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## In brief

### Venezuela plans stock sale of state- owned companies

In a break from its socialist model, Venezuela's government plans to open for private investment a number of state-owned companies in vital sectors as it seeks to address a need for capital for severely underinvested businesses. Scant details on the move are fuelling doubts. The government intends to sell between 5 per cent and 10 per cent of shares in various companies, some of which were nationalised by the late President Hugo Chvez in his bid to transform the South American country into a socialist state. But basic information for a public offering, including number of shares, stock price and the exchange in which a company will be listed, remain unclear ahead of the planned Monday sale.

### Registration, trip card mandatory for Char Dham pilgrims

With the Himalayan shrines in Uttarakhand receiving unprecedented crowd, check posts in Dehradun, Mussoorie and Rishikesh were activated on Saturday to ensure that only registered pilgrims are allowed for the Char Dham Yatra. "This has been done to ensure that the number of pilgrims does not exceed the daily limit prescribed for the temples. It will also help prevent any last minute confusion," Dehradun District Magistrate R Rajesh Kumar said. The pilgrims will be stopped at the check posts and will not be allowed to proceed on their onward journey cards.

### Doctor couple becomes India's first to scale Mt Everest

A surgeon couple from Gujarat scripted history on Friday by becoming the first Indian doctor couple to climb Mount Everest, while another Indian climber conquered the world's fourth-highest peak without using supplemental oxygen, Nepal's media reported on Saturday. Dr Hernant Lalitachandra Leuva and his wife Dr Surbhin Hemant Leuva stood atop the 8,849-meter (29,032-foot) summit at around 8:30 am on Friday, becoming the first Indian doctor couple to climb the world's highest peak, said Rishi Bhandari, Managing Director at Satori Adventure.

**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**

**Month & Paksham:**

**Titthi:** Chaturdashi: May 14 03:23 PM to May 15 12:46 PM

**Purnima:** May 15 12:46 PM to May 16 09:44 AM

**Nakshatram:**

**Swati:** May 14 05:28 PM to May 15 03:35 PM

**Vishaka:** May 15 03:35 PM to May 16 01:18 PM

**Rahukalam:** 5:01 PM to 6:37 PM

**Yamagandam:** 12:12 PM to 1:48 PM

**Varjyam:** 08:39 PM to 10:05 PM

**Gulika:** 3:24 PM to 5:01 PM

**Amritakalam:** 07:28 AM to 08:56 AM

**Abhijit Muhurtham:** 11:46 AM to 12:38 PM

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**

**Forecast:** Mostly sunny

**Temp:** 37°C

**Humidity:** 38%

**Sunrise:** 5:43 AM

**Sunset:** 6:31 PM

**Updated:** MAY 14, 2022 5:00 PM

## OBTUSE ANGLE



# Jagan, KCR busy selecting candidates for RS elections

SNCN ACHARYULU  
■ HYDERABAD

The crucial exercise for selection of Rajya Sabha candidates has begun in the Telugu states. Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has to select three candidates and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy has to select four candidates. KCR has to also select a candidate for the RS by-election.

Usually, hopefuls try to please the respective parties' high commands to get tickets. But surprisingly, in Telangana, the situation has been reversed in selecting a candidate for the RS by-election. The TRS leadership had decided to give a Rajya Sabha ticket in the by-election to former MP Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy. He had given up his Khammam Lok Sabha seat in the last general election. Ponguleti, then a sitting LS Member, had sacrificed his Khammam seat to accommodate Nama Nageswar Rao as per the request of the TRS leadership.

Now, the TRS leadership has offered a Rajya Sabha ticket to Ponguleti. But Ponguleti has report-



edly refused to take the Rajya Sabha ticket for the by-election. According to sources, Ponguleti has told the TRS leadership that he does not want a Rajya Sabha by-election ticket as it has only a two-and-a-half-year term. He reportedly wants the TRS high command to give him the Rajya Sabha ticket for the elections to be held on June 19 as it has a full (six-year) term.

However, the TRS high command is trying to make Ponguleti accept the ticket for the RS by-election. If Ponguleti does not change his mind, the TRS high command



may choose former minister Motkupally Narasimulu or former MLC Naradasu Lakshman Rao.

As for the other two seats, former MP and State Planning Board Vice Chairman B. Vinod Kumar is one of the strong contenders. The names of former MP Sitaram Naik and actor Prakash Raj, among others, are doing the rounds.

Meanwhile, in Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy is rethinking the selection of Rajya Sabha candidates. Jagan had previously decided to re-nominate Vijayasai Reddy and to give a tick-

et to the Adani family. For the other two seats, Jagan was considering advocate Niranjana Reddy and Beedam Masthan Rao or Killi Kruparani.

But now he is thinking about Kamma and Vysya candidates. In the new Cabinet, both these castes have no representation. In the first cabinet, the Kamma community was represented by Kodali Nani, and the Vysya community was represented by Yellampalli Srinivas.

If Jagan chooses to give the Kammam representation, he might pick Marri Rajasekhar and if he elects to give representation to the Vysyas, he might go for former minister Sidda Raghava Rao.

Sources close to Jagan said the RS tickets for Vijayasai Reddy and the Adani family were confirmed. For the remaining two seats, the combination will be a Kamma and BC or a Vysya and BC. Among BCs, former MP Killi Kruparani seems to have bright chances. Besides, the Kalinga community, which is the dominant caste in north AP, is having no representation in the government. So, Kruparani may be given a Rajya Sabha ticket due to this additional factor.

## Three-capital plan a closed chapter: GVL

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP GVL Narasimha Rao has alleged that the Amaravati capital development has been stalled due to political reasons. The MP visited Amaravati on Saturday and interacted with Amaravati farmers.

On the occasion, GVL said that the three-capital plan is a closed chapter and the Central government agencies will pay special attention to constructing their offices in the capital Amravati.

He appealed to the agitating farmers to continue their movement rising above politics.

The BJP MP said that if the State government extends a little financial support, Amaravati will be transformed into a great city.

He further said that if the state government provides the minimum infrastructure in the capital region, Amaravati city will develop by itself and will grow as a megacity.

The BJP supports the farmers of Amaravati and feels Amaravati is the only capital of Andhra Pradesh, he said.

He pointed out that it is not right to impede the development



of the capital region for political reasons. He accused the YSRCP government of failing to take the Centre's help for capital development and said that the state government should come forward on its own and develop the capital Amaravati.

He found fault with the State government for talking about three capitals even after the High Court order and the State government is acting against the court decision. "If the State government wants to challenge the High Court order on three capitals, why is remaining quiet?" GVL questioned and appealed to the government to stop being stubborn and start the development of Amaravati.

## Online sand sales in AP transparent: Peddireddy

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Energy, Forests, Environment, Science, Technology, Mines and Geology, Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy has alleged that TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu has been spreading false propaganda on sand mining in Andhra Pradesh.

Peddireddy told the media on Saturday that in the past, illegal sand excavations were carried out next to Chandrababu's house on the banks of River Krishna. Corruption in sand mining was rampant during the TDP government and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had imposed a fine to the tune of Rs 100 crore. The minister said that during the TDP regime the government did not respond even when the officers were attacked by the sand mafia.



The minister said that under the able governance of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, sand is being sold in a transparent manner. About Rs 750 crore revenue is being generated through sand sales every year. The government has set up a caution deposit of Rs 120 crore and irregularities were contained.

## Naidu's political graph has shrunk: Vijayasai

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MP V Vijayasai Reddy has claimed that the political graph of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu has shrunk and described Naidu as a national level liar.

Taking to Twitter on Saturday, Vijayasai Reddy said that Chandrababu Naidu was trying to mislead the people of the State by stating that Andhra Pradesh would become another Sri Lanka. He advised him to get out of the weakness of not being able to live without power. Out of fear he had managed the systems, he said.

"Chandrababu, who has been making large-scale false allegations against the AP government that it is going to be another Sri Lanka, should see the facts. Punjab has 53.3 % highest debt-to-Gross State Domestic Product (Debt-GSDP) ratio in the country



and it is followed by Rajasthan with 39.8% and West Bengal with 38.8%."

Naidu, who claims that he has 40 years of political experience, has not constructed a house in his home constituency Kuppam but now Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy made him construct a house in Kuppam, he claimed.

## Denial of justice would lead to anarchy: CJJ

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

It is imperative for a healthy democracy that people feel their rights and dignity are recognised and protected, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana said on Saturday, stressing that denial of justice would ultimately lead to anarchy.

Addressing a function in Srinagar, the CJJ urged lawyers and judges to create a congenial environment for litigants who are often "under a lot of psychological stress".

He lamented that the justice delivery mechanism in India is very "complex and expensive" and the country is far behind in making courts inclusive and accessible.

## Governor offers prayers at Tirumala

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Governor of Andhra Pradesh Biswabhusan Harichandan offered prayers along with his family at Tirumala temple on Saturday evening. Earlier on the Governor's arrival at Mahadwaram, he was offered a traditional 'Isthikaphal' welcome by pundits and received by TTD EO AV Dharma Reddy to the temple. After darshan of Srivaru, he was rendered Vedasree Vachanam at Ranganayakula Mandapam and presented with Theertha Prasadam. Deputy CM of AP Narayana Swamy was also present.

Among others, Deputy EOs Ramesh Babu, Harindranath, RDO Kanakanarasa Reddy, and VGO Bali Reddy were also present.



## AP CS' extension proves Jagan's hold on BJP brass

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The extraordinary decision by the Central Government in the case of Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma proves the strength of the ties between Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Usually, Chief Secretaries getting an extension of three months after retirement is a difficult thing. But in AP Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma's case, the Centre extended his service by six months after



he has already completed six months' extension.

## Kharif water release from June 1

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Here's is something for the farmers to cheer about. The State government has decided to release water for the Kharif season earlier than usual.

The government has announced the dates of the release of irrigation water in advance so that farmers will be prepared.

Irrigation water to Godavari delta will be released from June 1, for Krishna delta and Guntur Channel from June 10.

Irrigation water will be released to farmers of ayacut of Somalia, Gandikota, Chitravati, and Bramhamsagar projects from July



10 and Nagarjuna Sagar projects from July 15.

He said water will be released to ayacut farmers of the Rayalaseema

region under Gorakallu reservoir, Owk, Gandhi, and SRBC from June 30.

By informing the farmers about the release of irrigation water in advance, the farmers will be prepared with arrangements for seedbed and land preparation. If the irrigation water is not released in a time-bound manner the farmers will depend on the rainfall or lift irrigation which will result in the delay of the cultivation process by a few weeks in turn resulting in a delay in harvesting and also delay in the next crop for the Rabi season.

## Cong bid to win back weaker sections

PNS ■ UDAIPUR

The Congress is set to provide 50 per cent representation to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and minorities at all levels in the party organisation as part of its social engineering efforts to win back the confidence of the weaker sections.

In a change in stance on quota within quota in the women's reservation bill, the party is likely to resolve to demand that from out of the reservation for women in Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies, there should be proportionate reservation for SC, ST and OBC women.

# Jagan asks Central govt to cut import duty on mustard oil

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has sought to reduce the import duty on mustard oil (aava nunay) in the wake of shortage of cooking oil.

He wrote letters to Union Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman and Union minister for commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal in this regard. CM Jagan said that mustard oil is also similar to sunflower.

At present, there is an import duty of 38.5 per cent on crude mustard oil and 45 per cent on refined mustard oil.

He said that these tariffs were an impediment to imports and that the import tariff on castor oil should be reduced for at least a year in view of the plight of consumers.

The Chief Minister, in his letter, said that in 2021-22, the



country consumed 240 lakh metric tonnes of cooking oil, of which only 40 per cent was domestically produced and the remaining 60 per cent had to be imported.

About 95 per cent of the cooking oil imported is palm oil from Indonesia and

Malaysia and 92 per cent from sunflower oil from Ukraine and Russia.

"The situation in Ukraine and Russia has led to a sudden shortage of cooking oil in the world, which has had an impact on consumers," he said. CM Jagan said that this

has led to an increase in the prices of sunflower and other cooking oils.

Two-thirds of the people in the state use sunflower, followed by palm oil at 28 per cent and peanut oil at 4.3 per cent. He said the State government had already taken steps to ensure uninterrupted supply of cooking oil in the market.

He further said that the Vigilance, Civil Supplies and Weights and Measures departments had carried out extensive inspections and cracked down on violators.

The Chief Minister of AP explained that a task force has also been set up to supply cooking oil without shortage and to review prices on a daily basis and take action accordingly.

"We are also holding regular meetings with manufacturers, importers, and refiners,"

he said.

The Chief Minister said that the AP government is selling oils at reasonable prices at Rythu Bazaars through AP Oiled.

He stated that the AP government is raising awareness among consumers about the use of other cooking oils.

He said that Mustard oil is also similar to sunflower and it is produced largely in Canada. He further said that at present, there is an import duty of 38.5 per cent on crude mustard oil and 45 per cent on refined mustard oil.

CM Jagan said that these tariffs were an impediment to imports and that the import tariff on mustard oil should be reduced for at least a year in view of the plight of consumers. He added that this will be helpful to people and will protect the interests of consumers.

