

ANALYSIS 7
UNDER IBC, PROTECTING
MINORITY SHAREHOLDERS

MONEY 8
KIRIT PANEL LIKELY TO SUGGEST PRICE
CAP FOR ONGC GAS

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IND VS NZ: RAIN PLAYS
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HYDERABAD, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



AISHWARYA RAJ'S
POWERFUL
CHARACTER IN
SASANASABHA

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MODI STADIUM GETS GUINNESS RECORD FOR HIGHEST T20 ATTENDANCE: BCCI

The Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad has entered the Guinness Book of World Records for the maximum spectator attendance during the 2022 IPL final, BCCI secretary Jay Shah said on Sunday. Earlier known as Gujarat Cricket Association (GCA) Stadium, Motera the stadium has a capacity of 110,000 which is nearly 10,000 more than Melbourne Cricket Ground with an official capacity of 100,024. "Extremely delighted & proud to receive the Guinness World Record for the largest attendance at a T20 match when 101,566 people witnessed the epic. IPL final at @GCAMotera's magnificent Narendra Modi Stadium on 29 May 2022. A big thanks to our fans for making this possible," Shah tweeted.

MINOR ABANDONS HER NEWBORN ON VACANT PLOT

A 21-year-old youth was booked for allegedly sexually abusing his minor cousin for around 11 months after she delivered a child in a school bathroom and abandoned the newborn in a vacant plot of land, police said on Sunday. The infant was admitted to a hospital and was stated to be in critical condition, they said. The minor rape survivor was undergoing treatment and her health condition has improved, the principal medical officer of Bundi district hospital, Naresh Pal Singh, said. Within 4-5 hours of recovery of the newborn baby on Saturday morning, the police traced the minor rape survivor, Bundi Superintendent of Police Jai Yadav said.

MEMBERS OF INDIAN DIASPORA PROTEST OUTSIDE PAKISTANI CONSULATE

Several members of the Indian diaspora protested outside the Pakistani Consulate here on the 14th anniversary of the Mumbai terror attacks, demanding that perpetrators of the dastardly attack be brought to justice. Raising chants of Vande Mataram and Bharat Mata ki Jai, the people held placards that read Mumbai 26/11. We Won't Forgive. We Won't Forget and #SanctionPakistan. They also had a digital van parked outside the Consulate that flashed images of 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed and terrorist Ajmal Kasab as well as images of a burning Taj hotel in Mumbai when terrorists attacked the landmark building.

PT USHA SET TO GET ELECTED AS IOA CHIEF UNOPPOSED

The legendary PT Usha is set to become the first woman president of Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as she emerged as the lone candidate for the top post for the December 10 elections. The 58-year-old Usha, a multiple Asian Games gold medalists and a fourth-place finisher in the 1984 Olympics 400m hurdles final, filed her nomination papers for the top job on Sunday, along with 14 others from her team for the various posts. The deadline to file nomination papers for the IOA elections ended on Sunday. IOA elections returning officer Umesh Sinha did not receive any nominations on Friday and Saturday but 24 candidates filed nominations for various posts on Sunday.

‘G20 presidency big opportunity for India’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As India readies to assume the presidency of the "powerful" G20, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the country should focus on global good during its term and asserted that it has solutions to the challenges related to peace, unity, environment and sustainable development.

India will officially assume the G20 presidency from the current chair Indonesia on December 1.

Noting that assuming G20 presidency is a "big opportunity" for India, Modi said the theme that India has given is 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' which shows its commitment to 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (world is one family). "The G20 has a partnership comprising two-thirds of the world's

population, three-fourths of world trade, and 85 per cent of world GDP. You can imagine India is going to preside over such a big group, such a powerful group, from December 1," he said during his monthly Mann Ki Baat radio programme.

"What a great opportunity has come for India, for every Indian! This becomes even more special because India was awarded this responsibility during Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal (75th year of India's Independence)," the prime minister said.

The presidency of the G-20 has arrived as a big opportunity for India and it has to make full use of this opportunity and focus on global good and welfare of the world.



Explore new ways of progress

■ Govt machinery must coordinate operations: KCR



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said that if the government machinery coordinates operations it will speed up social development and make people join hands with the government.

KCR said that the progress achieved in self-rule as a result of the Telangana movement is proof of the success of collective efforts.

"We should not stop with what we have achieved and must think bigger," the CM said.

The Chief Minister reiterated that government officials should think

"Progress achieved in self-rule as a result of the Telangana movement is proof of the success of collective efforts. We should not stop with what we have achieved and must think bigger."

creatively to bring about qualitative improvement in the lives of people.

"Everybody works in a routine manner but what matters is working better. Think how much better you can do tomorrow. What is important is how scientifically you work. Only then can we grow. Ways should

be explored to solve public problems from time to time in innovative ways. For that, all departments must coordinate operations," KCR told officials.

The Chief Minister was addressing a high-level meeting at the Pragathi Bhawan on Sunday to review development projects undertaken by the Municipal Department across the state, along with improvements in the infrastructure of Nizamabad.

2

KCR to visit Yadadri Thermal Power Plant today

Finish projects on war-footing

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao made it clear that the development of Nizamabad city should be made more vibrant. KCR said that development projects should be completed as planned in two and a half months and that he will inspect the works. The Chief Minister asked local MLA Ganesh Bigala to make sure that development projects in Nizamabad are executed in coordination with the departments of Panchayat Raj, Roads and Buildings, Municipal Department and others. The CM clarified that there is no shortage of funds for developing Nizamabad. In addition to already released funds, KCR ordered the Finance Secretary to release more funds for the development of Nizamabad.

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BJP nothing but a bubble: Minister

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP is nothing but a bubble in Telangana and the Congress will disappear soon in TS, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Cinematography Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav said. He added that the pink flag will fly in Hyderabad for the next 20 years.

Talasani questioned IT officials who raided Minister Malla Reddy's house how they could confiscate his phone. Even though Malla Reddy's son was in hospital the IT officials did not leave.

Talasani said that the BJP has a chance now but tomorrow it will be the turn of the BRS. "Imagine what the situation would be like if 60 lakh BRS activists attack New Delhi," Talasani said threatening the BJP.

Addressing a general body meeting of the TRS Hyderabad district unit at the Telangana Bhavan on Sunday, Talasani said that Hyderabad is the centre of the TRS. The TRS government has launched many welfare and development programmes.

2

Use 10% of Hyd revenue to develop city: Kishan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy has demanded that the TRS government should spend at least 10 per cent of the revenue from Hyderabad for the city's development.

Kishan said that 80 per cent of the state's revenue has been coming from Hyderabad city, but the GHMC, Water Works and other departments have been facing financial problems.

He said that GHMC contractors have been staging dharnas demanding that the government should pay their bills. He said that there is a need for the state government to spend money to solve the problems of Hyderabad city.

2

‘No I-T raids if BRS comes to power’

People can earn any amount of money: Malla Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

There is good news for taxpayers across the nation. Telangana Labour and Employment Minister Chamakura Malla Reddy has declared that there will be no Income Tax raids if the Bharath Rashtra Samithi (BRS) comes to power at the Centre.

Declaring that the BRS will come to power in the next LS elections and that it is certain that the pink flag will fly on the Red Fort in 2024, Malla Reddy said that everyone will be allowed to earn any amount.

He said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will bring rules so that those who have earned will pay tax on their own while giving tax exemption. He said that Income Tax will be collected from all over the country.

Addressing a meeting after inaugurating a free mineral water plant at Tuniki Bollaram in the R&R Colony of Mulugu Mandal in Siddipet district on Sunday, Malla Reddy made it clear that he is not afraid of any raids as long as KCR is with him.

"I was not afraid even though 500 IT officials raided my residences," he said. Malla Reddy said that people all over the country want the schemes introduced by KCR in TS. He expressed confidence that the people of the country and intellectuals will



He said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will bring rules so that those who have earned will pay tax on their own while giving tax exemption. He said that Income Tax will be collected from all over the country.

think of change at the Centre.

The BRS coming to power at the Centre in 2024 is certain, he said, saying that there are students of Malla Reddy College in every country if we go across the world.

2

KCR to embark on tour of districts

■ Collectors' meet and House session to prepare the ground

SNCN ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

It seems that Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is getting into election mode. KCR's recent decisions clearly indicate this.

KCR has speeded up his political and official business. He has directed TRS MLAs to go to the people and solve their problems. He has also directed them to campaign extensively about the welfare measures implemented by the government.

At the same time, KCR too has

decided to go to the people. He has decided to organise public meetings and wants to go to all districts to address meetings.

KCR's district tours will start in December. At the official level, KCR is conducting a Collectors' conference on November 28 and has decided to hold a brief Assembly session in December.

KCR is also planning to inaugurate government buildings and TRS office buildings during his district tours. He is mixing official and political business during his tours.



The CM is very much confident about the victory of the TRS in the next Telangana Assembly elections. The CM's decision on the alleged attempt to poach TRS MLAs has

enhanced his image at the national level. There are allegations from Congress leaders that the TRS and the BJP are colluding with each other. But the CM's decision on the attempted poaching of TRS MLAs has cleared all doubts about this.

A senior TRS leader said that if the TRS and the BJP are colluding with each other as alleged by the Congress how can the Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the TS government on the poaching case issue a notice to BL Santosh who is the BJP's top leader. This shows the commitment of KCR to fight the BJP, the TRS leader said.

Delhi-bound for AP capital

About 2,000 people to take part in protest at Jantar Mantar

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On the completion of three years of the Amaravati movement against three capitals, the farmers of Amaravati will take up the Delhi Yatra on December 17.

According to the leaders of Amaravati Parirakshan Samiti (APS) and Rajdhani Rythu Sangham JAC, about 2,000

farmers, including leaders of the APS and JAC, will reach the national capital to voice their concerns over Amaravati for three days from December 17 and ensure that their plight of the Amaravati farmers resounds in the national capital. Amaravati farmers are getting ready for the protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi.

