provides talented young players from around the country an opportunity to develop their skills under the guidance of NBA-certified coaches.

Launched in 2015, the 2022 edition of ACG-NBA Jump marks the first time the program has been held since 2020. Palpreet Singh, the top prospect from program's inaugural edition, attended the 2016 NBA G League National Tryout in the United States and was subsequently drafted by the Long Island Nets in the 2016 NBA G League Draft. NBA Academy India, which is also supported by ACG, opened in 2017 and has seen multiple players earn scholarships to prep schools and junior colleges in the US or sign professional contracts, including Princepal Singh, who became the first NBA Academy India player to sign with the NBA G League and first player from India to win an NBA Summer League Championship.

# CWG: A happy hunting ground for Indian lifters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A new rule prevented India from rejigging the weight categories of its lifters for maximum advantage but country's 15-strong contingent, headlined by Mirabai Chanu, is still expected to return with a bagful of medals from the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

The Commonwealth tournaments, be it the CWG or the Commonwealth Championships, have been a happy hunting ground for Indian weightlifters, who revel in the absence of traditional powerhouses like China and North Korea.

India have finished as the best-performing nation in the sport in the 1990, 2002, and 2018 editions.

They are the second most successful nation in the sport with 125 medals, including 43 golds, behind Australia (159), whose dominance has taken a hit in the last few editions.

Indian weightlifters reigned



supreme in the 2018 Gold Coast Games, bringing home a rich haul of nine medals including five golds. And this year too, all 15 lifters are capable of podium finishes.

However, only a handful of them

are expected to strike gold. To increase India's chances of winning more gold medals in the women's events, the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWLFF) and head coach Vijay Sharma planned to

field Tokyo Olympic silver medalist Chanu, a sure-shot title contender, in the 55kg weight division.

Jhilli Dalabehera and S Bindyarani Devi were to compete in the 49kg and 59kg respectively while Poppy Hazarika would have presented her challenge in the 64kg division.

But the entries were rejected based on a new rule that stated only the top-ranked lifter in a category will qualify for the CWG and if he/she withdraws, the next best lifter will not get the berth, as was the case before.

This forced Chanu (49kg), Bindyarani (55kg), and Poppy (59kg) to drop back a weight class each which resulted in Jhilli missing out on the quadrennial event and no Indian representation in 64kg.

At the Games, all eyes will, no doubt, be on Chanu but while all others will strive to stand atop the podium.

The former world champion, whose personal best in the women's

49kg stands at 207kg (88kg+119kg), a whopping 39kgs more than the second best lifter in the field, winning the yellow metal is almost a certainty.

All she has to do is execute two legal lifts, one each in the snatch and clean and jerk, to win her third CWG medal.

She doesn't even need to bring her A game as her nearest rival, Nigeria's Stella Kingsley's best effort to date is just 168kg (72kg+96kg).

However, the 27-year-old, who already has a CWG gold and silver in her trophy cabinet, has set herself bigger targets.

Chanu is expected to rewrite her clean and jerk world record of 119kg and is also eager to breach the much-anticipated 90kg mark in the snatch section. "CWG is relatively easy for me, I will be fighting with myself. We have planned to lift 91kg or 92kg at the CWG.

Hopefully, it will happen," she had told PTI in an interview last month.