## Kharif water release from...

*Continued from page 1*

In the 2021 Kharif season, the total cropped area across the State was 38,13,859 hectares where crops like jowar, horsegram, tobacco, minor millets, greengram, sugarcane, mesta, bajra, blackgram, castor, paddy, ragi, redgram, groundnut, sesamum, cotton, onion, chillies, turmeric, maize, sunflower and soyabean were taken up.

Irrigation Minister Ambati Ram Babu suggested that farmers make advance arrangements for Kharif as the irrigation water will be released to various parts of the State as per the schedule announced. He said if the Kharif season starts early, the harvest will be ready in advance. He said the harvest would be ready by November which is considered the cyclone month. He further said that even the farmers would have the option of going for three crops.

The minister said that earlier irrigation water would be released in August only after the projects are filled, but now they would release the water



quite early.

AP State Agriculture Mission vice president MVS Nagi Reddy said that by releasing irrigation water in advance the farming community will get prepared for the farming activities. He said that the state government has announced the release of water well in advance is a good sign and the farmers should take the advantage of it. He said that during the five years of the TDP government, the irrigation water was released for the Kharif season on time. However, the present YSRCP has

announced the release of irrigation water in advance to benefit the farmers.

A farmer G Sekhar Babu from Vuyyuru said that before releasing the irrigation water for Kharif the department should ensure that there are no repairs to the canals. It is experienced that the department starts repair works to canals and sub canals after releasing the water. He said that if the government releases the water as per the announced dates it would definitely benefit the farmer for time-bound harvesting and for Rabi cultivation.

## SI's suicide an insult to police: Gorantla

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP Rajahmundry Rural MLA Gorantla Butchaiah Chowdary on Saturday termed it an insult to the whole police department that Sarpavaram SI Muppavarapu Gopala Krishna committed suicide in East Godavari district.

Butchaiah said the latest suicide of SI exposed the prevailing caste-based discrimination and harassment within the police department. In a statement here, the TDP MLA said it was highly unethical that the postings were being given in the police department along caste lines but not based on seniority and sincerity. Why did an officer shoot himself with



his service revolver instead of doing his duties with pride in his police uniform?

Butchaiah asked what explanation would the DGP give for the ghastly incident. The TDP regime never gave priority to caste and community but only encouraged

efficient officers. Jawahar Reddy, presently holding a key post in the CMO, had worked under the then Panchayat Raj Minister Nara Lokesh.

The TDP MLA recalled how Chandrababu Naidu gave the opportunity to Ajay Kallam Reddy, presently close to CM Jagan Reddy, to serve as TTD EO and State Chief Secretary under the TDP rule. Hundreds of police officers did not get postings after the YSRCP came to power in the State.

Butchaiah said that the officers were being harassed without giving salaries and for no fault of theirs. The YSRCP Government would meet with a gruesome end for all its brutal activities.

## Online sand sales in AP...

*Continued from page 1*

Ramchandra Reddy said that a toll-free number 1450 has been set up and so far 1400 vehicles have been seized. About 485 checkpoints have been set up across the State. The sale of sand was done online and the tender for sale was awarded to JP company.

Responding to the letter of TDP Leader Varla Ramaiah, the minister said that it was a part of spreading false propaganda by the TDP against the State government.

He said that the Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) is taking stern action on Sand irregularities.

Speaking on meters to agriculture motors, the min-

ister said that 18 lakh meters will be installed across the State.

As a pilot project, 28,000 meters have been installed for agriculture motors in the Srikakulam district, of which the government was saving an additional 33.15 per cent. An amount of Rs 10,000 crore subsidy was provided to farmers every year.

The minister further said that awareness of cash being paid by the government to farmers will increase.

He sought to know from Chandrababu Naidu what he had done to his constituency Kuppam and what was wrong with the meters being fixed to agriculture motors.

## AP CS' extension proves Jagan's...

*Continued from page 1*

In the extension order Union Under Secretary Kuldeep Choudhary said that as per the letter from Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, Prime Minister Modi has approved the extension of the services of AP Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma for another six months.

In spite of the state BJP leader's criticism against Chief Minister Jagan his relations with the Centre are very strong.

Otherwise, Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah would not have approved the request made by the Chief Minister.

It may be recalled that in the

past the Central Government had refused to give an extension to the Telangana Chief Secretary.

Generally, the Central Government will give an extension of six months after retirement to Chief Secretary-level officers.

But giving six more months extension is an extraordinary thing.

AP Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, Prime Minister Modi, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have been following a give and take policy for a long time. Jagan is honouring the request of Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

In the past, as per the

request of Amit Shah a Rajya Sabha ticket was given to Parimal Nathwani, a close aide of Mukesh Ambani.

Now, Jagan has decided to give a Rajya Sabha seat to a member of Adani's family as per the request of Amit Shah.

The BJP's top leadership is not ready to lose a reliable 'political friend' like Jagan. The BJP leadership knows what will happen if they weaken Jagan.

That will benefit only TDP supremo N. Chandrababu Naidu. The BJP has had bitter experiences with Chandrababu twice in the past.

Jagan has also extended unconditional support to the BJP leadership in the forthcoming Presidential election.

## Delhi HC seeks Maneka's stand on defamation plea by vets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has sought the stand of BJP MP Maneka Gandhi on a defamation lawsuit by the Indian Veterinary Association.

Justice Amit Bansal issued summons to the animal rights activist and granted her 30 days to file her written statement to the plea which seeks Rs two crore one hundred as damages as well as an unqualified apology for her.

The plea also prays for an order of permanent injunction to restrain her from making any defamatory comments and statements against veterinary doctors.

"Accordingly, let the plaintiff be registered as a suit. Issue summons in the suit to the defendant (Gandhi) through all modes. The written statement shall be filed within thirty days from the receipt of summons," said the court in its order dated May 10.

The plaintiff, which claims to be the apex organisation of veterinarians in the country and were represented by senior advocate Sunil Mittal, said that it filed the lawsuit against the defendant BJP leader for "harassment, injury, making illegal demands of money and making grossly defamatory comments and statements against the members".

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹293
Without Skin	₹312
Broiler at Farm	₹160

EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	411
VISAKHAPATNAM	420
HYDERABAD	346
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.11

## Stelis Biopharma...

*Continued from page 1*

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had granted emergency use permission to Sputnik Light, subject to certain regulatory provisions, in February this year. However, it is currently not being administered in the country.

In the letter written on May 13, Arun Kumar, Founder and Director of Stelis Biopharma Limited, said that after the prime minister had requested the industry to gear up to tackle the pandemic, the firm invested over Rs 700 crore to set up a state-of-the-art vaccine manufacturing facility within six months despite the COVID-19-induced restrictions and quickly commenced the production of Sputnik Light.

The company also received government approvals to produce and export the jabs.

"We are proud to state that after having been granted due approvals by the Government of India, we started manufacturing Sputnik Light in India and produced no less than 2.5 crore vaccine doses. However, due to several constraints



related to Russia, these vaccines are lying unsold with us at present," Kumar said.

Kumar requested that the government should acquire the available doses, failing which these will get wasted and the company will face a huge financial loss.

"We request the Government of India to procure our readily available vaccine and administer it to the people of India or donate it to other countries under the India Aid / Covid Maitri programme," he stated.

Sputnik Light is a one-dose vaccine and is same as component-1 of Sputnik V.

In March 2021, Stelis had partnered with Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), Russia's sovereign wealth fund, to produce and supply the vaccine.

## Cong bid to win back weaker sections...

*Continued from page 1*

Addressing a media briefing on the deliberations of the panel on social justice and empowerment formed by party chief Sonia Gandhi to lead discussions on this issue at the Congress' three-day 'Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir' here, senior leader and Union minister Salman Khurshid said establishing a social justice advisory council to the Congress president has also been recommended by the panel.

There will be an attached department that will collect data for social engineering and will make it available for Pradesh Congress Committees (PCCs) and other party units, said Khurshid, who is the convenor of the panel on social justice and empowerment.

Social justice is a principled commitment but the basic instrument for that is social engineering, he said.

K Raju, a panel member and coordinator to oversee the activities of the Congress' SC/OBC/Minority Departments, said the party's constitution as of now provides for 20 per cent reservation for SCs, STs, OBCs



and minorities.

"The group has discussed and decided that in the short run we must step up this to 50 per cent. Fifty per cent reservation in all the committees starting with booth committees, block committees, district committees, PCCs and the CWC, be provided, he said.

There is a view from some of the participants that we need to go beyond 50 per cent but members felt that let us step it up first from 20 per cent to 50 per cent, he said.

Raju said the Khurshid-led group has identified that there are many sub-castes within SCs and STs and the party needs to focus on those sub-castes which have not so far been represented in the organisation or in the govern-

ment, and give justice to them.

"So, henceforth attention will be given to identify those sub-castes in these communities who have not been adequately represented within the organisation and also in the government, Raju said.

He said the panel has also recommended for adoption by the CWC that once in six months there shall be a special session of the working committee, PCCs, DCCs to discuss all the issues concerning SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities, so that the party remains alive to their issues and takes decisions accordingly.

The panel also discussed major policy commitments to demand the government which is in power and implement them where the Congress is in power,

Raju said.

"The group has debated at length, the issue related to caste-based census of OBCs and all other communities. The group has strongly recommended that the Congress has to demand and express its commitment to caste-based census," he said.

Raju said that there was a discussion in the panel on the Women's Reservation Bill and it has been recommended that the party should push for quota within quota.

Out of the reservation provided for women, there should be proportionate reservation for SC, ST, OBC women, Raju said.

Asked why there was a U-turn in its stand as, when the UPA government passed the women reservation bill in Rajya Sabha, it had resisted quota within quota, Khurshid said. Sometimes you have to push legislations strategically, we were committed to a quota for women and the problem with the quota within a quota was that we had assumed there would not be easy agreement and consensus on that and the result would be we would lose out on reservation for women at that stage.

## Mundka building's single entry-exit point made escape difficult: officials

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Mundka building which was ravaged by a fire that claimed 27 lives had a single entry and exit point, which could explain the reason for the high number of casualties, a senior fire department officer said on Saturday. The building also did not have a no-objection certificate (NOC) from the fire department, the officer added.

The fire started from the first floor of the building that houses the office of a CCTV camera and router manufacturing and assembling company on Friday.

The owners of the company, Harish Goel and his brother Varun Goel, who were detained earlier, have been arrested, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Sameer Sharma said. The building owner has been booked as well.

## CM attends marriage reception of YSRCP leader's son in Vja

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy attended the marriage reception of the son of Amalapuram YSRCP leader Kudupudi Venkateswar (Babji) at the A Convention Hall here on Saturday.

He blessed the newlyweds Prabhakar Rao and Bhavana.



GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH Roads & Buildings Department	
E-Procurement Tender Notice	
e-CTN No.23/EE(NH&CRF)/DEE3/AE/2020-21,	Dt: 11.05.2022
Online tenders are invited through e-procurement platform for One work under Central Road Infrastructure Fund Scheme in East Godavari District - 1 work. Costing of work : Rs. 25.00 Crores. Last date of receipt of tenders : 31.05.2022 @ 3.30PM. Further details visit : @ tender.ape-procurement.gov.in.	
Sd/- Chief Engineer (R&B), DIPR No. 4494/CL/Advt/11/2022-23, Dt: 13-05-2022	National Highways & CRP



# Arrangements for CM's programme inspected

PNS ■ ELURU

Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh and SP Rahul Dev Sharma inspected the security and other arrangements being made for Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's programme to be held at Ganapavaram on May 16.

The Chief Minister will participate in the 'Rythu Bharosa' programme and address the gathering on the occasion at the Government College grounds. Under the advance security liaison, the Collector, SP and Joint Collector P Arun Babu inspected the helipad, dais, and the surrounding areas and gave advice to the officials.

The Collector and SP inspected helipad works and



made suggestions to the R&B officials. They directed the officials to arrange for the sprinkling of water around the helipad. After alighting from the helicopter, the Chief Minister will reach the venue

by road. A road was constructed especially for the purpose. The sanitation works around the venue have been taken up in a big way.

The officials also inspected the galleries being set up at the

venue in the government college for VIPs, representatives of people and farmers. Five entrances were being provided to the venue to make easy the entrance and exit of people. The Collector discussed with the agriculture department officials the stalls being set up on the premises.

The Collector instructed the officials to make arrangements for the CM's programme in such a way that no one feels incontinence. Additional SP K Chakravarthy, R&B SE MV Nirmala, ZP CEO K Srinivas, Agriculture JD Y Rama Krishna, horticulture DD Panduranga Rao and RDO K Penchala Kishore were among those who accompanied the Collector and SP.

## YSRCP leader murdered over trivial issue

PNS ■ ELURU

A trivial issue of parking an auto-rickshaw on the road led the murder of a YSRCP leader and the stabbing of his son-in-law at Mudinepalli on the night of Friday.

According to DSP Paideswara Rao, the accused Irfan parked his auto-rickshaw on the road which the deceased YSRCP district steering committee member and Mala Mahanadu president Varre Nagendram (40) objected to. A heated wordy duel took place over the issue between Nagendram and Irfan.

Irfan, along with one Duba Srikanth, attacked Nagendram and stabbed him indiscriminately. When his son-in-law Andugula Mahesh went to his rescue, he was also stabbed.