The leaders alleged that the State government is creating problems despite the court having given clear-cut orders to the farmers to organise 'padayatra'. At a time when many such incidents were taking place, the farmers of Amaravati started their efforts to intensify the Delhi Yatra.

2



Will stop YSRCP run: Pawan

JSP chief disburses cheques for Rs 1L to Ippatam demolition victims

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan has made it clear that he will not inform Prime Minister Narendra Modi of his political strategy in facing the YSRCP and challenged how the YSRCP can win all 175 seats in the 2024 elections.

Addressing party workers at JSP State headquarters in Mangalagiri after distributing Rs 1 lakh cheques to those whose houses were allegedly demolished at Ippatam village, Pawan Kalyan announced that he was born in AP and he knows how to face the YSRCP.

Expressing anger over the atrocities against the people by the ruling party, Pawan Kalyan asked whether the YSRCP is a political party or a terror outfit amid thunderous applause from the activists.

2

Covid lockdowns set off protests across China

Protestors shout anti-Xi Jinping slogans

PNS ■ BEIJING

China's rare public protests opposing stringent COVID lockdowns turned political on Sunday with protestors shouting slogans against President Xi Jinping and the ruling Communist Party, as the demonstrations spread to the university campuses in Beijing and Nanjing.

Shanghai, where thousands of protestors converged at the Wulumuqi Road - which is named after Xinjiang provincial capital Urumqi - on Saturday night, witnessed fresh demonstrations on Sunday despite the heavy presence of police.

The protests, which began in the morning, intensified with the participation of hundreds of people by mid-afternoon, Thomas Hale,

Correspondent of the Financial Times, who was present at the protest site, told BBC.

According to videos posted on social media about the protests in Shanghai, people were heard openly shouting slogans such as "Xi Jinping, step down" and "Communist party, step down", the BBC report said.

Hale said the protests are extremely significant as the politics of COVID policies reflected wider political frustrations including the slowing down of the economy.

Elsewhere protesters held blank white banners, while others lit candles and laid flowers for the victims in Urumqi, where 10 people were killed in a fire at a building reportedly under Covid lockdown on Thursday.

Observers say that the latest political



ical protests appeared to be in continuation of "banner protest" in Beijing last month ahead of the CPC's once-in-a-five-year Congress which elected 69-year-old Xi for an unprecedented 3rd five-year term.

The anti-lockdown protests appear

to be posing a major challenge for Xi, just over a month into his third term in power.

Political protests opposing the CPC and its leadership are very rare in China while the country witness sporadic agitations over various issues.

2

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Panchami: Nov 27 04:25 PM to Nov 28 01:35 PM
Shashthi: Nov 28 01:35 PM to Nov 29 11:04 AM

Nakshatram: Uttara Ashadha: Nov 27 12:38 PM to Nov 28 10:29 AM
Shravana: Nov 28 10:29 AM to Nov 29 08:36 AM

Rahukalam: 7:54 AM to 9:17 AM

Yamagandam: 10:40 AM to 12:03 PM

Variyam: 02:10 PM to 03:39 PM

Gulika: 1:26 PM to 2:49 PM

Amritakalam: 11:02 PM to 12:31 AM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny

Temp: 31°C

Humidity: 43%

Sunrise: 6:28 AM

Sunset: 5:40 PM

Updated: NOVEMBER 27, 2022 5:00 PM



Monday Mirchi

UNFOUNDED SPECULATIONS,
PREMATURE REJOICING

A purely personal meeting that Giridhar Aramane, 1988 batch IAS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre who took over as the Defence Secretary on November 01, 2022, had with AP Chief Minister Jagannathan Reddy the other day triggered unfounded speculations that he is going to be the next Chief Secretary. Yours truly gathered that Giridhar had met Jagannathan to invite the Chief Minister for his daughter's marriage. A valid question that rumour-mongers missed is: 'Why would a defence secretary -- reporting directly to the President, the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister - take himself down by accepting CS post?' It is a different matter that bureaucratic circles in AP, carried away by wild rumours, are prematurely rejoicing over 'the impending return of the officer as CS'.

REDDY TAG NO LONGER A LIABILITY

A little bird told us that, as things stand, Special Chief Secretary to Chief Minister KS Jawahar Reddy and Special Chief Secretary Poonam Malakondaiah, are among the frontrunners in the race for the CS post. Contrary to reports in a section of the press, in the case of Jawahar Reddy, his 'Reddy' tag is no longer an issue for the powers that be. That apart, the grapevine has it that Andhra Pradesh cadre senior IAS officer Y Sri Lakshmi, another strong contender for the post, has many more years of service left, compared to Jawahar Reddy and Poonam Malakondaiah. So, she may have to bide her time. In any case, the chances of others in the race for CS post such as Neerabh Kumar Prasad and R Karikal Valaven are bleak.

NO SHAVE NOVEMBER FOR JAYESH

Jayesh Ranjan is sporting a salt and pepper look. It was during the Covid pandemic that many of the bureaucrats were seen with beard. Despite normalcy, it has been No-Shave November. During the annual month-long campaign, participants forgo grooming to raise awareness for cancer. Funds that would normally go toward monthly hair maintenance are instead donated to cancer foundations. Jayesh seems to

have taken part in the annual event, going by available pictures from those taken a month ago to the ones taken of late.

SORRY, BUT WHO IS SHARING?

A la continuing leaks to media of videos of 'treatment' being given in jail to AAP Minister Satyendar Jain despite the undertaking given to the court by the ED against any such leaks, opposition and media houses are puzzled as to how certain details of SIT probe are getting leaked in the case relating to poaching of four TRS MLAs. CV Anand, who heads the SIT, has a stock reply to pointed media queries on this: 'sorry'. The local media is disappointed that, barring TRS mouthpieces, nobody gets information from the inside track. Still, they appreciate CV Anand for being genuinely apologetic. No response is something that irks media more than anything else. A seasoned IPS officer, Anand knows how to maintain relations. Some media circles believe that the Chief Minister's Office is releasing everything to TRS mouthpieces. Their grouse against the brains or advisors who came up with these calculated leaks is that the powers that be could rather leak juicy bits from the probe to the entire media, instead of sharing them with a few papers.

SOMETHING IS BETTER THAN NOTHING

Greeting people on the Constitution Day may have been a difficult choice for Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, considering that he has called for a debate to help rewrite the country's basic statute so as to bring it in sync with the times. On Samvidhan Divas, after celebrations were over, late in the night officials released a press note. The note came around 9:50 pm in WhatsApp and after 10:00 pm via email. The buzz is that officials had no clue when and whether to release such a note. Finally the view that not greeting people could be seen as disrespect to BR Ambedkar, thereby giving grist to the mill of opposition parties, prevailed among debating eggheads and the note was finally released. Well, they say 'something is better than nothing'.

-Yours truly

BJP nothing but a bubble...

Continued from page 1

He asked TRS leaders attending the meeting to explain the TRS government's development and welfare programmes by organising Athmeeya Sammelans.

He also suggested that TRS leaders should identify public problems in Athmeeya Sammelans and try to solve them on the spot.

"If Modi developed Gujarat why is he running around at the time of elections? Is it right for Modi to threaten KCR when he came to Hyderabad recently," Talasani said.

He said the Centre has been troubling TRS Ministers and MLAs and that TRS leaders are ready to take on the BJP.

Talasani said that soon they will hold a public meeting at the Nizam College after Athmeeya Sammelans. The TRS will show its strength there.

He said the BJP is troubling TRS leaders to control the BRS. "Until recently, the BJP leaders have been running around Munugode like hawks. Is anyone coming now?," Talasani asked.

It is natural to be unhappy as no nominated posts were given in the last eight years. Being a TRS worker is an honourable thing. Depending on the occasion posts will come to your homes, Talasani said and added that no one should be impatient.

| CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Dressed/With Skin | ₹225 |
| Without Skin | ₹235 |
| Broiler at Farm | ₹200 |
| EGG RATES ₹/100 | |
| VIJAYAWADA | 477 |
| HYDERABAD | 484 |
| VISAKHAPATNAM | 477 |
| RETAIL PRICE (IN VIJAYAWADA) | ₹4.84 |

KCR to embark...

Continued from page 1

Moreover, KCR's decision to fight the BJP has helped the TRS to get close to the Left. If the TRS is colluding with the BJP the Left will never support them, commented a TRS leader.

Meanwhile, the BJP leadership also has a strong hope of coming to power in Telangana in the next Assembly elections. The comments of a top BJP leader and that of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday at a conference indicate this.

Amit Shah said that the people of Telangana want a change and that he knows the pulse of Telangana. He said that he will tour Telangana until the BJP comes to power in the next elections.

Amit Shah also said that the BJP victory in Telangana in the next Assembly elections will be the BJP's gateway to enter south India.

In spite of the attempt to poach TRS MLAs allegedly by the BJP, the comments of Amit Shah have created interest.

The BJP leadership realised after the Munugode by-election

that their party can come to power in Telangana only if they weaken the Congress. If the Congress is strong it may not come to power but it will help the TRS to retain power.

Keeping this in view the BJP leadership is concentrating on Congress leaders to bring them into their party. Former Minister Marri Shashidhar Reddy recently resigned from the Congress and joined the BJP. In coming days some more prominent Congress leaders may join the BJP.

The infighting in the Congress is helping the BJP to easily attract Congress leaders. The present political situation and the fight between the TRS and the BJP have given the impression that the main fight will be between the TRS and the Congress in the next Assembly elections. This also helps the BJP to attract Congress leaders into their party.

In the fight between the TRS and the BJP, the Congress is gradually losing ground in Telangana. Union Home Minister Amit Shah may tour TS districts extensively to counter KCR's district visits.

“No I-T raids if BRS comes...

Continued from page 1

Malla Reddy alleged that there is enough electricity in the country, but the BJP has no guts to supply it to the people. He said that the BJP failed in providing drinking and irrigation water to the people although water is available in plenty.