## Special drive taken up to remove encroachments

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

District Collector P Prashanti has taken up a special drive to remove encroachments in Bhimavaram town. After carving out of the new district, Bhimavaram town is expanding rapidly while the vehicular movements in the town have also gone up. As many thoroughfares were encroached leading to traffic snarls in town.

In order to free the town from encroachers, Collector P Prashanti has taken up a special driver to ensure the town is free from encroachments. She prepared a plan in this regard.

The Collector along with municipal commissioner Shivarama Krishna has taken up a two-day special drive in the town.

The Collector inspected on



Saturday the Juvvalapalem road, Ambedkar junction, and Mavullamma Thalli temple road and saw the encroachments. She directed the town planning officers on setting up a hacker zone at Veeramma Park and other areas.

She also gave advice to the

officials on growing greenery in the Adarsha park.

Speaking on the occasion the Collector said that she had instructed the officials to remove encroachments on the road and arrange a hacker zone for the hackers in a particular area.

## Tripartite meeting on AP-TS issues on 25

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A tripartite committee meeting on all pending issues between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh will be held on May 25 as part of the AP Reorganisation Act. The committee which held a meeting once will meet again next week.

The meeting will be held virtually and will be chaired by the Union Secretary of State for Home Affairs. The Finance Secretaries of both the states, Ramakrishna Rao and SS Rawat, will participate in the meeting.

The bifurcation issues between Telangana and AP



will be reviewed. The AP Bhavan in New Delhi and the division of assets under the Ninth Schedule of the Reorganisation Act will be reviewed. Singareni and its subsidiary Opmel will also be discussed.

## JSP protests attacks on women

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Jana Sena activists staged protests on Saturday across the district against the attacks and atrocities on women.

The Jana Sena activists staged a dharna at Ambedkar centre in Mangalagiri, Taluka centre in Sattenapalli, at the collectorate office in Narasaraopet, also in Repalle and Pedanadipadu.

In Narasaraopet, the Jana Sena activists took out a rally in protest against the growing attacks and atrocities on women in the state. The police prevented the Janasena activists stating that they had not taken permission to take out the rally.

The JSP activists staged a massive dharna at the Collector's office here. They



held placards and raised slogans against the government for failure in taking effective steps to provide security to women.

Addressing the gathering JSP leader B Srinivas said that Andhra Pradesh had become

Atyacharala Pradesh. District president Gade Venkateswara Rao many attacks had been taken against women in the state during the last 60 days but there was no response from the Chief Minister.

City president Nerella

Suresh said that the accused in the rape case which took place near the Chief Minister's house had not been arrested so far which reflects the inept handling of crimes against women.

"The Jagan Mohan Reddy headed government in the name of welfare schemes has put the state in financial crisis. Jagan Reddy promised to keep AP in number one position in development but put the state number one position in borrowing debts" he ridiculed.

The Janasena party women leaders including Bitragunta Mallika and Pakanati Ramadevi lashed out at Jagan Reddy stating that he could not do justice to his mother and sister and the women of the state should expect more from him.



## Expedite desilting of canals to provide water to tail-end areas: Minister

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Deputy Chief Minister and also district in-charge minister Kottu Satyanarayana has directed the officials to expedite the desilting of canals and irrigation tanks to provide water to the tail end fields in the district.

The District Review Committee meeting was held here Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, the minister directed the officials to take steps to provide drinking water to the localities which are facing scarcity. He inquired with them about the tender process for the modernization of canals.

The Endowments Minister instructed the officials to take steps to expedite the desilting of irrigation canals and irrigation tanks to provide water to even tail end fields. The Water Resources and DWAMA department officials work together in this regard, he told them. Before the onset of monsoon season the de-silting should be completed, he told them.

"It has been decided in the Cabinet meeting to release water to the west delta from

June 10. The officials should take steps to release water on the day", the minister said adding that the farmers should be informed about the release of water and sensitize them to take sowing operations accordingly. The district in-charge minister directed the officials to provide more work under the NREGA scheme in the district.

He asked the officials to provide iron and cement to the beneficiaries of the Jagananna housing colonies. The e-crop enrolment should be completed at the earliest and steps should be taken to get loans sanctioned to the tenant farmers, he told the officials.

MP Mopidevi Venkata Ramana said that pipeline laying works should be completed at the earliest to provide drinking water and the officials should conduct field-level visits to address the problems. Collector Vijaya Krishnan said that the focus laid was on doing away with the drinking water scarcity. MLC Ummareddy Venkateswarlu, Lakshmana Rao and P Sunita, and MLA Karanam Baram also spoke.

## Steps on to make Eluru dist ID liquor-free: SP

PNS ■ ELURU

Superintendent of Police Rahul Dev Sharma has warned jaggery traders of stringent action if black jaggery is sold to illicit liquor brewers. The SP held a meeting with the traders at Bhimadolu as part of Operation Parivartana on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the police are taking steps to make Eluru district an illicit liquor-free district. He said that the illicit liquor is ruining the families in the rural areas and many people are losing their lives as they become addicted to the country-made liquor. The illicit liquor vitiates the bright future of individuals and advises people to maintain distance from the alcohol.

The SP appealed for the cooperation of all to eradicate the illicit liquor menace in the district. Rahul Dev Sharma



instructed the retail traders not to keep stock jaggery of more than 100 KGs of black jaggery. More than one KG of black

jaggery should not be sold to an individual, he told them.

The SP said that a strict vigil had been laid on the sales of black jaggery and on the buyers of the commodity in order to check the illicit liquor brewing in the district. The SP made it clear that black jaggery is the main ingredient to distill country-made liquor.

"Every trader should submit sales returns to the Special Enforcement Bureau every 15 days. If strangers purchase black jaggery their details should be sent to the SEB officials. The responsibility of eradicating the country-made liquor threat lies on the traders as well", the SP said.

SEB assistant commissioner Srinivasa Chowdary, Superintendent Aruna Kumari, Bhimadolu SI Chava Suresh, SEB inspectors, and taskforce inspectors were among those who were present.



## Collector visits Jagananna colony

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Collector AS Dinesh Kumar on Saturday visited the Jagananna housing colony at Mekalaviripalli village in Tarlapadu mandal.

He interacted with the beneficiaries and knew their requirements.

The officials told the Collector that a total of 126 plots had been laid in the layout, which was laid out in a public place.

Out of the 126 plots, 73 had

been allotted so far and the rest were being kept for allotment for eligible beneficiaries. Of those who got plots, 23 had started construction of houses of which seven houses had reached roof level, another fifteen houses had crossed the basement level and the rest were at the foundation level, the officials explained to the Collector.

The beneficiaries told the Collector that the sand and iron were being supplied to them by the authorities in a

timely manner. The Collector was satisfied with this and advised the beneficiaries to use this opportunity to expedite the construction of houses as the government had allotted valuable land adjacent to the highway. He assured them of providing electricity, water supply, and other basic facilities.

RDP Lakshmi Shivaji, Tehsildar Srinivasa Rao, Housing AE Nirmal Babu, and other officials were present.

## West Hyderabad resembles 'mini-Singapore' at night: KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Industries Minister KT Rama Rao said that Hyderabad is a city that combines old-world charm and new-age vibrance.

"If you go to the Financial District or Knowledge City at night it is a mini-Singapore. Many of my friends said that you are not marketing the city enough," KTR said.

Speaking at the national conference 'NATCON-21 Arch Utsav' organised by the Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) in Hyderabad on Saturday, KTR said, "The city is growing, and it is important for the state and the country. The top 8 to 10 cities run our nation whether we like it or not. We have to make sure that the cities continue to perform and do well, if not the economy will tank. When we aspire and dream to be a global city, political opponents laugh at us, scoffing at us for dreaming too much. Unless you think big and think of the impossible, you cannot aspire to be a world-class city."



Telangana Minister KTR speaking at a 'NATCON-21 Arch Utsav' on Saturday.

"We are an urban state. Telangana is more than 46 per cent urban. With rapid urbanisation, we will be a predominantly urban state in the next 5-7 years. We will have a majority living in urban areas. If you don't keep up the pace of rapid infrastructure expansion you are in trouble. Most of the world and Indian cities

face this challenge today. India is run by cities and towns and we cannot destroy them by not creating infrastructure," KTR said.

KTR described Hyderabad as a place where Biology meets Technology and Data Sciences marries Life Sciences. He said, "During the initial days we had a tough time selling

Telangana because it is a name that doesn't easily roll off your tongue. But today after eight years TS has done exceedingly well despite Covid-19, demonetisation and many other issues."

Citing Ayn Rand's Fountainhead KTR said, "I read it during my college days. I was intrigued by the persona of Howard Roark. He has an interesting personality. It got me to question whether you conform to stereotypes and existential realities of the world or would you rather want to do something truly different and path-breaking. That is a dilemma which any designer or Urban Development Minister or bureaucrat has on a day to day basis."

He said that Telangana has done many things in innovating our policy, design, and practices. He spoke about Ts-iPass and Ts-bpass.

He said that the T-Hub, Image Tower, Command Control and the new secretariat follow green building and fire safety norms.

## 'Rahul knows only about dances, pubs'

Industries Minister KT Rama Rao came down heavily on Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Saturday. He said, "Rahul Gandhi has no knowledge about Yedulu (bulls) and Vadlu (paddy). He knows only about pubs and clubs." KTR inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for development projects in Halia and Nandikonda Municipalities in Nagarjuna Sagar constituency. KTR addressed the gathering at Halia and recalled that he had asked the people to give him one more chance. "How many times Congress represented this constituency? They were given a chance seven times, but nothing was done. The Congress was given a chance 10 times in this country. They ruled for 50 years. They couldn't do in 50 years and now asks for another chance." He said that Congress leaders are fighting each other and that Nagarjuna Sagar is moving forward in development. KTR advised the people not to trust the Congress and praised Nomula Bhagat.

## Parties competing in name-calling netas on social media

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

Using funny names for self as username or catchy nicknames for friends on social media is quite common. Political parties have gone a step further to name and, in the process, shame or defame, albeit in a lighter vein, netas belonging to rival parties. Surprisingly, the netas who are the butt of these jokes, rarely feel offended, and often take the insinuating monikers, whether hilarious or sarcastic, as compliments.

Sample these: 'KaChRaO', 'Kurkure Reddy', 'Thondi Sanjay' and 'Manikchand Tagore'. These are the words used by Telangana social media users to refer to politicians. Each political party has given such names for its rivals in other parties.

The TRS uses a set of names to refer to opposition leaders. Kishan Reddy is allegedly

referred to as 'Kurkure Reddy'. It is not without reason. During the Covid lockdown, he was seen distributing Kurkure and Doritos to healthcare workers as part of a company's CSR activities.

Bandi Sanjay is called variously as 'BS Kumar' (bull shit), 'Tambaku Sanjay' and 'Thondi

Cheap' because TRS feels that his comments are often very cheap.

For Prime Minister Narendra Modi also, his initials are used. BJP calls Chief Minister Kalvakuntla Chandrashekar Rao as 'KaChRa', derived from initials of his full name. He is also referred to as 'Farmhouse CM' and 'Dora'.

They call Kavitha as 'Thaithakka'.

Harish Rao is called 'Agipetta macha'. It is a reference to an incident during the agitation days when petrol was there, but no match box.

Rajya Sabha MP Joginapally Santosh Kumar is referred to as 'Happy Rao'. Santosh means Happy.

Even the party cadre have names. Pink party people are called 'Pinkies'. BJP folks are referred to as 'flowers' or 'Battai' (orange).

By the time poll bulge is sounded more leaders will be given such trendy names.



# ‘Rules on linking Aadhaar with electoral rolls soon; sharing details voluntary’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rules on linking Aadhaar with the electoral rolls can be issued by the government soon, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra has said, adding that sharing Aadhaar details will be voluntary for voters, but those not doing so will have to give "sufficient reasons".

Chandra, who demits office on Saturday evening, also said that the poll panel played a key role in intensifying the vaccination drive in the five states where assembly elections concluded in March this year to ensure that voters and those involved in election duty were safe from the coronavirus.

In an interview with PTI, he said two major electoral reforms which took place in his tenure as the CEC are the provision of four dates in a year instead of one to enrol those turning 18 as voters and the linking of Aadhaar with electoral rolls to check duplicate entries in the voters' list.

"Earlier, only January 1 of every year was the cut-off date.



We convinced the government that this reform is very essential and these people should be enrolled as soon as they turn 18. With this reform now, there will be four dates in a year to get these people registered when they complete 18 years of age. This reform was pending for the last 20 years," Chandra said.

The four cut-off dates for enrolment is part of a Bill passed by Parliament a few months back to allow linkage of Aadhaar with the electoral rolls.

As of now, those turning 18

on or before January 1 can be registered as voters. Those who turn 18 on January 2 or later have to wait for one year to register as a voter. But once the rules are issued, young people can get registered as voters on four different dates every year.

"The second biggest reform is the linking of Aadhaar with electoral rolls to check duplicate entries. It will make the voter list pure. It will make the electoral roll more robust," he said. Asked when the rules will be notified by the government, Chandra said

"I think very soon because we have already sent draft proposals in this regard. We have also sent the forms which are to be changed and they are with the (law) ministry. Very soon, I think they will be cleared. We will also have to tune up our IT system."