Malla Reddy said that KCR is not an ordinary person and that he is a 'Mahatma'. "If there is anyone who has served the people well after Ambedkar, that is KCR," Malla Reddy said.

It may be recalled that Malla Reddy's residences and offices were searched by the IT department a few days ago. A total of 50 teams took part in these raids. Raids were also conducted at the house of his sons, his son-in-law and others.

Explore new ways...

Continued from page 1

KCR said that development projects across the state must be pursued continuously. Public needs are increasing in tune with the growing wealth in Telangana. Accordingly, everyone should work together to provide quality facilities to the people, KCR said.

Today Telangana has achieved development in all fields. Earlier, there were not even minimum facilities in TS under the united Andhra Pradesh government. The people of TS got quality infrastructure in agriculture, irrigation, drinking water, electricity, roads, education, medical care etc only after the formation of TS, KCR said.

"The rural economy has grown. As a result, the purchasing power of villagers has increased. All sections of Telangana society are becoming

Explain what you have done for the people: Judson to Revanth

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC General Secretary Bakka Judson sent an open letter to TPPC President Revanth Reddy on Sunday asking him to explain what he has done to get public problems solved.

Judson put 11 questions to Revanth. He asked Revanth whether he had done anything regarding the Kokapet lands although Congress activists were beaten up by the police while participating in the Chalo Kokapet programme after a call given by the TPCC chief.

Judson said that Revanth's statement carried by the media on Sunday signals that the remaining senior leaders too must leave the Congress like



Marri Shashidhar Reddy.

He asked what Revanth has done to solve public problems except conducting press conferences.

Criticising Revanth for blaming senior Congress leaders by saying that they are merely sitting at home, Judson

asked Revanth to explain what happened to the statement that he will file a complaint with the CBI against former Siddipet collector Venkatram Reddy, who late became a TRS MLC.

Did you fight against Myhome Rameshwara Rao's land scam, Judson asked Revanth. He also asked him whether he had visited Mallanna Sagar after the submergence of the Bahubali motors during floods.

What have you done to help farmers who were facing trouble due to the Dharani Portal, Judson asked. Did you take up the cases of villages which are not receiving water from Mission Bhagiratha, he asked.

Use 10% of Hyd revenue...

Continued from page 1

Kishan took up a padayatra in his Secunderabad Parliament constituency on Sunday. He walked across Addagutta, Tukaramgate, Tarnaka, and Lalapet in the morning and Borabanda and Erragadda in the evening.

The people of those areas raised their problems like drinking, drainage and other issues with Kishan.

Speaking on the occasion, Kishan said that he will forward the memorandums submitted by the people during his padayatra to the officials concerned.

He also explained to the people about the failures of the TRS government and Central schemes during his padayatra. Former Mayor Banda Karthika Reddy and local BJP leaders accompanied Kishan Reddy.

Covid lockdowns set off...

Continued from page 1

One protester in Shanghai told the BBC that he felt 'shocked and a bit excited' to see people out on the streets, calling it the first time he'd seen such large-scale dissent in China.

He said lockdowns made him feel 'sad, angry and hopeless', and had left him unable to see his unwell mother, who was undergoing cancer treatment.

A female demonstrator said that police officers when asked how they felt about the protests, and the answer was "the same as you". But, she said, "they wear their uniforms so they're doing their job."

Shanghai, a city of over 25 million, endured weeks of COVID lockdowns in April sparking protests.

With protests over lockdowns of dozens of apartment buildings intensifying, the government stepped back on Saturday from enforcing lockdowns in Urumi,

the provincial capital of Xinjiang. During the weekend, Urumi witnessed a huge demonstration in which many Han Chinese nationals took part along with Uyghur Muslims.

Urumiqi authorities on Saturday said the city would lift coronavirus restrictions "in phases" after footage surfaced online showing rare protests against a three-month lockdown, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported on Sunday.

In Beijing, people from several compounds, under lockdowns for days, also staged protests, leading to officials withdrawing the curbs.

Meanwhile, the National Health Commission on Sunday said 39,501 coronavirus cases, including 35,858 asymptomatic cases, were reported in the country by the end of Saturday as mass COVID tests were carried out across China to identify new clusters of infection.

VH describes himself as ‘Home Guard’ on Twitter, removes it later

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Congress leaders have been expressing their unhappiness over TPCC President Revanth Reddy using the words 'Home Guard' and 'SP' in his comments.

Former Congress leader Marri Shashidhar Reddy said that he is quitting the Congress as a 'Home Guard' on November 22.

Before Shashidhar, TPCC Star Campaigner Bhongir MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said during the Munugode by-poll that there was no need for a 'Home Guard' to campaign in the Munugode by-poll as the SP (TPCC President Revanth Reddy) can ensure the victory of Congress candidate Palvayi Sravanthi.

Now senior Congress leader V. Hanumantha Rao has included a sentence in his Twitter bio-data stating 'Currently working as Home Guard of Congress!' after mentioning that he is a former RS MP, a former PCC president of united Andhra Pradesh and ex-president of the Youth Congress.

It is learnt that Hanumantha Rao is angry at Revanth Reddy for criticising seniors in a section of the media on Sunday saying that they are not working on behalf of the public.

VH included the sentence 'Currently working as Home Guard of the Congress' in his Twitter bio-data to express his anger. But VH removed it after a few hours.

Will stop...

Continued from page 1

"The YSRCP has claimed that it will win all 175 Assembly seats. I will see how the YSRCP can win all the seats," he said.

Hitting back at YSRCP leaders comments that Jana Sena is a 'rowdy sena', Pawan Kalyan said that Janasena is a 'revolutionary sena'. The YSRCP government was giving him a lot of trouble though he is a prominent person, he said, and expressed concern about the fate of common men in the state.

Pawan Kalyan also objected to naming after welfare schemes 'YSR' and asked why the government did not name Pingali Venkaiah and Gurram Jashuva the schemes.

"I will continue my fight to protect the interests of people even if I am defeated. I felt pain when houses were demolished at Ippatam village in an unjust manner," he said.

Delhi-bound for...

Continued from page 1

It may be recalled that on December 17, 2019, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced three capitals during the winter Assembly sessions. Since then, the farmers of Amaravati's capital and supporters of Amaravati have been protesting. By December 17, 2022, it will be three years since the Chief Minister announced three capitals.

On the other hand, the 'Maha Padayatra' from Amaravati to Arasavalli in Srikakulam came to a halt on October 21. The farmers moved the court for an extension of the date as the 60 days permission was completed on November 12. The court on November 24 adjourned the case for four weeks. By the time the Delhi Yatra is completed, the final orders for 'Maha Padayatra' will be given.

APS president A Siva Reddy said that a request has been placed with the South Central Railways for a special train from Vijayawada to New Delhi that will start on December 15 that will carry over 1,600 Amaravati farmers and leaders.

He said that the APS leaders will go to Delhi on November 28 to seek permission for the protest at Jantar Mantar on December 17. He said that they will also participate in the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh rally on December 19 and return to Vijayawada. They are inviting all politicians across the nation including Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha MPs.

Amaravati Rythu JAC, Invitation committee member Aluri Ugender said that about 2,000 people including Amaravati farmers of all age groups and leaders will participate in the Delhi Yatra. The protest will be on December 17. He said that all MPs irrespective of political parties will be invited and e-mails will be sent to them. Despite acute weather conditions, the senior citizens are also travelling to Delhi to take part in the three days protest.

Former Tadikonda MLA T Shrawan Kumar announced that the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) will be supporting the farmers for their Delhi Yatra. He also said that other political parties should also stand by the farmers in support of the movement.

KCR to visit Yadadri Thermal Power Plant today

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao is planning to visit the Yadadri Thermal Power Plant being constructed at Damarachaela in Nalgonda district on Monday. KCR will go to Damarachaela from the Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad by helicopter and will land at the helipads in Veerlapalem (V), and Damarachaela (M) in Nalgonda district. Later, he will visit the Yadadri Thermal Power Plant at 10.30 am. After lunch, KCR will review the progress of ongoing work. Later, he will return to Hyderabad from the helipads Veerlapalem (V) and Damarachaela (M).

MORALE BOOSTER FOR TOURISM

TS eyes 20% hike in foreign tourist, 30% domestic arrivals

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Tourism expects a 20 per cent increase in foreign tourist arrivals and 30 per cent growth in domestic tourist footfall by the end of next year, as compared to pre-COVID level, a senior government official said on Sunday.

Showcasing attractions like the marvellous standstone Ramappa temple of the Kakatiya era, which was recognised last year by UNESCO as a world heritage site, the Pochampally village famed for its hand-woven Ikat saris, authorities are running digital campaigns as well to promote such tourist destinations.

"Our target is to increase international tourist arrivals by 20 per cent, and also domestic tourist arrivals by 30 per cent by 2023-end," Telangana State Tourism Development Corporation (TSTD) Managing Director, B Manohar said.

During 2019, when the pandemic had not yet set in, the domestic arrivals in the state was 8,30,35,894 while the



number of foreign travellers was 3,23,326. The TSTD estimates that there would be 20 and 30 per cent growth, in foreign and domestic arrivals respectively, when compared to 2019, he said.

Working towards a significant increase in domestic and foreign tourist arrivals, authorities have augmented facilities to cater to the needs of holiday-makers. Be it facilities in hotels or connectivity issues, authorities have addressed them and

the Road-cum river cruise tour are among the appealing offers.

With the fading of COVID related apprehensions, there has been an increase in tourist flow to all tourism destinations in the state. The occupancy in state-run hotels, boats and buses is impressive. Local and foreign tourist arrivals have also increased, he said, hoping that the target could be achieved.

"Good facilities have been developed at the destinations.

Every district we are planning to develop Haritha hotel (State-run), so that people can stay there and can go to surrounding destinations," the official said. Telangana witnessed domestic tourist arrivals of 3,20,00,620 while international tourists numbered 5,917 in 2021. For this year, domestic arrivals increased to 3,95,53,865 and international arrivals rose to 35,945 up to July.