On whether sharing Aadhaar details will be voluntary, he replied in positive. "It will be voluntary. But sufficient reason will have to be given by voters for not giving their

Aadhaar numbers. The reason may include not having an Aadhaar or not having applied for one or any other reason they can think of. I can not think of any other reason," the CEC said said.

Chandra was of the view that sharing Aadhaar number will help the EC to purify the voter list. It will also ensure that the poll panel is able to give more services to the voters through its communication system, he added. "If we know about the voter more clearly, then we can give more services such as when the elections will be held and booth (details) on their phone numbers... We should know clearly that he/she is the right person," Chandra said.

Asked about the biggest "We had regular meetings with health secretaries and chief secretaries of the states. We asked them to intensify vaccination and we kept a close watch every week. We were giving a very graded response to our campaigning methodology. We opened it gradually. By the time electioneering started,

the vaccination rate was very high in all the five states, and the voters had been given the first or the second doses as per protocol," he added.

Chandra replied in positive when asked whether it was the EC which had in a way been responsible for intensifying the vaccination drive in the five states.

"Definitely. In states where it was especially less like Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Manipur, we reviewed the situation and asked the chief secretaries and the health secretaries to boost the vaccination drive.

"Each and every person should have taken at least the first dose. If the first dose had been administered, then the second should be given. In Uttar Pradesh, the first dose coverage was 100 per cent. The percentage of vaccination in Punjab and Manipur also went up. We took each and every step possible to check the spread of Omicron during the elections in these states so that the voters and the voting process can be safe," he said.

## MUNDKA FIRE

# 29 still missing; death toll likely to mount

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after a massive building fire in outer Delhi's Mundka claimed 27 lives, frantic relatives were still searching for their loved ones as police said 29 people were unaccounted for.

According to the fire department, the death toll could rise up to 30 as charred remains were found in the building during cooling operations on Saturday morning. Twelve injured were undergoing treatment at a hospital here.

They said the four-storey building, which did not have a fire safety certificate, had a single entry and exit point which could have been the reason for the high number of casualties.

"The building had a single escape route which is why there were so many casualties. Twenty-seven people have died," Chief Fire Officer Atul Garg said.

Officials said there was only



one narrow staircase for entry and exit which made escape from the burning building difficult.

Garg said it is suspected that an explosion in an AC may have triggered the fire.

Harish Goel and his brother Varun Goel, owners of a CCTV camera and router manufacturing and assembling company, from whose office the fire is suspected to have started, have been arrested, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Sameer Sharma

said. Garg added it was difficult to ascertain whether the remains found on Saturday morning were of one person or more.

Of the 27 deceased, seven have been identified so far as Tania Bhushan, Mohini Pal, Yashoda Devi, Ranju Devi, Vishal, Drishti and Kailash Jyani, the DCP said.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy, Manish Sisodia, visited the spot on Saturday.

# Rana couple pray in Delhi for Thackeray's ouster

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Independent lawmakers Navneet and Ravi Rana on Saturday recited the Hanuman Chalisa at the Hanuman temple here and claimed to have prayed for removal of the "biggest danger looming over Maharashtra in the form of Shiv Sena".

The couple was arrested last month on sedition charges after a call for reciting the Hanuman Chalisa outside Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's residence in Mumbai and released on bail 12 days later.

Dressed in a saffron sari and accompanied by her husband and scores of supporters, Navneet Rana, the independent Lok Sabha member from Amravati, walked on foot from her North Avenue residence to the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place to offer prayers.

"Uddhav Thackeray is the biggest danger looming over Maharashtra. I have come to offer prayers to rid



Maharashtra of this danger," Navneet told reporters outside the temple.

The Rana couple also performed aarti at the temple.

The temple visit comes on a day when Thackeray is scheduled to address a massive rally in Mumbai.

Meanwhile, Navneet Rana accused the Shiv Sena of abandoning the cause of Hindutva by joining hands with the Congress and NCP to grab power in Maharashtra.

"Uddhav Thackeray has forgotten the legacy of Balasaheb Thackeray. Balasaheb was the

real torchbearer of Hindutva, these are duplicates," she said to questions on Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut's remarks that the time had come to show the real style of Shiv Sena.

Navneet Rana dared Thackeray to take action against "those offering prayers at Aurangzeb's grave" instead of targeting her for espousing the cause of Hindutva.

AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi had offered prayers at the grave of Mughal ruler Aurangzeb at Khuldabad, near Aurangabad in Maharashtra.

# Kejriwal's meet on demolition drive cancelled

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's meeting with his party's MLAs, which was scheduled for Saturday, has been cancelled in the wake of a massive fire in outer Delhi's Mundka in which 27 lives were lost, official sources said.

Several other events, including the inauguration of electric vehicle charging points by Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, have been cancelled as well, they said.

Kejriwal, national convener of the Aam Aadmi Party, was scheduled to hold a crucial meeting with party legislators here to prepare a strategy to counter the anti-encroachment drives launched by the BJP-ruled municipal corporations in the national capital.

The meeting was scheduled to begin at 11 am at the chief minister's official residence in Civil Lines.

The fire in the four-storey commercial building on Friday started from the first floor that houses the office of a company which manufactures and assembles CCTV cameras and routers, the police



## The Delhi chief minister announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each to the kin of the deceased

have said.

Kejriwal and Sisodia visited the spot to take stock of the situation.

The Delhi chief minister announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for those injured in the blaze.

"A magisterial enquiry has been ordered into the incident. The families of the deceased will be given a compensation of Rs 10 lakh, while the injured will be given Rs 50,000," he said.

## Wheat export ban, 'anti-farmer', says congress

PNS ■ UDAIPUR

The Congress on Saturday hit out at the government over the ban on the export of wheat, saying it was an "anti-farmer" measure as it deprives farmers of reaping the benefit of higher export prices. According to an official notification, India has banned wheat exports with immediate effect as part of measures to control rising domestic prices.

Asked about the government's move at a press conference on the second day of the Congress' ongoing 'Chintan Shivir' here, senior leader and former finance minister P Chidambaram said, "I presume that it is because the central government has failed to procure enough wheat. It is not that wheat production has come down, it is more or less the same. In fact, it may be marginally more." Chidambaram said that on Friday, a Chhattisgarh minister had told him that the government there had procured 97 lakh tonnes of paddy.

If procurement had taken place, there would not have been any need to ban the export of wheat, he said.

## INDIA CORNER

### Goa govt to develop eco-tourism in forest areas



The Goa government will develop eco-tourism in the forest areas and parks of the coastal state, state Minister Vishwajit Rane said. Taking to Twitter on Friday, Rane said that discussions were held with officials of the forest department for the development of eco-tourism

and to improve infrastructure in wildlife sanctuaries in the state. "Following discussions with forest dept officers, we have decided to give thrust to development of forest eco-tourism within forest areas and forest parks. We will improve infrastructure of Dr Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary, build camping areas, jungle trails etc," the state forest minister tweeted. "We will carry out these activities with guidance from experts in order to ensure that people are more interested in and visit forest parks. Camping areas and jungle trails will be prioritised. We will create an entirely new

### CAF constable injured in IED blast by Naxals in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur



A jawan of the Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) was injured when a pressure improvised explosive device (IED), planted by Naxals, exploded in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh on

Saturday, police said. The incident occurred around 11 am near Pandemurga village under Nelasnar police station limits, where a road opening party (ROP) of the CAF's 8th battalion was out for patrolling, Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P said. When the patrolling team, that had launched the operation from Nelasnar camp, was cordoning off the route ahead of Pandemurga, constable Ramnath Maurya stepped on the pressure IED connection, triggering the blast, he said.

### 17-year-old boy killed as bomb explodes in garbage



A 17-year-old boy was killed on Saturday morning when a container bomb exploded in a garbage dump in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, police said. The incident happened in Ajamtala behind Rahara police station, around 15 km from Kolkata, they said. The

bomb, which was inside a container, exploded when Sheikh Salim took it from his father and threw it at a lamp-post, they said. Sheikh's father found the container while clearing the garbage dump, police said. "Sheikh was first rushed to Barrackpore BN Bose Sub-divisional Hospital, and then to Sagar Dutta Hospital where he was declared brought dead," a senior police officer said. A large contingent of police was deployed in the area as the incident triggered panic among the locals. An investigation is underway to find who kept the bomb there, police said.

### 'Good luck and goodbye Cong': Sunil Jakhar as he quits party



"Good luck and goodbye Congress", former PCCF chief Sunil Jakhar said on Saturday while announcing his decision to quit the Congress that last month removed him from all party positions for alleged anti-party activities. The disgruntled leader, whose decision comes during the party's three-day 'Chintan Shivir' in Udaipur, went live on his Facebook page to make the announcement. "It is my parting gift to the party. Good luck and goodbye Congress," Jakhar said while announcing his decision to part ways with the Congress party. The former Punjab Congress chief had been upset with the party for serving him a show-cause notice on April 11. However, Jakhar chose not to reply to the Congress disciplinary committee panel. The former MP had criticised former chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi and termed him a "liability" for the party after the Congress lost to the Aam Aadmi Party in Punjab.

# Raut for 'one country, one language'

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Making a pitch for "one country, one language", Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Saturday said Hindi is spoken across India and has acceptability, and added that Union minister Amit Shah should accept the challenge that there should be one language in all the states.

His statement comes over a month after Shah said that Hindi should be accepted as an alternative to English and not to local languages, a statement that was vociferously opposed by several prominent political leaders in southern states, who said foisting Hindi on people was not acceptable, and also called it a part of an agenda to weaken the regional languages.

Raut made the remark here while talking to media persons here. The comment was in response to a question about



Tamil Nadu Education Minister K Ponnudurai a day earlier decrying any attempts of alleged imposition of Hindi and questioning claims that learning the language would fetch jobs.

Taking a dig at those who insist jobs will be available for those who learn Hindi, the Tamil Nadu minister had also asked who are selling 'pani puri' in Coimbatore now, an obvious reference to the predominantly Hindi-speaking vendors involved in the trade.

Mumbai - where civic body polls are likely to be held later this year - has a sizeable number of people from northern belt of the country.

Asked about the Tamil Nadu minister's remark, Raut said his party has always respected Hindi.

"Whenever I get an opportunity in the House, I speak in Hindi. Because the country should listen what I want to say, it is a language of the country. Hindi is the only language which has acceptability and is spoken in the entire country," he said.

To drive home his point, the Shiv Sena leader also said that the Hindi film industry is influential in the country and the world.

So, no language should be insulted, he added.

"Union Home Minister Amit Shah should accept this challenge that there should be

one language in all states. One country, one Constitution, one nishan (emblem/symbol) and one language should be there," Raut said.

The chief spokesperson of the Sena further said Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray's rally, scheduled to be held later in the day, will be "historic and revolutionary".

He added the entire country is "excited" to know what stand Thackeray will take during the public rally, first of the party in the last two-and-half years.

"Some people want to vitiate the atmosphere in Maharashtra, want to defame the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government and want to destabilise the state (government). Shiv Sena chief Uddhav ji Thackeray will give a befitting reply to all this," he added.

# Sonia chairs meeting of AICC brass

PNS ■ UDAIPUR

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Saturday discussed the party's action plan for the second phase of the mass contact programme to take on the policies of the government as well as rising inflation and unemployment in the country.

She presided over the meeting of AICC general secretaries, PCC presidents and legislature party leaders during the party's Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir here.

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi also spoke at the meeting and called for planning the next stage of the

action plan for Jan Jagran Abhiyan, sources said.

The Congress launched the mass agitation/contact programme - 'Jan Jagran Abhiyan' -- from November 14 to November 29, 2021 to highlight various issues, including inflation, price rise, recession, unemployment rate and farm distress.

The party is now planning to launch Jan Jagran Abhiyan 2.0.

Top Congress leaders from across the country are here for a three-day brainstorming conclave to decide on the party's strategy on key issues and revamp of the organisation.



# 30% students didn't return to schools after pandemic

PNS ■ BHUBANESHWAR

After discovering that about 30 per cent of students have not returned to schools as classroom teaching resumed after a gap of two years due to the pandemic, the Odisha government has asked the district collectors to try reverse the alarming trend.

Analysing the daily attendance data from schools collected by District Education Officers (DEOs), it was seen that around 70 per cent of students are attending the classes, School and Mass Education Department secretary BP Sethi said in a letter to district heads.



On detailed analysis, it was seen that the attendance in classes 1 to 5 in districts such as Malkanagiri, Boudh, Sambalpur and Nuapada is also poor in case of attendance in classes 6 to 8, he added.

In the secondary section, attendance in schools in

The performance of Malkanagiri, Boudh, Sambalpur and Nuapada is also poor in case of attendance in classes 6 to 8, he added.

In the secondary section, attendance in schools in

Gajapati, Bolangir, Bargarh, Sonepur, Nuapada, Cuttack, Khordha, Koraput, Ganjam, Boudh, Malkangiri, Keonjhar, Sambalpur is less than the state average, Sethi said.

The overall attendance in higher secondary classes is abysmally low in Gajapati, Sonepur, Bargarh, Kandhamal and Nuapada, which is a matter of concern, he mentioned.

"The above figures lead us to believe that thorough analysis has to be made to know the whereabouts of the absentee students. It may so happen, these students who are not attending the offline classes might have dropped out/

moved out along with their parents/ lost interest in academic activities due to non-continuance of the teaching schedule due to the pandemic situation and many other reasons, which need analysis," he noted.

A review by the School and Mass Education Department also found that many students passing out of class 8 are not taking admission in class 9.

"We have to devise a location-specific strategy to bring back the students to the classroom," Sethi told the district collectors.

Noting that the department has prepared a strategy to bring back the absent students,

he asked the collectors to conduct a school-level survey to list the students who are not attending classes.

"The junior teachers who are posted in schools may be sent to the houses of the absentee students to know the reason for their absence from the school," he said.

"These junior teachers should also motivate students and their parents to send their ward to the school and explain the benefit of sending the student to school and steps taken by the government to provide free books, free uniform, MDM (mid-day meals) and scholarships to students...", he said.

**NTPC's 20 MW solar capacity at Kawas begins commercial operation**

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

State-owned power giant NTPC on Saturday announced the beginning of commercial operation of the first part capacity of 20 MW out of 56 MW Kawas Solar PV Project in Gujarat.

"Consequent upon successful commissioning, the first part capacity of 20 MW out of 56 MW Kawas Solar PV Project at Kawas, Gujarat, is declared on Commercial Operation from 00:00 Hrs of May 14, 2022," a BSE filing said. With this, the standalone installed and commercial capacity of NTPC has reached 54,616.68 MW. Further, the NTPC group installed and commercial capacity has touched 68,981.68 and 68,321.68 MW, respectively.



# Committee to create enabling eco-system

**PNS ■ MUMBAI**

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday said the government has set up a high-level committee to create an enabling eco-system for the development of cruise tourism in the country.

The committee comprises government officials and cruise industry players.

Sonowal on Saturday inaugurated the first two-day International Cruise Conference being held here.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the event, the minister said the government aims to make India the most attractive cruise tourism destination and the industry the world's largest one in the world.

The Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways also informed that the government has set up a Task Force under the Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and the Shipping secretary as its vice-chairman.



The high-level committee will assist the Task Force with its ideas and suggestions to the committee, he said.

"I declare the constitution of a High-level committee comprising both government officials and national and international industry players. It will assist the Taskforce and give it ideas and suggestions,"

Sonowal told reporters.

Emphasising that the purpose of the international conference is to make India a cruise tourism hub, the minister said the government will provide whatever modern infrastructure is required to attain the objective. He also expressed hope that the state governments will also play

their role in the promotion of the industry, which is seeing demand coming back after being hit during the pandemic. "India is going to be the most attractive destination of cruise tourism, and there is no doubt about it because whatever potential we have in the coastal areas and inland waterways are now set to be explored.

## Legal backing for RoW by Dec, says telecom minister

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday said legal backing for Right of Way (RoW) will be in place by December, and launched the GatiShakti Sanchar portal that will centralise and speed up approvals for laying of fibre and tower installations, as the country gears up for 5G roll-out.

The GatiShakti Sanchar portal will facilitate centralised Right of Way (RoW) approvals. An online platform for the industry to apply for RoW approvals as they build telecom infrastructure, including for 5G services, the GatiShakti Sanchar portal offers a unified, integrated, centralised approach covering all states and UTs, and central government ministries.

For players, it promises to



reduce the days involved in getting stipulated permissions, lower costs, and facilitate ease of doing business.

Launching the portal, Vaishnaw asserted the need for legal provisions for Right of Way, and promised that a strong legal backing will be put in place by December this year.

At present, RoW rules are

based on administrative process, and a strong legal backing is required to empower local officials, bring clarity on the fee structure, and fix accountability, he explained.

"That will be our next step. Moreover, all the portals that are there, especially Gati Shakti portal, railway portal, highway portal, and others...integration of those...We will be working on these two technological and legal aspects," Vaishnaw said.

Work has started on these two fronts already, and the integration of portals is expected in the next 3-4 months while the timelines for providing legal backing is December-end. Asked if legal provisions for RoW will also entail penalties if approval timelines are not met, the minister said generally accountability and penalty tend to be linked.

## G7 warn of Ukraine grain crisis, ask China not to aid Russia

**PNS ■ WEISSENHAUS**

The Group of Seven leading economies warned Saturday that the war in Ukraine is stoking a global food and energy crisis that threatens poor countries, and urgent measures are needed to unblock stores of grain that Russia is preventing from leaving Ukraine.

In a statement released at the end of a three-day meeting on Germany's Baltic Sea coast, the G-7 nations also called on China not to help Russia, including by undermining international sanctions or justifying Moscow's actions in Ukraine.

"Russia's war of aggression has generated one of the most severe food and energy crises in recent history which now threatens those most vulnerable across the globe," the group said.

"We are determined to



accelerate a coordinated multilateral response to preserve global food security and stand by our most vulnerable partners in this respect," it added.

The G-7 asked Beijing to support the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, and "not to assist Russia in its war of aggression."

The group, which comprises Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States, also called on China "to desist from engaging in information manipulation, disinformation and other means to legitimise Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine."

## Flour millers' association RFMFI welcomes govt's decision to ban wheat

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Flour millers' association RFMFI on Saturday welcomed the government's decision to ban wheat exports, saying this will prevent "unnecessary panic" in the market regarding domestic supply and also help in controlling any price rise.

Roller Flour Millers Federation of India (RFMFI) President Anjani Aggarwal said the association had written to the government to regulate exports. "It is a very good decision by the Government at this stage, as this will prevent unnecessary panic in the country about wheat supply and prices." He said the wheat production in the 2021-22 crop year, ending June, is likely to decline at 95-98 million tonnes.

## MONEY MATTERS

## Bharat Krishak Samaj unhappy over wheat exports ban



Farmers' body Bharat Krishak Samaj (BKS) on Saturday expressed unhappiness over the ban on wheat exports, saying that restrictions on shipments of farm produce are an "indirect tax" on farmers. Farmers will not be able to take advantage of high global prices, while India will lose credibility as a reliable trading partner, it said.

"Sadly, India has banned exports of wheat. Restrictions on agricultural exports are an indirect tax on farmers in countries where imposed," Bharat Krishak Samaj Chairman Ajay Vir Jakhar told PTI. Farmgate prices get subdued by policy and farmers are unable to benefit from rising commodity prices while having to pay higher input costs, he added. "Today not only traders but even farmers are holding wheat stock will lose out. Such export bans is the reason why farmers do not trust market reforms. It adds to the trust deficit," Jakhar said. In view of the skyrocketing food prices in the world, he said the UN had also appealed for nations not to make sudden announcements. India also loses credibility as a trading partner, he said. "Lack of credible real-time data and analytics in the government is why we are in this situation," he rued. Jakhar said his association has been advocating for long that farmers must be compensated when they suffer a loss due to government policy as is the norm in the USA.

## Sundaram Home Finance bullish on long-term prospects

**PNS ■ CHENNAI**

Sundaram Home Finance was bullish on the long-term prospects of the sector and would further strengthen its presence in real estate sector, according to a top official. The city-based wholly owned subsidiary of Sundaram Finance Ltd declared its financial results for the quarter ending March 31, 2022. The company clocked 44.9 per cent rise on its net profit for the quarter ending March 31, 2022 to Rs 53.05 crore from Rs 36.60 crore registered same period last financial year. Disbursements during the quarter went up to Rs 794.11 crore from Rs 459.38 crore recorded corresponding period last year. Sundaram Home Finance registered a record disbursements of over Rs 300 crore in March 2022, the highest in its history.

## There are mountains to climb: Air India CEO-designate Campbell Wilson

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Campbell Wilson has termed his appointment as Air India CEO and MD as a fantastic opportunity to lead a historic airline and mentioned that there are "mountains to climb" in his new stint.

Wilson is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Airlines' wholly-owned subsidiary Scoot Air.

Singapore Airlines (SIA) is a joint venture partner of Tata Group in full service carrier Vistara.

On Thursday, Tata Sons had announced the appointment of Wilson as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Air India.

In a communique sent to Scoot employees on Friday, he said, "This afternoon I informed the executive team



and your union leaders of my resignation from Scoot and the SIA Group."

He said it was by no means an easy decision to leave and SIA was his first professional job and has been his home for the last 26 years.

Wilson noted that across three continents, six countries and more than 12 roles, SIA has accorded him many more opportunities and experiences

than he could ever have dreamed of.

"It is especially hard to leave Scoot which, in two chapters, I have had the honour and pleasure of nurturing - together with a wonderful, wonderful group of people, past and present - from a mere spreadsheet to, amongst many other things, the World's Best Long-Haul, Low-Cost Airline," he mentioned.

## Carborundum Universal clocks 7.6 pc rise in Q4 standalone PAT

**PNS ■ CHENNAI**

Abrasives and industrial ceramics maker Carborundum Universal Ltd on Saturday reported a 7.60 per cent jump on its standalone net profit for the quarter ending March 31, 2022 at Rs 61.91 crore.

The city-based Murugappa Group company had registered standalone net profit at Rs 57.52 crore during the corresponding quarter in the previous year.

For the year ending March 31, 2022, standalone net profit grew by 38.30 per cent to Rs 254.48 crore, from Rs 183.97 crore registered a year ago, a company statement said.

Total income for the quarter under review went up to Rs 601.47 crore, from Rs 519.98 crore registered same quarter in the previous year.

For the year ending March 31, 2022, standalone total income was at Rs 2,257.18

crore as against Rs 1,714.65 crore recorded last fiscal.

The company said it incurred a capital expenditure in 2021-22 of Rs 170 crore and the debt-equity ratio at the consolidated level was at 0.09.

Free cash flow for the year ending March 31, 2022, was at Rs 118 crore, the company said. Return on Invested Capital for three major segments together moved from 27 per cent in FY21 to 31 per cent in FY22. Revenue from the abrasives business at a consolidated level grew by 29 per cent to Rs 1,283 crore for the year ending March 31, 2022, as compared to Rs 993 crore recorded last year.

The company said the abrasives business in India, Russia and US registered significant growth. Revenue at consolidated level in the electro minerals business grew to Rs 1,312 crore during the year ending March 31, 2022, as compared to Rs 1,064 crore a year ago.

# UK delays ban on buy-one-get-one free junk food deals

**PNS ■ LONDON**

Rules banning multibuy deals on foods and drinks high in fat, salt, or sugar (HFSS), including buy-one-get-one free (BOGOF), three for two and free refills for sugary soft drinks, will be delayed for a year, the UK government said on Saturday.

The plan had been unveiled in December 2020 to be enforced by April this year as part of a wider anti-obesity health drive.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said the delay to restrictions on multibuy deals will allow the government to review and monitor the impact of the restrictions on the cost of living in light of an unprecedented

global economic situation.

"Pausing restrictions on deals like buy one get one free will allow us to understand its impact on consumers in light of an unprecedented global economic situation," said UK Public Health Minister Maggie Throup.

"We're committed to doing everything we can to help people live healthier lives," she said.

The restrictions banning HFSS adverts on TV before 9 pm and paid-for adverts online will also be paused for a year, meaning they come into force January 2024.

Recognising that the industry needs more time to prepare, a consultation on TV and paid-for adverts online will be launched in the coming weeks.

"We are determined to tack-



le childhood obesity and are working hard to improve young people's health, including by investing 550 million pounds of government and lottery cash to level up access to sport and physical activity right across the country," said

UK Media, Data and Digital Minister Julia Lopez.

"We have listened to the concerns which have been raised and will not be bringing in restrictions on junk food advertising until confident that the time is right," she said.

**The plan had been unveiled in December 2020 to be enforced by April this year as part of a wider anti-obesity health drive.**

Restrictions on the placement of less healthy products - a key part of the government's commitment to reduce obesity - will still come into force in October 2022 as planned.

These will mean less healthy

products are no longer promoted in key locations, such as checkouts, store entrances, aisle ends and their online equivalents.

DHSC said addressing obesity remains a priority for the government, and will reduce the strain put on the state-funded National Health Service (NHS) as it works to tackle the COVID backlogs.

It pointed to the laws on calorie labelling in large restaurants, cafes and takeaways coming into force last month as part of the anti-obesity drive. The department will also be launching the Better Health: Rewards scheme in Wolverhampton later this year to test whether financial incentives can support adults to move more and eat better.

## Future Retail's Chief Financial Officer C P Toshniwal resigns



Debt-ridden Future Retail's Chief Financial Officer C P Toshniwal has resigned from the company, effective May 12. Toshniwal's resignation is the recent addition to the string of resignations that started after the Rs 24,713-crore deal was called off last month by the billionaire

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries after creditors voted against it. Last week, Future Retail's Managing Director Rakesh Biyani stepped down, while officials including the company secretary of the debt-ridden firm tendered resignation. "C P Toshniwal - Chief Financial Officer of the Company has resigned with effect from the closure of business hours of May 12, 2022. Consequent to the same, he shall also cease to be a 'Key Managerial Personnel' (KMP) of the Company," FRL said in a regulatory filing. FRL, a flagship firm of the Kishore Biyani-led Future Group, now faces an insolvency petition filed by its lenders before the National Company Law Tribunal as it has committed defaults. FRL was part of the 19 companies which were supposed to be transferred to Reliance Retail as part of a Rs 24,713-crore deal announced in August 2020. The deal was called off by the billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries last month.