About 63.51 crore domestic tourists visited Telangana from 2014 to July 2022 and 13,50,307 foreign tourists during the same period visited the tourist areas in Telangana, he said. TSTD, a state government undertaking, has built 54 green tourism hotels and way-side facilities across the state. Sound and light shows are being organised at Golconda and Warangal forts.

The official said that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is giving priority to the development of tourism sector with the ambition of "Our Telangana - Our Culture - Our Tourism".

TSRTC denies reason of transfer for staffer's suicide

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TSRTC driver D Rajaiah was found hanging in his house on Saturday morning. As his wife has complained the police are investigating. However, reports said that he was upset over his transfer. Rajaiah has been shifted to Jubilee bus station recently from Godavari Khani depot.

Telangana State Road Transport Corporation has condemned that there was no issues of transfer with Rajaiah. TSRTC Managing Director VC Sajjanar claimed that the TSRTC is working for the welfare of the employees. The reason claimed about the driver's suicide is untrue and reprehensible. We condemn these baseless allegations, Sajjanar said. Rajaiah was transferred to Jubilee bus station three months ago at his own request. He said that his son was working in Hyderabad and his family was staying there and he himself requested to be transferred to JBS. Rajaiah never asked the officials to change JBS duty, Sajjanar added. His daughter has been staying in Australia for the past two years. She recently arrived in Hyderabad and is scheduled to return to Australia on December 6. So, as he applied for a week's leave, it was granted.

KCR to lay stone for Metro 2nd phase works on Dec. 9

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandra shekhar Rao decided to extend the Metro Corridor from Rayadurgam Metro Terminal at MindSpace Junction to Shamshabad International Airport. As part of it, the Chief Minister will lay the foundation stone on December 9. The Telangana government prepared plans to complete the Metro project in the next three years. The Chief Minister said that the state government will build this project.

This Metro will proceed via Biodiversity Junction and go through Kazhaguda Road touching Nanakramguda Junction at Outer Ring Road. Metro trains run from the airport through a special route (right of way). The state government will build this Metro project on a total length of 31 km at a cost of Rs.6,250 crore. Many international companies will establish their offices along this corridor.

The CMO statement said that to meet the future transport needs of Hyderabad, which has become a global city, the Metro Project (airport express highway) has been designed to reach Shamshabad



Connecting the Metro to the airport became a top priority in the wake of increasing traffic congestion in Hyderabad city, which is expanding massively with world-class investments

Airport from any corner of the city in the shortest time. All major metro cities of the world had also developed metro rail facilities to the airport. In this background, this Metro project with international standards is designed under CM KCR's vision of promoting Hyderabad as a cosmopolitan city. Connecting the Metro to the airport became a top priority in the wake of increasing traffic congestion in Hyderabad city, which is expanding massively with world-class investments.

Hyderabad is going to become a destination for more investments owing to the Metro project. With the intention of coping with the day-to-day traffic in the city, the Telangana government is already providing transport infrastructure on a large scale with the efforts of state Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao and under the direction of the Chief Minister. The state government is strengthening many projects, flyovers, link roads and other road systems.

Nitish pats MEIL for executing water supply project

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has commended Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited (MEIL) for executing Phase-I of the Gangajal Aapurti Yojana on time during the inauguration function held at Rajgir on November 27.

The tourist destinations of Rajgir, Gaya and Bodhi Gaya are known as the Buddhist circuit.

This is India's first-of-its-kind drinking water project launched as part of the Jal Jeevan Hariyali mission. It is also Bihar's first and biggest drinking water scheme.

The project will store, treat, and supply floodwaters of the Ganga River the state receives during the monsoon.

The project has two objectives. First, it conserves flood-

waters preventing wastage, and second, it transforms this precious resource into safe, drinkable water.

The floodwaters will be pumped up using pumps at Hathidah and transported through a 151-kilometre pipeline to three enormous reservoirs in Rajgir, Teta, and Gaya.

These reservoirs stand out as they were constructed based on the terrain using natural materials. Water from the reservoirs will be pumped to two Water Treatment Plants (WTPs), where it is treated and piped to cities.

MEIL executed the first phase of the project. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, MEIL finished the project in three years. With the supply of clean drinking water, the water shortage in these cities will be solved to a great extent.

CHILDREN SAVE RS 44,000 IN CHILPUR ZILLA PARISHAD HIGH SCHOOL

Students set up bank on their own

DEEPIKA PASHAM
■ HYDERABAD

While government schools in Telangana are lacking basic facilities, students of a Zilla Parishad High School stand out of crowd in facilitating themselves a service.


It is establishing a school bank to understand the concepts of deposit, withdrawal and savings by self-learning. The Zilla Parishad High School of Chilpur in Jangaon remains an example for other schools while learning the concepts by practising them in school.

The children have turned one of the rooms into a School Bank and collected Rs 44,000 over a month. In all, 158 students have bank account cards in the school for little savings on their own. They are saving money to buy maps, pens, graph papers, pencils and for school tours which

come in an emergency. The highest was by one girl with Rs 2,400. Students can save from Re 1 to Rs 2,000 on a daily basis. Social Studies Teacher, Venkatesh, who is behind the initiative explained, "We started the school bank on October 15 to create awareness on savings, financial discipline as children are buying junk food while coming to school; a few others also lost as they forget where they are saving. Backdrop is that in classes VIII, IX and X, students in economics learnt lessons on banking system. We usually take students to banks but there is none in our locality and also their memory will erase as we return from banks." "Since the response was tremendous, the parents are also contributing to save in the school bank as they have confidence that their children will bring back money when it is essential, espe-

HIGHLIGHTS

- Every procedure is followed in this school bank similar to the original bank.
- The students themselves shift the roles, one is cashier, one an accountant and other one is desk clerk to help students to fill the forms.
- The bank is open thrice a day, in the morning, in the afternoon and later in the evening.
- They have original date stamp and acknowledgement slip is given to depositor or withdrawer. A ledger book is also maintained. The commutative balance is also shown by the students. There are tokens to check balance.



cially mothers are saving through children. It is only towards creating awareness on the banking system because a lot of parents are illiterate and these children teach their parents by visiting banks. It has been more than a month and students collected Rs 44,000," he

added. The teachers were alerted by officers of Reserve Bank of India who conducted classes on financial literacy. However, the school bank has been established because even educated students get confused while they visit banks.

Auspicious muhurat for weddings to begin from December 4

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The inauspicious period for weddings, which continued for over three months, will end by the month end. Celebration of marriages that are put on hold during the period will begin from the first week of December. In fact, there are five auspicious muhurat in December.

As the auspicious period is drawing nearer, the people have booked function halls, community halls and marriage halls. In all, thousands of marriages are going to take place in December. The inertia in the markets will lift off soon, so that the people will come forward to make their



wedding purchases. The inauspicious period that commenced on September 22 this year continued till Nov 27. As a result, people did not celebrate house-warming celebrations and marriages during the period.

According to ancient reli-

gious texts, the auspicious dates in December are Dec 4, 8, 14, 17 and 18. Confirming this, noted vedic scholar Chirravuri Ramakrishna said that these five days are excellent. However, he said that there is likelihood of celebrating marriages on other days in December, but they are not so important.

At least, 10,000 function halls and other venues have been booked for marriages. The purohits estimate that at least 25,000 couples will tie the knot in December. However, the number is going to increase further. The business of textile showrooms, jewellery shops and other markets is likely to pick up soon.

She Toilets in state of utter disrepair

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The She Toilets provided in the GHMC limits have been worse for want of proper maintenance. For want of water supply, not cleaning them regularly and repairs to the damaged doors, these toilets are in a bad condition. The complaints vary from place to place.

The condition was so bad that women who go out on various works could not use them. In case they used them under emergency situation, they are sure to acquire diseases. Some women say that they either rush to a shopping mall or to a restaurant in cases of grave emergency.

However, some say that the mobile She Toilets provided with the central government support are useful. Women and other social activists demand that the Centre provide many more such toilets in the city.

As part of the Swachh Bharat programme, the GHMC has provided She



Toilets at several places. It washed off its hands entrusting their maintenance to private agencies incurring crores of rupees of expenditure.

For want of effective supervision, these toilets have become worse. At some places, there were no such toilets for a vast geographical region. Women's activists seek establishment of a public rest room for every 2 km like in Western countries. Women say that they have to wait for long in traffic jams and express inability to delay the calls of nature for so long. Moreover, it would pose health problems, they added.

They want proper maintenance of the existing toilets and want the GHMC to set up

many more toilets. Under the Safe City Project, the Home Department releases funds to the metro cities. With the funds, the GHMC provided the electric mobile She Toilets at many places. Such vehicles are provided in Secunderabad zone (3), Khairatabad zone (2), Charminar zone (2) and Kukatpally zone (1). Such toilets are available from 9 am to 5.30 pm in NTR stadium, Tank Bund, Pragati Bhavan, Secunderabad Railway station, Assembly, Gacchi Bowli junction, Rajendra Nagar, LB Nagar, Bala Nagar and Uppal. They have western and Indian seats.

The fecal matter is linked to municipal sewerage tank. There are breast feeding rooms, easy chair and table for changing diapers for children. They are also fitted with lockers and mobile charging facilities. A lady worker is available near the vehicle. They are provided only in heavily crowded public places.

GHMC yet to restore Praja Vani programme

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has suspended its public grievances redressal programme Praja Vani during the Pandemic situation, but it is still yet to revive the programme.

Instead of reviving the programme, the GHMC insists that people send their representations online for resolving it. Soon after sending it, a message is flashed on to the mobile of the sender that the concerned GHMC official will look into the problem.

Taking advantage of the online resolution of the problems, the officials are allegedly shirking their responsibility. The civic body is collecting various taxes from people, but allegedly not paying attention to resolve their problems. Those who are active in the social media, if they represent their problem through social media platforms either to KTR or to

city Mayor Vijayalakshmi or to Arvind Kumar, the problems get resolved provided they show mercy on the complainant.