Every year, on May 17, **World Hypertension Day** is observed in order to educate the public and create awareness on high blood pressure (BP) or hypertension which has no symptoms or warning signs. The HEALTH PIONEER reports

An alarming one in four Indian adults has high blood pressure. Known medically as hypertension, many people don't even know they have it, because high blood pressure has no symptoms or warning signs.

"But only about 10 per cent of them have their blood pressure under control," according to a report by the India Hypertension Control Initiative. Releasing the report, Indian Council of Medical Research Director-General, Dr Balam Bhargava, emphasised on making hypertension a national priority.

Prashant Mathur, director of ICMR's Na Mathur, director of ICMR's National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research, Bengaluru, and corresponding author of the study chips in that "recognising the low awareness and high rates of drop-outs between the diagnosis of hypertension, its treatment and control calls for better planning of providing continuum of care for high blood pressure."

For both women and men, the prevalence increases sharply with age. The increase is for all categories of hypertension, including pre-hypertension, for both sexes. About one-fourth of women and men aged 40-49 have hypertension, says the study.

The recent National Family Health Survey 5 (NFHS-5) too presents an alarming picture of the chronic disease. It shows that when it comes to treatment, only 7 per

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PRESSURE BY 25 PER  
CENT BY 2025.



cent women and 6 per cent men who have been diagnosed with high blood pressure are on medication.

The survey also found that 33 per cent of women and 46 per cent men have never got their blood pressures measured. Based on the blood pressure measurement, the NFHS-5 found 21 per cent of women and 24 per cent of men are having hypertension marked by the blood pressure measurement of 140/90 or above.

When elevated blood pressure is accompanied by abnormal cholesterol and blood sugar levels, the damage to your arteries, kidneys, and heart accelerates exponentially. According to a study presented at the American Stroke Association's International Stroke Conference recently, hypertensive young people between the ages of 20 to 40 could experience brain problems in their midlife.

Last year, the World Health Organisation modified its blood

pressure control guideline, suggesting that a systolic pressure of 130 should be the threshold to start medication in people with a history of heart complications or other risk factors whereas for others such a threshold would be 140/90.

Fortunately, high blood pressure is easy to detect and treat. Blood Pressure can be kept under control in a healthy range simply by making lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, increasing activity, and eating more healthfully, say doctors.



## YOGA REMEDY

Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, Director of Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) tells you, "We have a range of yoga asanas, pranayama and meditation that help to open up the chest cavity, improves lung capacity and increases cardiopulmonary function, which lead to maintain physical activity for longer." According to him, some of the Yoga



asanas that can help in beating high blood pressure are: Tadasana without heel raise/ Katicakrasana/ Ushtrasana/ Gomukhasana/ Uttanmandukasana/ Bhujangasana/ Ardha halasana/ Shavasana / Yoga Nidra/ Abdominal Breathing (30 times)/ Nadi shodhan pranayama/ Sitali pranayama/ Bhramari pranayama and Dhyana.

# Three-layered healthcare system to aid common man

Prevention is better than cure. Its significance can be witnessed in the tri-layered healthcare mechanism introduced by the Governments. The mechanism encompasses Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs), Community Healthcare Centres (CHCs) and District Healthcare Centres (DHCs) after which big hospitals comes into play, whenever needed, says Gaurav Pandey

The objective of this mechanism is to ensure that larger number of ailments shall be diagnosed at the initial stage in rural pockets or small towns and effective medications may begin to uproot it.

The importance of PHCs is considerable as the locals receive medical aid the moment symptoms appear. Also, such Centres are responsible for spreading awareness about and bringing various government healthcare measures to the locals through Aanganvadi workers and Asha workers.

If one does not get cured at the PHCs, s/he is referred to the CHCs which has adequately equipped Diagnostic Laboratory as well. The consultations and investigations may help him to get fully cured. But if there is no respite, s/he may be sent to District Hospital and to higher referral hospitals like All

India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

It is quessential for every resident to understand the nuances and structure of this mechanism. Talking of private sector, a person visits a General Physician also known as Family Physician, usually an MBBS degree holder. In case of common diseases, a person gets cured there itself. There are Polyclinics where Specialists dealing with various body parts and related ailments are available and a patient may get synergized expert opinion of these Consultants in case of two-three ailments.

Then there are Nursing Homes where the patients can be admitted. It falls under primary healthcare. The bigger Nursing Homes equipped with Operation Theatre (OT) and Intensive Care Unit (ICU), they are considered as second-level or Secondary care Centres.

The big hospitals with more



The writer is an expert in health care management

than hundred beds, fully-equipped with latest machines, contemporary Modular Operation Theatres, ICU,

facilities of CT Scan, MRI, in-house pathology and Consultants related to every speciality are available fall under the category of Tertiary Care Hospitals.

The hospitals where Robotics Surgery, Proton Therapy, Heart Transplants, Lung Transplants and other advanced solutions are possible are known to be Fourth-level Healthcare Hospitals which are at the zenith in terms of providing medical solutions.

It may be true that these mechanisms and levels come into play once someone falls ill but it is important for all of us to be aware of these structures so that the illness can be diagnosed at the initial level through investigations and doctor's interventions and prescriptions and can be contained before it may cause serious damages.

In abroad, the cost of keeping every citizen healthy lies with the

Insurance Companies and the Governments. There exist Diagnostic Related Groups where annual medical tests are carried out so that contagious ailments can be contained in time and the burden of paying for cure and recovery may get lessened from the shoulders of the Insurance Company or Government.

Many Insurance Companies offer annual health check-ups to those who hold their mediclaim policies. The private hospitals also play their active part and offer significant rebates on various investigation packages.

The government-run and private hospitals organize free camps continually and the people in remote locations are investigated through mobile vans and people must take benefit of it without second thoughts as many serious ailments get diagnosed in time. More such drives are needed which is possible by effective Public Private People Model.

## BEYOND THE STETHOSCOPE

When not pursuing their profession, a breed of doctors prefer to wear different hats to keep themselves fit and centered. The HEALTH PIONEER tries to catch up with them every week.



## Doc's Iron Will For Iron Man

What started as a pastime activity in 2010—participating in the 5K category at the Airtel marathon—has now become a passionate hobby for this 48-year-old medico.

Dr. Hariprasad G, Additional Professor at Department of Biophysics, AIIMS, Delhi, has since then even successfully completed the Olympic Triathlon (1.5 Km swim; 40 km cycling; 10 km run) a few times in under three-and-a-half hours.

His thirst for a bigger challenge unquenched, he is now preparing for the Half-Iron Man Triathlon (1.9 km swim, 90 km cycling and a 21 km run) championship to be held this year-end at the Talkatora-SPM Swimming complex. In between this journey, Dr Hariprasad has graduated from a 5 km run to a 10 km and then half marathon and finally a 42 km Full marathon, which he comfortably does in four-and-a-half hours.

He has participated in several marathons including Mumbai, Standard Chartered Singapore, New Delhi and Omaha to name a few. The most recent one was the Hyderabad Marathon, which Dr Hariprasad recalls, was quite a challenge considering the number of steep flyovers in the city all along the route.

Hundreds of colorful medals from all these events and the many glittering gold medals decorate the walls of the living room of this clinician-scientist who along with his team are currently investigating the A-Z of Omicron virus.

The father of two sons who balances out work-family-friends-endurance training shares, "I mix-up of a lot of physical activities like walking, jogging, sprinting, swimming, cycling, stair climbing, yoga, core exercises, skipping to get the best out of my heart, mind and body."

Every event is a learning curve and the challenge only gets bigger and more significant with each passing year, says the doctor who has done his MBBS from a Karnataka Medical College, Hubli and later did his post-graduation MD and subsequently a PhD from AIIMS, Delhi. His inspirations are sports legends such as Phelps, Dressel, Ledecky, Djokovic, Federer, Nadal, and Kipchoge!

Of course, behind all these achievements is his rigorous efforts, a strong-will and most importantly the support of his family, particularly his better half Roopa, a doctor herself who is into cervical cancer prevention at National Institute for Cancer Prevention and Research, Noida. She doubles up as his nutritionist and a personal chef, and ensures he gets the right blend of food in the weeks leading up to the endurance event, during the race and post-event. As a general rule he usually consumes wholesome unprocessed food cooked at home and avoids fast-packaged foods. Even delicacies be it Pani puri, dosas, tacos, pasta, pan cakes, waffles and desserts are given a yummy but healthy twist at Dr Roopa's kitchen, and it is this that helps him in 'the long run,' he chuckles.

"We always have a choice and end up with the easier one. I decided to change that," the doctor quips, adding that "Don't give up on your dreams, because you have no idea what all you are capable of."

(Medicos may write to us at [healthp100@gmail.com](mailto:healthp100@gmail.com))

## NEWS BRIEFS

### CUT DOWN BAD MICROBES

Healthy adults who eat a diverse diet, with at least 8-10 grams of soluble fibre such as grains, beans, lentils, nuts and some fruits and vegetables daily, have fewer antibiotic-resistant microbes in their guts, according to a study by Agricultural Research Service scientists and their colleagues in mBio.

### 'AYURVEDA AAHARA' ON THE PLATTER

The Union Ministry of Ayush and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), India's apex body for food regulation has formulated regulations of safety and quality standards for food products under 'Ayurveda Aahara' category. This comprehensive initiative will ensure manufacturing of quality Ayurveda food products and help in expanding the international market for Make-In-India products.

### NEW THERAPY FOR BREAST CANCER

The world's first subcutaneous therapy for breast cancer that is effective and reduces treatment time by 90 per cent has been launched in India, Roche Pharma said recently. The treatment by Roche called PHESGO is the first ever fixed dose formulation in oncology that combines two monoclonal antibodies: Perjeta (pertuzumab) and Herceptin (trastuzumab) with hyaluronidase. It is administered via an under the skin injection in combination with intravenous (IV) chemotherapy for the treatment of early and metastatic HER2-positive breast cancer.

### 'ONE STEP' PORTAL FOR HEALTH INFO AT INDIAN EMBASSIES

Soon facilitation centres at Indian embassies across the world will be set up for people wanting to travel to India for treatment, said Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya while addressing a roundtable conference with senior IFS officers on 'Building Brand India' in Delhi.

Don't ever doubt  
yourselves or waste a  
second of your life.  
It's too short, and  
you're too special.  
— Ariana Grande



There is a wide recognition that the creation of the IAS was one of the cardinal follies of the wise. It is irrelevant to the people at large but it has made itself hugely useful to the political class, writes  
MANOJE NATH

# HAS THE COUNTRY FAILED THE IAS?

Officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) who demonstrate the capability to make money from the system and make it fast, inevitably endear themselves to people in power. So, whatever the outcome of the ongoing investigation against Jharkhand Mines and Industry secretary Pooja Singhal, IAS, it will not interfere with the chances of her appointment as Chief Secretary of Jharkhand, when her time comes. In its brief history of twenty years as a separate state, Jharkhand has honoured three such IAS officers by appointing them as Chief Secretaries. Among officers so appointed was a gentleman who was facing trial in two cases related to financial irregularities in purchase of fertilizer. Another one had spent many months in jail on charges of forcing entrepreneurs to donate money to his NGOs and finally won a reprieve from the Supreme Court. A third officer who was convicted in an animal husbandry case, and perhaps died in jail, had two stints as chief secretary of Jharkhand. Jharkhand's case may be an exception, but in popular imagination IAS officers can make money not only with impunity but with honour.

There are two standard explanations for the steady diminution of the stature and prestige of the IAS. The first consists of playing down the well-founded criticisms of servility and capitulation, corruption and chicanery. Even though sometimes the merit of the criticism is granted, its significant contribution to the polity and society is dwelt upon at great length; distortions and aberrations that may have crept in are laid at the door of the many extenuating circumstances.

If the IAS has failed it is because the country has failed (or is failing at an accelerated rate). is only the extreme formulation of such an approach. The other strategy is to deflect and devalue - the criticism by outwitting and silencing the critic with a more vehement self-critical diatribe, an anguished self-loathing of their own, as if the act of advertising could, in itself, absolve the service of all the sins that were being advertised.

The IAS, according to one view, requires a particular kind of society to function to its full potential, something like the idylls of Nehruvian era. The post-Independence leaders and influencers like Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Ambedkar, Madan Mohan Malviya, T T Krishnamachari, Acharya Kripalani, Jyoti Basu, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Jaiprakash Narayan (to mention just a handful); industrialists like JRD Tata, Jammalal Bajaj, Dinshaw Petit and GD Birla; editors like Desmond Doig, Arun Shourie, Sunanda K Dattaray, Kushwant Singh, Frank Moraes and Russi Karanjia have been mostly replaced by pygmies and carpet baggers. These people may win elections, make billion of dollars in one year or run up huge TRP ratings, but they are incapable of promoting public values or morals, or establishing ethical corporate standards, or writing an editorial (let alone investigating a story).

But that is hardly the case. The IAS has not only been quick to limber up to the changed political realities, it has scripted an even more indispensable role for itself in the era of "pygmies and carpetbaggers."

Politics, to appropriate Balzac's remark, has become like, "Soldiering, ... chiefly a finan-



Jharkhand Mines and Industry Secretary Pooja Singhal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

cial undertaking, you need gold in order to do battle, and you need to do battle in order to get gold." Some governments are (were) headed by leaders from newly emergent political classes for whom English was not the language of choice, who did not feel constrained by rules, regulations etc and were quite upfront about their intentions to abuse their office for personal gains.

The longevity of governments challenged the myths that the IAS had forged out of isolated life stories of a young collector telling off a CM,

THE IAS HAS NOT ONLY BEEN QUICK TO LIMBER UP TO THE CHANGED POLITICAL REALITIES, IT HAS SCRIPTED AN EVEN MORE INDISPENSABLE ROLE FOR ITSELF IN THE ERA OF "PYGMIES AND CARPETBAGGERS."

a chief secretary recording his dissent in days long gone by, myths that made them intelligible to themselves, provided them with their reassurance during times of self-doubt. Governments were there to stay; they were here today, they were going to be here tomorrow. How long could they wait out in the cold?

Though supposed to be unaligned, personally free and subject to the executive authority only within a defined area, they choose to be incorporated in the apparatus of political power. Commitment to rule based governance, are pragmatically abandoned by such officers. They are for the government, the government is for them.

An interesting example from marine biology will serve as an apt metaphor. In the Bay of Naples, a common sea slug medusa, and a snail, start off as independent organisms but on close encounter become conjoined in such a manner that both the jellyfish and the snail shed off a lot of themselves. A small portion of the snail gets permanently affixed to the ventral surface near the mouth of the jellyfish to become one single organism. They get along nicely in a symbiotic arrangement, exploiting each other's biological capabilities and yet retain their specific otherness.

A clutch of trusted officers-the drastically edited version of service, the cadre may have hundreds of officers, in an arrangement

reminiscent of the medusa and the snail, handle the core sectors of the governments as also the entire range of political purpose. The others are kept in a state of idle splendour. But like an Englishman the IAS is "never at a loss for an effective moral attitude ... you will never find ... them in the wrong." It is responsible for the marginalisation of its own service and yet persists with the complaint of political interference.

There is a wide recognition that the creation of the IAS was one of the cardinal follies of the wise. It is irrelevant to the people at large but it has made itself hugely useful to the political class. In an unusual consensus, cutting across their ideological divide, they have found them to be even more valuable after retirement than they are in service. As heads of all the accountability institutions, all those roadblocks to arbitrary exercise of executive power, they render them defunct. In many states you can find officers recruited in the 60s, 70s, 80s making themselves useful to their political masters in a myriad ways. To stand an old saying on its head, "the dead lion is even more valuable than the living donkey."

The alliance of these two major institutions has significantly altered the balance of power much to the detriment of democracy.

Manoje Nath is a retired Government servant.

# Sinn Fein a game changer in Northern Ireland

The Sinn Fein's historic win in the Assembly election is signaling a much-awaited change in the power corridors in Northern Ireland. It is the beginning of a new era. The old guards (Democratic Unionist Party) were forced to give way to a new political dispensation (Sinn Fein) in last week's election. Once again what has come to the forefront is that for long the Sinn Fein has been linked to the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a paramilitary group that used violent tactics to free Northern Ireland from British control. Once it used to be the Catholics vs the Protestants that led to a series of violence for decades in Northern Ireland. The IRA is a Catholic and nationalist organisation that conducted an armed insurgency against the state for a united independent Ireland whereas the DUP mainly evolved from Protestant Unionist Party that itself came out of the Ulster Protestant Action Movement.

This election has spear-headed a new debate, a new narrative and a new future in this part of the UK. The total number of seats in the Assembly is 90, but constituencies are only 18. The Sinn Fein won 27, DUP 25, Alliance Party 17, Ulster Unionist Party 9, Social Democratic and Labour Party 8, and the rest of the smaller parties and independents one each.

In the 2017 election, the DUP won 28 seats and Sinn Fein 27. The margin of victory between the two main rival parties was very narrow. In 2017, the Social Democratic and Labour Party won 12 seats, the Ulster Unionist Party 10, the Alliance Party 8, the Green Party 2, while the People Before Profit and Traditional Unionist Voice had one seat each.

What does this victory of Sinn Fein mean for Northern Ireland? It means a lot for the party as it has won a majority for the first time in the Assembly election. And for the DUP, it is a loss of face. The Sinn Fein has received the most first preference votes in

the election. The party said that the Brexit move unleashed by the Boris Johnson Government in Britain accelerated the debate on reunification with the EU member Ireland because most of the Northern Irish people voted to remain with the Union. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 recognises the right of the people on the island of Ireland to reunify if border polls in Ireland and Northern Ireland support it. Whereas the existing British law says that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland should order a vote if it appears likely that a majority of voters want a united Ireland but is unclear on how that should be decided. However, the Irish Government must also agree to the same.

Michelle O'Neill, the First Minister of the Northern Ireland Government, is the first nationalist politician to occupy that position since its creation. During the election, the DUP and the Sinn Fein were battling hard for the top post because it offers an entitlement to nominate the next First Minister. But it must be noted here that the office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister is an equal office with joint powers in Northern Ireland. But what has been termed as symbolically important is the allocation of the titles.

Why was it so important for the DUP to win the Assembly election in 2022? It was indeed crucial for the DUP to win the election as it has been the most dominant and largest political party since the formation of Northern Ireland in 1921 as a Protestant majority province. Earlier the Assembly was known as the Stormont Parliament in the name of the Stormont Estate in East Belfast where the building is located. Generally, the Stormont is the commonly used name to refer to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

What is Sinn Fein all about? Why is its win so significant for Northern Ireland? The Irish phrase "Sinn Fein"



From left, Sinn Fein's John Finucane, deputy leader Michelle O'Neill, party leader Mary Lou McDonald, and Conor Murphy speak to the media at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast, on May 9

refers to "We Ourselves" or "Ourselves". The party was formed by Arthur Griffith in 1905 when the very ideology of Sinn Fein was brought into practice. Originally Griffith was the leader of the Cumannann Gaedheal i.e. "Party of the Irish". But the current form of Sinn Fein emerged only in the 1970s. The policy of Sinn Fein enunciated by Griffith highlighted passive resistance to the British, non-payment of taxes, the formation of an Irish ruling council and independent law courts.

Until the rise of the Easter Rebellion or Easter Rising in the month of April (24-29) 1916 in Dublin by the Irish republicans, the Sinn Fein was not in the limelight around the world. This rising was all but to challenge the colonial rule of Britain over Ireland and to establish an independent Irish Republic.

It was an armed insurrection launched for the first time during the Irish revolutionary period. After this rebellion, the Sinn Fein became the rallying point for a new brand of

ultranationalist sentiment which is also known as "Republicanism". The fury of the nationalists could well be gauged from the historic proclamation of the Republic published in 1916. The proclamation known as the "The Provisional Government of the Irish Republic to the People of Ireland" clearly says: "Irishman and Irishwomen, in the name of God, and of the dead generations, from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom... We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies to be sovereign and inalienable..." This clearly hints that the Irish people wanted to come out of the colonial yoke of British imperialism when the latter was fighting the First World War in Europe.

Sinn Fein's basic objective is to unite all the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland and 6 counties of Northern Ireland under the umbrella of a

Democratic Socialist Irish Republic. For many years, this part of Ireland had the "Troubles" or better known as "Northern Ireland Conflict" that ravaged the land from 1968 to 1998. It was clearly a bloody flight between the Catholic and the Protestant community of Northern Ireland about their relationship with Britain.

Against this background, the historic win of the Sinn Fein is to be taken seriously by the people of Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and of course by Britain. Now the political situation in Northern Ireland has become fragile. It seems the unionist DUP will not join the new government until the post-Brexit custom arrangements.

The Sinn Fein, the single largest party, now has the right to occupy the post of the First Minister. But a functioning Executive cannot be established without the DUP taking the role of the Deputy Minister in the new government. As per the constitutional mandate of Northern Ireland, the DUP

has to take the required role of the Deputy in the power sharing agreement. If this power sharing does not take place, it could trigger a constitutional crisis in Northern Ireland.

After the withdrawal of Britain from the 28-member European Union (EU) in 2020, the relationship between the UK and Northern Ireland and between the EU and Northern Ireland has come into question. And to set it right, what has emerged is known as the famous Northern Ireland Protocol or post-Brexit Customs Arrangement Deal. Under the protocol, checks are needed on goods coming into Northern Ireland from the UK. Since it came into force from the beginning of the 2021 when Britain formally left the EU, the protocol became a bone of contention between the UK and the EU.

Many wonder why the Unionists are against the deal. The Unionist parties are opposed to the protocol as to them placing physical border across the Irish Sea absolutely undermines the longstanding

union they advocate between Northern Ireland and the UK. Paul Givan of the DUP in fact resigned over this matter as the First Minister of Northern Ireland in February. Just before the Assembly election, in a public debate Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, the leader of the DUP, made it clear that his party may not take part in the new government unless the outstanding issues around the protocol are solved amicably.

Today, leaders like Donaldson have voiced concerns about a decisive action on the protocol at the earliest. Indeed, this protocol is very necessary as the border is too sensitive an issue which can't be ignored.

One must flash back on the fragile history of Northern Ireland and how the past peace efforts came after decades of armed fighting by the IRA against the UK. And clearly, the agreements to bring back peace to this part of the UK also included the removal of visible signs of border. Now, if any physical border is erected between Northern Ireland and Britain, this could rightly threaten the historic peace deal known as the Good Friday Agreement or the 1998 Northern Ireland Peace Deal.

It is very clear that Sinn Fein's victory will not push for the union of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland, but it has simply started the process. Britain's future measures towards this part of its territory may be more cautious in the days to come. Politically speaking, the Sinn Fein has to go a long way to muster a clear majority as the roots of the DUP are still very solid in many areas across the island.

(Dr Makhan Saikia has taught political science and international relations for over a decade in institutions of national and international repute after specialisation in globalisation and governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He is the chief editor of the Journal of Global Studies, an international research journal)

It is very clear that Sinn Fein's victory will not push for the union of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland at once, but it has started the process. Britain's future measures towards this part of its territory may be more cautious in the days to come. Politically speaking, the Sinn Fein has to go a long way to muster a clear majority as the roots of the DUP are still very solid in many areas across the island



MAKHAN SAIKIA

## PERSPECTIVE

# Islam and nation-state: Are they compatible?

Many scholars claim that there is no inherent issue whether textual or practice, within Islam that makes it incompatible with the nation-state system or even democracy. The case of liberal democracy is a separate category as many argue that Islam is inherently opposed to such ideas



PREM ANAND MISHRA

Any discussion on the compatibility between Islam as a faith and the idea of the nation-state as a political, social and economic reality has been exhausted in the hegemonic Islam and western modernity debate. The text and practice distinction has been a historical reality in Muslim societies, and it remained equally significant with the rise of the nation-state system. The question of the separation between religion and politics has been a different historical reality in the pre-scientific world.

The religious experiences among all faiths and societies have a different trajectory. However, there has been a homogenised notion of such division in Islam. The core vision of Islam doesn't make any distinction between sacred and secular, and political and temporal. The argument is that politics can't be separated from Islam as its core value.

Propagators of such ideas were not just orientalists but have been equally among Muslim scholars. The division between *din* (religion) and the *dawla* (state) has been a usual practice in Muslim societies since its origin, notably after Islam emerged as an organised form of life and the emergence of Islamic empires. But the question remains "why is it a contested concept, and are they compatible?"

The nation-state system is a few centuries old idea born in modern Europe. The nation-state system came to Muslim societies only in the 20th century, under two separate circumstances: the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rubric of European colonialism.

The gaze of orientalism has been a central episteme in creating a sustained knowledge power discourse over western understanding of Islam and thus the idea of the Muslim world and idea of Islam has been categorised as a singular category. There is a vast generalisation over the accordance given to Islam and nation-state compatibility.

With failing democracies and the rising number of failing states in the current world system, and the authoritarian structure in the majority of Muslim states, there is a discussion whether Islam and nation-state are compatible.

### Religion and politics: An Islamic context

The boundaries of religion have always crossed the boundaries of politics and vice-versa, both in practice and in the language of Muslim empires. James Piscatori argues that Islam and the nation-states debate has been broadly discussed under two schools of thought: Conformists and non-conformists.

The non-conformists' refutation is based on the thrust that comes directly from the Quran, shaping the whole human sphere of life; spiritual, physical, individual, social, economic and political through the divine law called Shariah. The non-conformists' holy will is supreme, and God's sovereignty doesn't allow the human will to trespass God's divine decree.

After all, the human will is the core idea of the nation-state system, which defines the whole sphere of life.

Therefore, God's decree under the command of the

Quran and Shariah would decide the do's and don'ts for humans, which is insignificant in the nation-states system. In this regard, the case of Saudi Arabia is significant. The Saudi Arabian case is essential for two critical reasons: It's where Islam finds its origin, and for Muslims worldwide, it's the heart of Islam.

And secondly, the Saudi State's behaviour since the state's formation in 1932 under the command of the King has been an institutionalised form that foretells the contemporary image of Islam in Saudi Arabia. This is to understand the making of an institutionalised form of Islam or official Islam as many categories in Saudi Arabia under the aegis of the nation-state system.