There were allegations that the officials do not pay attention to resolve the grievances unless they get orders from the above. Earlier, face-to-face programmes were held with GHMC commissioner and Mayor, now the programmes stand cancelled.

The FoBs constructed at Banjara Hills, LV Prasad's Eye Hospital, Muffakam Jha College require maintenance. The GHMC spends crores of rupees annually to solve the mosquito menace, but there is no let up in the problem.

The Ts-iPASS has made it very easy to issue permission for construction of buildings and to issue the occupancy certificates, but the GHMC officials are allegedly not paying attention to illegal addition of one more floor and illegal constructions.

Students sponsor study needs of orphanage kids

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

During the World Children's Day on November 20, students of the Oakridge International School, Bachupally, along with more than 78,000 students from 32 countries across the Nord Anglia family, came together to spread awareness about children's rights. As part of the celebration, which is focused on promoting quality education this year, a week-long series of activities begun at the school by Christopher Short, Managing Director, Nord Anglia India. The activities were focused on UNICEF's Sustainable Development Goals, (SDG-4), to ensure that the students' voices are heard.

The senior students of the school sponsored the educational needs of children at Aashri Society orphanage and



donated a full library set up to foster a love of reading among the kids. In addition, a health camp has been organised to promote wellness and good health for all the support staff.

Inspired by the senior students, even the junior students joined to celebrate and promote quality education for all.

"It's a time to promote togetherness around the world, awareness of the problems children face in every corner of

the globe and improve welfare for all children. We, believe in 'starting early' to consciously grow an environment of 'imparting amongst our givers, caretakers of the future,' said Baljeet Oberoi, Principal of the school. "Being a UNICEF ambassador comes with a lot of responsibility. We cannot wait to continue our work as UNICEF ambassadors for the rest of the year," said UNICEF student ambassador Neha Kalagudi of Grade XI.

DISTRIBUTION OF SANITARY KITS

Govt order exempting Class VI, VIII hits 3 lakh girls

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The state government has exempted the girl students of Class VI and VII for distribution of sanitary health and hygienic kits affecting 2.5 lakh to three lakh people in the state, according to a latest order

issued by the medical and health department.

At least half of the three lakh students are definitely eligible to receive the kits. The menstrual cycle among girls is beginning from 10 years. Since majority of the students of government schools are poor they may not afford buying sanitary kits. In this backdrop, the state government officials are showing an empty hand to these students.

Criticism is that the state government is reducing the burden by exempting the students of Class VI and VII.

In fact, the government made provision in the last year's budget to give the sanitary kits to the students of classes VII to Intermediate. The latest instructions from health department indicates that the kits will be given to students from Class VIII and above up to Intermediate class.

There are 26,000-odd Government schools in the state, including social welfare residential schools. Denial of these kits to the students of the social welfare residential school is making them face problems. In fact, the state government



launched the distribution of the hygienic kits programme in December of 2019-2020 when Kadiam Srihar was the Education Minister. For various reasons, the scheme has been shelved for the past two or three years. Earlier, the government used to pay Rs 100 to the students towards cosmetic charges. The students used to

purchase the sanitary napkins with the amount. In place of the cosmetic charges, hygienic kits have been introduced. These kits contain comb, hair oil, powder, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, rubber pad, bindi stickers and sanitary napkins. In all, 15 articles worth Rs 300 used to be provided to students in four installments in a year. Afterwards, the state government removed tidlis and ribbons from the list and reduced the number of goods provided to 13. Every kit is sufficient for use by students for three months. The government has decided to resume giving the sanitary kits. But, the kits would contain six sanitary napkins, a bag and a water bottle since the academ-

ic year is going to come to close in six months. The government has plans to give only napkins from the next year. They will be distributed among 11 lakh students pursuing education from Class VIII to Intermediate. The officials are going to procure 11 lakh kits for the current academic year which is going to end in six months. But the officials will procure another 22 lakh kits for the year 2023-24. The demand from students is to supply the kits from Class VI onwards.

Peak performance at workplace key to success

Modern corporate workplace is in a state of flux. The success of any organisation relies heavily on its employees' performance. Employees are the driving force to take companies to the zenith of success. Quality of work produced is the key indicator of performance of any organisation. There has been tremendous change in corporate job market due to technological revolution lead to mismatch of employees' abilities to execute tasks. Hence, maximising workforce performance can help organisations to accomplish their goals. To encounter challenges, organisations need to enhance competency of employees to sustain in the fierce market place. Since employees' performance directly impact firm's Return

on Investment (ROI) and hence it is essential to identify the root cause of their underperformance, and constantly take suitable measures to augment their efficacy. How efficiently the workers fulfil their job roles, accomplish tasks, and collaborate with peers is one of the ways of evaluation of employees' performance. Employees can not achieve peak performance unless they are communicated clearly about management expectations no matter how skilled and competent they are. Exploring the ways to learn new skills is the initial step towards achieving peak performance. The corporate world is very competitive so that workforce needs to take advantage of every opportunity that can give an edge. Employees have to upgrade

Employees must have a positive attitude towards enhancing their skills and ready to keep abreast changes. According to a recent Career Builder survey, 45% of respondents reported that a gap in skills caused a loss in overall productivity. Undoubtedly, employees' performance and effective delivery of tasks is critical for an organisation's growth and success. Most employees have the power to achieve peak performance but due to lack of encouragement from higher-ups and peers, they underutilise their internal energy

their talents continuously to give impressive performance and meet the expectations of management.

Maintaining a competitive edge in the global marketplace demands that the employees attain peak performance even in acute challenges and work pressure. Employees should handle work stress, negative judgments from others, and sustain focus even in dire sit-

uation. They should keep in mind work stress drains energy and lessen focus.

Exceptional employees are not just proactive, they can forecast crises, embrace change, and have a deaf ear to naysayers around them. Employees must have a positive attitude towards enhancing their skills and ready to keep abreast changes.

According to a recent



SRINIVAS VISSAPRAGADA

Career Builder survey, 45% of respondents reported that a gap in skills caused a loss in overall productivity. Undoubtedly, employees' performance and effective delivery of tasks is critical for an organisation's growth and suc-

cess. Most employees have the power to achieve peak performance but due to lack of encouragement from higher-ups and peers, they underutilise their internal energy. In order to embrace change and predict uncertainty, employees need a certain level of future-mindedness to stay agile, ability to bounce back from setbacks. If organisations want to improve employee performance, they need to set clear goals to employees and develop metrics to measure their progress. People do their best when they are engaged and motivated.

Collaborative learning is also a great way to help boost employee performance. Cohesiveness among employees can solve conflicts that may lead to smooth execution of projects. Sharing of information

among workforce will also expand their knowledge and bring clarity in their minds and allow them to think out of the box. When it comes to improving employee potential, facilitating training will always give better results. But it's not enough to bring them to a seminar or workshop. To make the most out of training endeavour, make training more creative, engaging, and interactive. Employees have their own strengths, setbacks, goals, and aspirations.

Hence, customised training and development programmes can help improve performance and also create potential opportunities for professional development. Human Resources are the most expensive assets, and therefore, organizations must utilize their workforce effi-

ciently and effectively. One of the best practices is to regularly monitor their performance and offer necessary training to enhance competence employees. Assess the strengths of employee and allot tasks that fit for their abilities. Enhanced employee performance benefits organisation in the long run. It lets firms maintain a competitive edge while allowing employees to grow and excel on the professional front. Thus, it's imperative to formulate an effective performance management strategy.

Achieving peak performance has to be given paramount importance for living an extraordinary life.

(The writer is Assistant Professor Department of Commerce PB Siddhartha College of Arts & Science, Vijayawada)

Press freedom facing danger in TS: Uttam



Congress Lok Sabha member N Uttam Kumar Reddy

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Declaring that the freedom of the press is in danger in India, especially Telangana, Congress MP Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy has appealed to journalists to be on guard to defend independent journalism.

Speaking at the meeting of the Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUWJ) in Suryapet District on Sunday, Uttam spoke about the glori-

ous past of journalists and their commendable role in India's freedom movement.

"Mahatma Gandhi was the greatest journalist of all time. Gandhi Ji was associated with six journals and he was the Editor of two journals. His first paper, Indian Opinion, was started in South Africa. Young India and 'Harijan' played an important role in India's freedom movement. Gandhi Ji has clearly stated that the sole

aim of journalism should be service," he said.

Similarly, he said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru began his career in journalism and became a great journalist of those times. He established the 'National Herald' on September 9, 1938. The paper carried on its masthead the words 'Freedom is in Peril. Defend it with All Your Might'.

Likewise, Bal Gangadhar Tilak started 'Kesari' in Marathi and 'Maratha' in English and used them to gain freedom for the country. He was an icon of fearless journalism. He did not change his views despite the British book- ing seditious cases against him.

He said that journalists played an active role in the Telangana movement and fearlessly exposed injustices.



Modi hails expertise of Siricilla weaver

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRICILLA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday, during 'Mann Ki Baat' radio address, praised the skill of a handloom weaver in Siricilla. The weaver, who presented a cloth, weaved with a logo of India's G20 president, along with a hand-written letter.

"Hariprasad Garu, the

weaver brother from Rajanna Siricilla district in Telangana, sent me a self-woven G20 logo. Hariprasad has such a mastery over his skills. Hosting of G20 Summit is a matter of immense pride for India," the Prime Minister said.

Rajanna Siricilla district unit BJP leaders felicitated Hari Prasad hailing him as a great weaver.

Tension as police deny permission for Bandi's Yatra

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Tension built up at Jagtial as the TRS and BJP workers clashed following the police taking the BJP State unit leader Bandi Sanjay Kumar into custody at Venkatapur village under Korutla mandal in Jagtial district on Sunday evening.

The police took Telangana BJP president Sanjay Kumar into custody stating that he has no permission to take up his fifth phase of Praja Sangrama Yatra to commence on November 28.

In fact, the Nirmal district police did not give permission for the yatra to be launched on November 28 from Bhainsa in Nirmal district, fearing law and order problem.

The Nirmal District Superintendent of Police Ch Praveen Kumar also confirmed that no permission was given to Sanjay Kumar's yatra. The BJP MP from Adilabad Parliament constituency Soyam Bapurao applied for permission for Sanjay's yatra on November 17.

When his convoy was obstructed, Sanjay Kumar got into an argument with the police. He said that he was on his way to a temple. The BJP



Police whisking away BJP State unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar at Venkatapuram village in Jagtial district

activists raised slogans against the police.

The BJP has decided to take up the yatra from November 28 to December 17 from Bhainsa to Karimnagar. The yatra will continue for 20 days and Bandi Sanjay decided to walk for 222 kilometers through 5 districts, 3 Parliament constituencies and 8 Assembly segments. Sanjay decided to start his padyatra performing special poojas at Adelli Pochamma Ammavari temple in Nirmal district and participate in a public meeting at Bhainsa.

Arrangements were made for the yatra as Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister

Devendra Fadnavis was invited to take part in it as the chief guest.

A large number of BJP activists gathered at Gandhinagar area in Jagtial town to protest against the arrest of Sanjay Kumar. The TRS activists confronted the BJP works and it led to a clash between the two warring groups. The police resorted to baton charge to separate the warring groups.

Meanwhile, Telangana BJP official spokesperson NV Subash alleged that this shows that KCR government wanted to create an unnecessary tension and wanted to disturb the peaceful padyatra.

A Class 7 student in Residential school attempts suicide

PNS ■ WARANGAL

A 13-year-old Class 7 student in a Social Welfare Residential School at Madikonda in Hanamkonda district attempted to commit suicide on Sunday, according to reports reaching here.

The incident created panic in the school.

According to B Srinivasa Rao, principal of the residential school, the Class 7 student, B Kiran Raj, who hailed from Dupakunta village, had a heated argument with a Class 8 student over sharing toothpaste.

Kiran Raju seemed to have been upset after he had an argument with another student.

He went into his room and

attempted to commit suicide by hanging, the principal said.

The students rescued him and brought it to the notice of the principal.

He was immediately rushed to MGM Hospital. The doctors in the hospital suggested that he be shifted to Hyderabad for better treatment.

The boy's parents, however, shifted him to a private hospital. The doctors at the private hospital said that the boy's condition is stable.

No case has been registered by the police so far. Madikonda sub-inspector A Narasimha Rao said that the incident had not been brought to the notice of the police so far.

'BJP ready for elections'

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

There is no need for surprise if early elections are declared in Telangana, senior BJP leader N Indrasena Reddy said. The Chief Minister has embarked on district tour with an eye on Assembly elections, he said.

He said that Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao did not fulfil even a single promise he made. He said KCR was a complete failure in governance and that there is no need to be surprised if there are early elections.

Speaking to the media here on Sunday, Indrasena said that the BJP is ready for elections. He said that he did not see implementation



BJP leader N Indrasena Reddy speaking to the media in Mahabubnagar on Sunday

That Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao did not fulfil even a single promise he made. He said KCR was a complete failure in governance and that there is no need to be surprised if there are early elections.

of the promised free KG to PG education.

Indrasena said that double-bedroom houses are still not available to beneficiaries.

He said that KCR has been neglecting filling up vacant posts in government service and that Dharani Portal is nothing but a big scam.

'Bring out the enormous energy latent among women'

○ Balika Sakti Sangamam camp held in the city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Sri Saraswathi Peetham Sangathan Secretary Patakamuri Srinivasa Rao has said that the objective of Balika Sakti Sangamam programme is to bring out the enormous energy that is latent among women.

Sri Saraswathi Peetham, which runs over 400 schools in Telugu states, is celebrating golden jubilee in 2022.

In connection with the golden jubilee, it is conducting Balika Sakti Sangamam programme-bringing thousands of girl students of schools being run by the Peetham together at one place to train them in concentration, self-defence, confidence and awareness, essential qualities to sustain in the present day society. South Central Kshetra president Dr Chamarti Umamaheswara Rao, a retired

civil servant, Telangana region president and former OU vice-chancellor Prof Tirupati Rao, Bharateeyam organiser Satyavani inaugurated the Balika Sakti Sangamam Camp here on Sunday.

All-India Prachara Prabhari of Vidya Bharati Lingam Sudhakar Reddy delivered the key-note address and showed way forward to the students.

To motivate the participants,



It is conducting Balika Sakti Sangamam programme-bringing thousands of girl students of schools being run by the Peetham together at one place to train them in concentration, self-defence, confidence and awareness, essential qualities to sustain in the present day society.

discussions by women who have occupied dizzy heights in society have been arranged.

Samayam digital editor Amruta noted that several

women inspite of their rural original have reached top positions in their career and quoted the example of President Draupadi Murmu in this regard.

Indecent remarks against women: Ramdev's effigy burnt

PNS ■ WARANGAL

National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) State unit general secretary Nedunuri Jyothy on Sunday warned Baba Ramev of dire consequences if he failed to mend his way. She registered a protest against Ramdev for his 'indecent remarks' against women.

"The women look good in anything- sari, salwar Kameez or even when they wear noth-



N Jyothy

ing," Ramdev was quoted as having said. Baba Ramdev's

effigy was burnt at Pocham Maidan under the auspices of NFIW. Speaking on the occasion, Jyothy said the Baba under the garb of a spiritual guru was making 'derogatory remarks' against women, she said. She warned him of the consequences if he continued to pour scorn on women. She demanded an apology from the Baba.

NFIW district general secretary T Rahela, P Divya and others were present.

NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

Perni calls Pawan a political hypocrite

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former minister Perni Venkatramaiah (Nani) has called Jana Sena president Pawan Kalyan a political hypocrite who kneels before the Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

Addressing the media here on Sunday, the former minister went hammer and tongs against the Jana Sena president mocking his futile exercises of making a mountain out of a molehill at Ippatam for political gains.

Pawan Kalyan has no con-

sistent policy except for revolving around the TDP president and even his fans are wondering why the actor always kneels before Chandrababu, he wondered.

While the Government served notices and removed staircases of some houses at Ippatam as per the law of the land for road widening, Pawan Kalyan forced some of the Ippatam villagers to misrepresent the facts before courts, he said.

Since the curtains are now drawn over his Ippatam



drama, Pawan Kalyan should clarify if he is ready to pay the fine of Rs 1 lakh each imposed by the Court on 14 villagers for misrepresenting the facts and cheating the courts of law

under his pressure.

Objecting to the Jana Sena president commenting that Amaravati farmers also should have agitated like the Ippatam villagers, he said the actor's statements are irrelevant and reflect only escapism.

He asked why Pawan Kalyan, who raised an unnecessary hue and cry over Ippatam where nothing happened, maintained stony silence when Masjids and temples were demolished and crops were burnt at Prasadampadu and

Ramavarappadu during the TDP rule.

If Pawan Kalyan has any guts and wits, he should contest all 175 seats individually against the YSRCP in the 2024 elections, he dared the Jana Sena chief. He further said that the actor-led Jana Sena can't win a single seat while Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, who surpassed even his father and former chief minister YSR in implementing welfare programmes for all, will lead the party to sweep all 175 seats.

INDIA CORNER

Probe ordered after 82-year-old man dies during police raid at his house

An investigation was ordered after an 82-year-old man allegedly died of cardiac arrest on Sunday when police raided his house in the dead of the night in search of his son, an accused in a cattle smuggling case, in Jharkhand's Khunti district, an officer said. Residents of Rodo village in Torpa police station area alleged that the man died after police pushed him while entering the house. Khunti's Superintendent of Police (SP) Aman Kumar said that a magistrate-level investigation will be conducted into the case. A special police team reached the village, around 60 km from capital Ranchi, around 1 am to arrest one Izhar Ahmed alias Kallu, an accused in a cattle smuggling case. As the search was underway, Kallu's father Md Nizamuddin suddenly fell on the floor and died. Police said he died of cardiac arrest, while villagers alleged that he died after police pushed him. Local sources said that the irate villagers gheraoed the police personnel who were conducting the raid.



Three, including RAC constable shot dead in Rajasthan

Three brothers including a police constable were shot dead when their neighbour along with some others allegedly opened fire at them in their house in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district, police said on Sunday. The incident occurred in Sikrora village and the police was informed early Sunday. Constable Gajendra Singh, his two brothers Samandar Singh and Ishwar Singh were killed while Gajendra's wife, son and his daughter in law were injured and are being treated at the SMS hospital in Jaipur, police said. Gajendra Singh was a constable posted in Rajasthan Armed Constabulary (RAC). SHO Kumher Himanshu Singh said that Gajendra Singh's son Tenpal had a verbal spat with his neighbour Lakkan a few days back and Tenpal had slapped Lakkan too. The elderly people in the village had intervened and the issue was resolved at that time but Lakkan wanted revenge, the SHO said. He said that Lakkan along with 8-10 others barged into the house of Gajendra late last night and started shouting.



More than 40 high-end mobile phones stolen during concert at BKC

More than 40 high-end mobile phones were stolen by unidentified persons during a concert at the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) here, police said on Sunday. Many concert-goers approached the police with complaints that their mobile phones were misplaced or stolen during the concert that took place at MMRDA ground on Saturday night, an official from BKC police said. Hundreds of people had attended the concert after booking their tickets online and the venue was packed, he said. The police have registered four to five FIRs under section 379 (punishment for theft) and other relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) after more than 40 high-end mobile phones were stolen or misplaced at the venue, the official said. The police were examining the CCTV footage from the area to identify and apprehend the accused, he added.