This makes the case further critical to know how the state has dominated this space despite being considered the most conservative that follows a strict religious command in controlling the Saudi society, its religiosity and the everydayness of life.

In short, Saudi Arabia defies the core nature of the conformists' view, and therefore, the question of legitimacy needs serious analysis. The idea that despite being the most conservative country in the world that follows the Wahhabi brand of Islam, Saudi has managed to create a dominant space for the idea of the nation-state.

Therefore, the core assumption of an Islamic state is that authority, regardless of the status of exercising power over the subjects, is legitimate according to the Islamic juridical theory if it follows divine sources like the Quran and

Sunnah.

In that scenario, can a Muslim majority state necessarily become an Islamic state, or it can only become genuinely Islamic only by applying the Quran and Sunnah and Shariah laws in the realm of the socio-political feature of the nation as a basic constitution of the country?

The two critical elements of the Islamic state are command (*amr*) and prohibition (*nahy*). However, the juridical sphere of the state follows the command and prohibition based on jurisprudential (*fiqh*) traditions based on the interpretations of the divine command of the Quran and sayings of the prophet.

Islamic philosophical/theological and legal enquiry creates a fundamental difference in the contested aspect of *fiqh* traditions that have been divided among four schools in Sunni Islam (Hanafi, Shafii, Maliki and Hanbali).

On the issue of Shariah, the vital principle for an Islamic State has four primary dimensions: First, enforcing ordinances of Shariah.

Second, for an administrative position, any stipulation of Shariah is unacceptable. Third, a properly constituted Islamic government is a Muslim's religious duty. People's consent is a part of forming an ISIS; fourth, the government comes into existence based on the people's free choice of the Quranic expression, "from among you."

"As Muhammad Asad helps in understanding these significant distinctions in the rulings of Shariah based on *Fard* (obligatory-omission of which is a sin) and *Mubah*

(allowed) omission of which doesn't make a man sinner.

*Mandub* (recommended) has merit in it, and the deletion doesn't lead to sin. *Makruh*: Undesirable but committed acts can't be a sin. *Mutlaq*: Neither meritorious nor sinful. This significance of the diversity of ruling Shariah directs the Muslims to accept the divine law (Shariah) and an open road (*Minhaj*) where *ijtihad* comes as a free enquiry despite the place for Shariah as divine law is the basis of the Islamic state system for fulfilling all spheres of life.

The practice, however, through *fiqh* rulings, is based on Qiyas. The room for the state to create its dominance comes from *fiqh* traditions in the absence of no strict divine commands.

The source of the state sovereignty in an Islamic State as a political framework for Muslim unity and cooperation and means for equity and justice is based on three guiding principles: Injunctions of the Quran and obey God, obey the Apostle and those in authority.

The injunctions, "He who follows me, obeys God; and he who disobeys me disobeys God. And he who heeds the Amir (head of the state) observes me, and he violates the Amir and disregards me."

Therefore, a Muslim, nature wise and superior ineligibility is a qualification under Shariah for the head of the state. In this sphere of a philosophical-technological and legal aspect, the Saudi state commands its legitimacy and creates a space for an official and institutionalised form of Islam.

### Understanding official Islam and its multivariate dimensions

Despite the structural differences, the genealogy of Muslim societies and the historical processes overwhelmingly have placed Islam as an ideology.

This whole idea of putting Islam as an ideology is the root of the concept of Dar-ul Islam (House of Islam) and Dar-ul Harb (House of war) and the violent form of *jihad* as a language of the Islamic empires more than a Quranic command for Muslims against non-Muslims.

This has been a galvanising force for Muslims on the question of brotherhood and social justice. Second, the idea is Islam needs to be politicised. This has been a core factor of Islamic revivalism. The Islamic movement in the name of pan-Islamism started during the end of the Ottoman empire and the rise of the western intervention of colonial enterprise in the heart of the Muslim world.

This notion reached its more politicised form after the height of the Muslim Brotherhood and found a revolutionary expression in the 1979 Iranian revolution. The argument here is that politics in Islamic colleges lag in institutional development because Islam lacks an organised priesthood.

This has had two consequences. One is that there was no effort of reformation in Islam in the absence of institutional efficiency and the second consequence is that the *ulama* or clergies were never established sufficiently to wield real power and lacked the ide-

ology and organisational characteristics.

It might be assumed therefore the future stability of Saudi Arabia may well depend on how the government balances demands for political participation and the traditional concentration of power within the Saudi elite. On the ideological factor, a tendency in orientalist tradition is that Islam is antithetical to modernisation.

If the 1950s and the 1960s were dominated by Arab nationalism, the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the rise of "Islamic fundamentalism," challenging secular ideologies and Muslim governments by appealing to religious dogma, symbols, and rhetoric.

Democracies are failing across the world under the reign of authoritarianism, but no other religious group receives so much attention on the question of compatibility as Islam.

Hence, the final point that many scholars offer is that there is no inherent issue whether textual or practice, within Islam that makes it incompatible with the nation-state system or even democracy.

The case of liberal democracy is a separate category as many argue that Islam is inherently opposed to such ideas. Still, even Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Algeria have classic compatibility cases between Islam nation-state and their multiple forms of expression, including constitutional democracy.

(The writer is PhD from Centre for West Asian Studies, JNU, New Delhi, and is a former journalist)

# Severe heatwave to worsen in Delhi

IMD has warned that the mercury may soar to 46-47 degrees Celsius



**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

A heatwave spell scorching Delhi for the last two days is predicted to worsen today, with the India Meteorological Department or IMD issuing an 'orange' alert, warning that the mercury may soar to 46-47 degrees Celsius in parts of the city. The maximum temperature at the Safdarjung Observatory, Delhi's base station, is predicted to settle at 44 degrees Celsius as against 42.5 degrees Celsius on Friday. Delhi on Friday saw the mercury rise to 46.1 degrees Celsius at Najafgarh. The weather stations at Jafarpur and Mungeshpur had recorded maximum temperatures of 45.6 degrees Celsius and 45.4 degrees Celsius, respectively, six notches above normal for this time of the year. Delhi's Pitampura also reeled under heatwave conditions, recording a maximum temperature of 44.7 degrees Celsius. A 'yellow' alert has been issued to caution people about a heatwave on Sunday. The IMD uses four colour codes for weather warnings - green (no action needed), yellow (watch and stay

updated), orange (be prepared) and red (take action). Cloudy skies and thunder may provide some relief from the intense heat next week. This is the fifth heatwave - one in March and three in April - in the capital this summer season. With scanty rains owing to feeble western disturbances, Delhi had recorded its second hottest April this year since 1951 with a monthly average maximum temperature of 40.2 degrees Celsius. A heatwave at the month-end had sent the mercury soaring to 46 and 47 degrees Celsius in several parts of the city. The capital got a miniscule 0.3 mm of rainfall in April against a monthly average of 12.2 mm. March saw nil rainfall against a normal of 15.9 mm. The IMD had predicted above normal temperatures in May. A heatwave is declared when the maximum temperature is over 40 degrees Celsius and at least 4.5 degrees above normal. A severe heatwave is declared if the departure from normal temperature is more than 6.4 notches, according to the IMD.

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## UP cyber cops nab three for pan-India 'franchise fraud'



The Cyber Crime wing of Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested three men, allegedly involved in duping people online across the country on the pretext of providing franchises of some popular commercial brands. Investigation into the gang's criminal antecedents revealed that it made fake websites of popular consumer retail chains, dairy products, automobile companies and even central government schemes for farmers to dupe people, Cyber Crime's Superintendent of Police Triveni Singh said. The trio was arrested on Friday following a case lodged in Prayagraj where the complainant had alleged fraud of Rs 17 lakh. The complainant was tricked into paying the money in return for the franchise of consumer retail chain Easyday, Singh told PTI. The gang has similarly duped people in the name of big companies like Royal Enfield, Bajaj Finance, Easyday, PM Kusum Yojna etc and are suspected to have conned thousands of people across the country. We are working on more cases linked to this gang and expecting more victims duped by it to approach the police, the officer said. The accused have been identified as Vinay Kumar alias Ashok Singh, 33, Abhishek Sharma, 27, and Ratnesh Bharti, 29. Vinay worked as the main operator while Abhishek developed the websites for the gang, he said. On the modus operandi of the criminals, Singh said the police investigation has revealed that this gang is one of several such groups of cyber cheats which are now operating from Bihar's Nalanda and nearby areas. They are notorious online criminals who have organised their work very smartly. They operate from Bihar, have got mobile phone sim cards from West Bengal, and got fake websites made in Madhya Pradesh. For transaction of the duped money, they used bank accounts which were not in their names, he said. As per our investigations till now, they have duped people from Tamil Nadu and Kerala in south India to people in Jammu and Kashmir in the north. They have several victims in states like UP, MP, Bihar and Rajasthan. Legal action is being taken against them, he added. The Cyber Crime Department, meanwhile, urged people to be cautious during online transactions and social media activities to avoid financial fraud or any other hassles.

## Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed elected UAE President

The UAE's long-time de facto ruler Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was elected as president on Saturday, official media said, a day after the death of former leader Sheikh Khalifa. Sheikh Mohamed was elected by the Federal Supreme Council, WAM news agency said, becoming the ruler of the oil-rich country founded by his father in 1971. Sheikh Mohamed, often known as 'MBZ', met members of the Federal Supreme Council, made up of rulers of the UAE's seven emirates, as the oil-rich country enters a period of mourning for his half-brother Sheikh Khalifa. His ascension, which was widely expected, formalises his position as leader of the desert state of 10 million after years of calling the shots while Sheikh Khalifa was sidelined by poor health. Under his low-key direction, the United Arab Emirates has put a man in space, sent a probe to Mars and opened its first nuclear reactor, while using its oil-funded clout to develop a more assertive foreign policy. Closely allied with Saudi Arabia, it has emerged as a leader of a reshaped Middle East since the retreat of traditional powers and the reduced involvement of the United States, forging ties with Israel and joining a war against Iran-backed militants in Yemen.



## Man beheads uncle, walks on street with severed head



A man allegedly beheaded his 60-year-old maternal uncle over black magic suspicion and walked around two kilometers with his severed head and axe in hands in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh before being arrested by the police, an official said on Saturday. The incident occurred on Friday in Karimati village located in the jurisdiction of Jamodi police station, around 10 kms from the district headquarters, he said, adding that the 26-year-old accused suspected his uncle to be creating problems for him by performing black magic on him. Jamodi police station in-charge Sheshmani Mishra said that the accused, Lalbahadur Gaud, went to his maternal uncle Maksudan Singh Gaud's house on Friday and hit him on the neck with an axe following an argument. "The attack was so intense that his uncle's head got severed from the body," he said. Mishra said that after the killing, the accused started walking towards the police station by holding the severed head and the axe in his hands, but the cops arrested him midway after being alerted.



## India bans wheat exports 2 days after announcing massive trade goal

India has banned wheat exports with immediate effect as part of its steps to control the spike in prices at home. Only export shipments for which letters of credit have been issued on or before yesterday's notification will be allowed, the government said. Besides, the government will allow exports on requests from other countries, the notification issued by Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said. The notification said that the government had taken the decision "in order to manage the overall food security of the country and to support the needs of the neighbouring and other vulnerable countries". Global buyers had been banking on India - the world's second largest wheat producer after China - for supplies after exports from the Black Sea region dropped since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in late February. The move to ban wheat exports comes after huge crop loss due to a heatwave in March. The government is also under pressure to rein in inflation that surged to 7.79 per cent in April. Also, the move is a u-turn two days after the government announced its plans for a big export push. "The Centre will send trade delegations to Morocco, Tunisia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Turkey, Algeria and Lebanon for exploring possibilities of boosting wheat exports from India. India has set a target of a record 10 million tonnes of wheat in the 2022-23 amid rising global demand for the grain globally," a government statement said Thursday. "There is a rise in the demand for Indian wheat in the global market, farmers,

traders and exporters have been advised to follow all the quality norms of importing countries so that India emerges as a reliable supplier of wheat globally. "We are extending our support to all the stakeholders in the wheat exports value chain for boosting shipment from the country," M Angamuthu, Chairman, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Exports Development Authority, said at a sensitisation meeting on wheat exports in Karnal, Haryana, according to the government release. Nuking Pakistan Better Than Giving Power To Thieves: Imran Khan Islamabad: Issuing a confounding statement, former Prime Minister Imran Khan said that "dropping an atomic bomb would have been better than handing over the helm to the thieves". Khan made these remarks while interacting with reporters on Friday at his Banigala residence, according to The News international. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman also said that he was shocked to see the "thieves" being foisted on the country, adding that dropping an atomic

bomb would have been better than handing over the helm to these people. According to The News International, Khan said those powerful people who would tell him the tales of corruption of the "previous rulers" started advising him to focus on his government's performance instead of the graft charges against others. He further said that the thieves brought into power destroyed every institution and the judicial system, asking now which government official would probe the cases of "these criminals". Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that Imran Khan is "poisoning" the minds of the people of Pakistan with his speeches targeting state institutions. "The nation has been divided as Khan repeatedly called (the then-Opposition and now government) thieves and dacoits," Shehbaz had said during the first regular session of the National Assembly since the new government's formation. The PTI chairman had warned Shehbaz Sharif's government that no power could stop them from entering the federal capital during the long march to be held on May 20.