Cong, allied parties view terrorism as shortcut to success: PM Modi

PNS ■ KHEDA

Remembering the 26/11 Mumbai terror strike, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said Gujarat and the country need to be "alert" about Congress and like-minded parties which keep mum on "big terrorist attacks" to not offend their vote bank. Addressing a rally in Kheda district in Gujarat where Assembly elections are scheduled for December 1 and 5, the prime minister said Congress and many like-minded parties view terrorism as a shortcut to achieving success. "Terrorism is not over yet and the politics of the Congress has not also changed. The fear of terrorism will remain till appeasement politics continues. 'Congress views terrorism from the prism of vote bank,

Not only Congress but many like-minded parties have come up now who view terrorism as a shortcut to achieve success and this small party's hunger for power is even bigger," he said without naming the "small party". The prime minister said the mouths of these parties remain "locked when big terrorist attacks take place so that their vote bank is not offended. They even go to courts from the back door to save terrorists". "When Batla House encounter took place, a Congress leader cried for terrorists. Gujarat and the country should remain alert from such parties," he added. The 2008 encounter near Delhi resulted in the deaths of two terrorists hiding in a flat in the Batla House area in Okhla



and a police officer. "Your one vote in 2014 (Lok Sabha elections) strengthened the fight against terrorism. Now forget about terror attacks in our cities, they (India's enemies) think 100 times before even conducting such attacks on our borders," the PM said, adding they know India will hit by entering their homes ("ghar main ghus ke marega"). In an apparent reference to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the PM said Congress and like-minded parties had raised doubts about surgical strikes and the ability of our armed forces. "Those countries which took terrorism lightly

are in clutches of terrorism. Terrorism is not over yet. The politics of the Congress party has also not changed, while small parties are also indulging in vote bank politics," he said. The PM said, "till the vote bank politics remains the fear of a resurgence of terrorism is also real". "We have to save Gujarat from those playing the dirty game of terrorism. This is a long fight and we need your support," Modi said. He said the 2008 Mumbai terror attack was the "epitome of terrorist attacks in the country". "I pray for the departed souls," the PM said, a day after tributes were paid to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the 26/11 strike unleashed by 10 Pakistani terrorists in which 166 people were killed and several injured.

India eyes smaller N reactors for clean energy transition: Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is taking steps for the development of small modular Reactors with up to 300 MW capacity to fulfil its commitment to transitioning towards clean energy, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said Sunday. At a workshop on Small Modular Reactors (SMR) organized by NITI Aayog and the Department of Atomic Energy, he said the participation of the private sector and start-ups needs to be explored in the development of this critical technology within India. He emphasised that technology sharing and availability of funding are the two crucial links for ensuring the commercial availability of SMR technology. Singh said the exploration of new clean energy options is in tune with



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadmap for clean energy transition through bold climate commitments which are reflected in the updated Nationally Determined Contributions. SMRs with up to 300 MW capacity, by nature, are flexible in design and require a smaller footprint, Singh said, adding that being mobile and agile technology, SMRs can be factory-built, unlike the conventional nuclear reactors that are built on-site. SMR is a promising technology in industrial de-carbonization, especially where there is a requirement for a reliable and continuous supply of power, the minister added.

3 children crushed to death by train in Punjab's Rupnagar

PNS ■ RUPNAGAR (PUNJAB)

Three children were crushed to death by a passenger train near Sri Kiratpur Sahib here on Sunday, police said on Sunday. The incident took place when four children of migrant labourers were playing near the railway track close to the bridge over Sutlej river, they said. The fourth child was injured in the incident and was admitted to a hospital, said police. The boys were in the age group of 7 to 11 years, police added.



21 YEARS AFTER DEVASTATING EARTHQUAKE

Bhuj yearns for planned industrialisation

PNS ■ BHUJ (GUJ)

Two decades after a devastating earthquake struck Bhuj in Gujarat, the Kutch district might have witnessed unprecedented industrial growth, but environmentalists and town veterans are apprehensive about whether Bhuj has learnt its lessons and prepared to face such a natural disaster. In January 2001, a massive earthquake struck the town of Bhuj and Kutch district, killing thousands of people, destroying thousands of homes, and rendering lakhs of people homeless. Post-earthquake, the Gujarat government announced a major reconstruction and rehabilita-

tion policy, under which the district witnessed unprecedented industrial growth in the last two decades. Scientists and environmentalists feel that with Kutch being one of the active seismic zones of the country, the administration should be extra careful while carrying out developmental activities such as industrialisation and town planning. As the election approaches, the earthquake survivors and the scientists urge political parties to take note of warning signs before it's too late. The Bhuj assembly constituency will go to poll on December 1, the first phase of the Gujarat elections. Professor M G Thakkar, the

head of the Earth and Environmental Science department at KSKV Kachchh University, said Kutch has several "active fault lines", with one passing through the Bhuj town itself. "There are several research papers where we have pointed out these fault lines. After 2010, the ministry of sciences allotted us various projects to map those fault lines. But the thing is, we are not considering this scientific outcome during town planning," Thakkar said. He wondered whether, even after two decades, the district is well prepared to face a disaster of the 2001 Bhuj earthquake magnitude in future.

Avoid antibiotics for low-grade fever: ICMR

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Council of Medical Research has issued guidelines warning against the use of antibiotics for conditions such as low-grade fever and viral bronchitis while advising doctors to follow a timeline while prescribing them. The ICMR guidelines stated that antibiotics should be prescribed for a duration of five days for skin and soft tissue infections, five days in case of community-acquired pneumonia and eight days for hospital-acquired pneumonia. "A clinical diagnosis most often helps us predict causative pathogens fitting into a clinical syndrome which would tailor the correct antibiotic rather than blindly relying on fever, procalcitonin levels, WBC counts, cultures or radiology to make a diagnosis of infection," the guidelines said.

It stated limiting empiric antibiotic therapy to seriously ill patients. Generally, empiric antibiotic therapy is only recommended for a select group of patients suffering from severe sepsis and septic shock, community-acquired pneumonia, ventilator-associated pneumonia and necrotizing fasciitis. Hence, it is important to start smart and then focus, i.e., evaluate if empiric therapy can be justified or de-escalated and then make a plan with regard to the duration of therapy, the guidelines said. An ICMR survey conducted between January 1 and December 31, 2021 had suggested that a big chunk of patients in India may no longer benefit from the use of carbapenem, a powerful antibiotic administered mainly in ICU settings for the treatment of pneumonia and septicemia,



etc., as they have developed anti-microbial resistance to it. The analysis of the data pointed towards a sustained increase in drug-resistant pathogens, resulting in difficulty to treat certain infections with the available medicines. Resistance to Imipenem, which is used to treat infections caused by E coli bacteria, increased from 14 per cent in 2016 to 36 per cent in 2021. The trend of decreasing susceptibility of bacteria to specific antibiotics was also observed with Klebsiella pneumoniae as it registered a drop from 65

per cent in 2016 to 45 per cent in 2020 and was at 43 per cent in 2021. The susceptibility term here was used to describe the vulnerability of the bacteria to the antibiotic. Carbapenem resistance isolates of E coli and K pneumoniae are also resistant to other antimicrobials, making it very challenging to treat carbapenem-resistant infections. The resistance to broad-spectrum antibiotic carbapenem in respect to infections caused by Acinetobacter baumannii bacteria was recorded in 87.5 per cent of the patients who were part of the study in 2021, limiting the availability of treatment options, the ICMR report said. According to HAI Surveillance data included in this report, Acinetobacter causes almost 70 per cent of the urinary tract infections in critically sick (ICU) patients.

Railways sees dip in senior citizen travellers, pandemic key reason

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Railways has seen an almost 24 per cent dip in the number of senior citizens travelling by trains in 2021-22 as compared to 2019-2020, according to an RTI query. Officials said this dip can be attributed to the second wave of COVID-19, when fewer people were travelling by trains. This was also the time the Railways withdrew concessions for senior citizens, they said. In 2018-2019, 7.1 crore senior citizens travelled by



trains, while in 2019-20, the number rose to 7.2 crore. In the pandemic-hit 2020-21, only around 1.9 crore citizens aged above 60 years travelled by train. However, in 2021-22, about 5.5 crore used the Railways. Due to the

decrease in number of passengers, the Railways has experienced a dip in revenue from this category, with the earnings showing a downward slide of 13 per cent. The total revenue from senior citizen travellers during 2018-2019 was Rs 2,920 crore, Rs 3,010 crore in 2019-2020, Rs 875 crore in 2020-21 and Rs 2,598 crore in 2021-22, according to the RTI response. The coronavirus-related travel restrictions imposed during the first wave of COVID-19 in 2020 continued to be in place until the end of second wave of the pandemic.

Mumbai's century-old museum wins UNESCO Asia-Pacific award

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The restoration of the 100-year-old Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya in Mumbai has won a top award from UNESCO, with the jury hailing it as a project that "sets a standard" for the conservation of world heritage monuments. The museum, part of the Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai's world heritage property, has received the Award of Excellence in this year's UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation that were announced on Saturday.

UNESCO Bangkok, in a statement, said, "The jury applauded the museum project for restoring 'a major civic institution in the historic city of Mumbai'. The jury noted, 'impressive in its scale, the project addressed extensive deterioration through well-informed architectural and engineering solutions, overcoming major challenges during the pandemic', it said. The "heroic" restoration of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya has received the Award of Excellence in this year's UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation, the statement said.

BJP govts work to ensure empowerment without appeasement: Naqvi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A politician's identity is not dependent on family lineage and the BJP's governments work to ensure empowerment without appeasement and development without discrimination, senior party leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said on Sunday, in an apparent dig at the Congress. Participating in meeting in Uttar Pradesh's Naunganva to seek support for the BJP's candidate, Akash Saxena, for the December 5 Rampur assembly bypoll, the former union minister said arrogance and anarchy

cause trouble. Politics of "arrogance of power and post" never lasts long and the welfare and wellbeing of the common people should be the objective of politicians, Naqvi said. The Rampur seat fell vacant after Samajwadi Party MLA Azam Khan was convicted by an MP-MLA court in a 2019 hate speech case. "The (Narendra) Modi-Yogi (Adityanath) era has replaced 'khandaani zamindari' (family feudalism) with 'khidmat ki ravadari' (devotion to service). This revolutionary change has jolted those who considered

politics as their 'dynastic property', a statement from Naqvi's office quoted him as saying at the meeting. "Prime Minister Modi has brought significant positive change in the country's politics. Now, a politician's identity is not dependent on a 'family cradle', but only his diligence and hard-work can establish him in politics," Naqvi said. Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath have made every section of society an equal partner of progress with the commitment to 'reform, perform and transform', he said.

ALL ABOUT AUTONOMY

Single woman farmers become entrepreneurs

PNS ■ RAYAGADA (ODISHA)

Vivid orange marigolds, dense purple aubergines and luminous green cabbages... not just farm produce but the colours of freedom for the women of Rayagada who defied a society unwilling to accept their status as single women to collectively find independence. Out to regain control over their lives and break free of societal shackles, more than 30 widows, divorced or unmarried women formed the Ekal Naari Sangathan (single women collective) in 2019. It was the starting point for a profitable busi-

ness venture that over time included more women, and the turning point in their lives. As they move through their fields tending to their crops, the song is back in their lives. Quite literally. Women working as helpers in farms alongside men is a common sight across India. But look carefully, hear closely and the difference is clear. The women of the tribal Dengasargi village in Rayagada, who break into song in Kui language, are the main decision makers who farm, market and sell their produce to earn their livelihood. The women's families own land



The Sangathan began with three acres to grow marigold as well as vegetables such as bitter gourd, aubergine and cabbage. In the three years since, the land being cultivated has grown to 40 acres. The women's families own land

between 0.5 acre to 2 acres on which they grow flowers and vegetables. The collective sells it in the market. The amount earned goes directly in their bank accounts every week. "We had a turnover of Rs 47 lakh last year and this season we have made Rs 76 lakh. Of this, each woman farmer gets between Rs 80,000-1.5 lakh profit depending upon the size of land they are carrying out the cultivation on," said Morepingidhi. She is a board member of Annapoorna, the collective formed with the help of the government and NGOs, to sell

their produce. There are 98 women in the company right now. The marigold cultivated here is transported to different temples in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh and also used in family functions. "The company is now planning to extend its operations to other southern states," Morepingidhi said. For these women, most from the Kondha tribe, who didn't or couldn't get married, got divorced or were widowed, the financial independence has translated to not just autonomy but also respect and equal sta-

tus in their families and in society. "We were abused, called names for stepping out of our homes to farm. But when the money started coming in, our status not just in society but also in our own family changed," Morepingidhi said. The 35-year-old said she could not get married due to a leg injury and didn't get a chance to study because of her family's financial condition. She worked all her life in a farm where she grew rice and millet, just enough for the family to survive with nothing left to sell in the market.

Mufti, former legislators served eviction notices

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Authorities in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir Sunday asked PDP president Mehbooba Mufti and seven former legislators to vacate government residential quarters within 24 hours failing which action would be taken, officials said. Mufti was served an eviction notice for her 'Fairview' residence at the high security Gupkar area of the city here last month as well. Sunday's eviction notice, by the executive magistrate First class on the orders of the Anantnag deputy commis-

sioner was issued to Mufti and others for the government quarters located in Housing Colony at Khanabal in the south Kashmir district, the officials said. They said other than Mufti, the notices were issued to ex-MLAs Mohammad Altaf Wani, Abdul Rahim Rather, Abdul Majeed Bhat, Altaf Shah, and Abdul Kabir Pathan, ex-MLCs Bashir Shah and Choudhary Nizamuddin. The notices warned the occupants of action under law if they fail to vacate the premises within 24 hours, the officials said.

Precept and practice

Politicians say nice things in speeches but opt for expedience, as evident from their campaigns

When a netaji is pontificating about virtue, responsibility, etc., talking about dos and don'ts, he is actually telling his rivals how they should behave. He, however, would continue to do what he deems fits, expedient; after all, it is winnability that matters. Others, however, should behave themselves; they should not indulge in populism or promote the 'revdi' culture; their language should be civil, within the lakshman rekha. Almost all politicians are convinced that their adversaries should follow these rules; I, however, will do whatever I want to do. This has once again become evident in the run-up to the Assembly polls in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 16 cautioned the political class about the menace of what he called the "revdi culture." He was absolutely correct when he said that freebies are "very dangerous" for economic development. For a while it looked like the Bharatiya Janata



Party had decided to weed out the menace from the political arena. A BJP leader, Ashwini Upadhyay, petitioned the Supreme Court, seeking restrictions on parties on distributing "irrational freebies" before elections. All this looked nice—till the campaign for Assembly elections in the two states gained momentum. All the nice things said about the danger of freebies have been forgotten by the BJP. Other parties anyway were not preaching the virtues of fiscal prudence; in fact, Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party boss Arvind Kejriwal defended freebies with usual sanctimoniousness.

In Himachal, the BJP has promised Rs 2,500 every month to 5,000 girls in government schools with best performance in class 12 throughout their graduation. Also, all school girls will get bicycles and college girls scooties. While promoting female education is a laudable enterprise, one may wonder if freebies are the best way to do that. Unsurprisingly and expectedly, the AAP has promised free power, an unemployment allowance, and monthly cash allowance for all adult women in Gujarat, where its ambition is to topple the BJP Government. The saffron party has been ruling the western state for the last 27 years. Not to be left behind, the Congress manifesto has pledged farmers' debt waiver, gas cylinder at Rs 500, and 300 free units of electricity in Gujarat. Quite ominously, the party manifesto says, "Congress will stop mindless privatisation of healthcare and education." Such phraseology is the consequence of a socialist mindset. In a way, the three parties' elections manifestoes also show their desperation: the BJP doesn't want lose, especially in Gujarat because it is Modi's home state; the grand old party wants to stage a comeback; and the AAP wants to convince everyone that it is on a successful expansion drive, especially after its spectacular victory in Punjab earlier this year. In normal circumstances, politicians are not the best specimens of mankind; in their desperation, they can breach several norms of civility and canniness. This is exactly what they are doing now.

PICTALK



Artists perform a Garo traditional dance during Wangala festival at Chotipara, in Goalpara

PTI

Govt's dilemma

Indian govt abstains on UNHRC resolution on anti hijab protesters to show its support to Iran

India abstained on a resolution adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to set up a fact-finding mission into alleged human rights violations in Iran committed on protesters in the country by state authorities. The anti-Hijab protests are at the peak in Iran which started after the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in police custody. She paid with her life for not wearing a 'hijab'. India's was one of 16 abstentions on the resolution, sponsored by Germany and the Netherlands, and comes just a week after New Delhi voted against an Iran-specific resolution in the third committee of the UN General Assembly. Nevertheless, the resolution in the UNHRC was passed, at a special session of the 47-member human rights body. The resolution denounced the "violent crackdown on peaceful protests by security forces" which started after the death of Mahsa Amini. The resolution established a fact-finding mission into the allegations of human rights violations in Iran since September 16. China, Pakistan, Armenia, Eritrea, Cuba and Venezuela voted against the resolution. The two Gulf members of the Council, Qatar and United Arab Emirates, abstained and India gave them company. Earlier this month, the UN Security Council held an informal meeting on the Iranian protests. India did not give a statement at that meeting either. Two weeks later, on November 16, the UNGA's third committee voted on a draft resolution that referred to the death of Mahsa Amini and urged Iranian officials to "cease the use of excessive force against peaceful protesters, including women and children". India had voted 'No'.

It is indeed an Indian Govt's dilemma. From an economic perspective, Iran is the second-largest supplier of crude oil to India. India buys more than 4,25,000 barrels per day. India happens to be one of the largest foreign investors in Iran's oil and gas industry. The government wants to appease the Iranian rulers so as not to disturb its relations with them and so would not mind standing against the world at large in supporting hijab whereas back home it is doing the exact opposite. The Karnataka government led by the BJP is out to enforce 'hijab' ban and it does not mind crushing the pro hijab protesters. This is political expediency at its best where only interest matters. The govt doesn't mind looking regressive to the world, it is sheer convenience that is at play.



Remembering demonetization

Demonetisation was successful in curbing the informal economy and insulating the country from the neighbour's financial mischiefs

Reportedly, there are some 50 petitions pending in the country's courts protesting the demonetization of currency notes that was implemented on November 8, 2016; we just passed its eighth anniversary. Understandably, this move by the Narendra Modi government continues to generate much talk. In all, I have witnessed three demonetizations and therefore feel qualified to comment on the subject. In 1946, the old 1000-rupee note was demonetized. In 1978, high denomination notes were rendered invalid. We are today debating the 2016 decision.

In the pre-Modi era, it was widely believed that approximately 50 per cent of the Indian economy generated in the country could not be tapped at all for purposes of development. The black money had to be spent in less productive activities like land deals, property transactions and what not. Such money had to be spent quickly in order to keep it away from thieves and from income tax vigilance; its mention in any legal document was not possible. The tax-evaded money could neither be legally invested nor safely saved for even one's children, not to speak of national development. In brief, black was money only for the time being, in contrast to the bankable money, which was actual wealth.

What was unusual about Indian black money was that it was reported to be manufactured in our neighbouring countries. For example, superannuated Bihari cows used to have a ready market at fancy prices. West Bengal traders used to buy our toothbrushes readily; more especially if one did not write a bill and accepted cash. In the event the notes paid happened to be jaali (counterfeit) one would have been informed at which shop one could change it back to a valid note. When the thunderbolt of the 2016 demonetization burst upon India, everyone up to the upper middle class was able to change their cash. Those who were hit were the people who had hoarded large sums of black



money and could not change their notes. On the morrow of the occasion, many an economist or an intellectual began using the term "informal economy" for the black economy, because it is inappropriate for a respectable person to plead for something illegal.

The result of the action was to get rid of the hoarded cash lying wastefully. However, its greatest service was to interrupt for a long time, if not forever, the printing of Indian currency notes in neighbouring countries. Simultaneously, smuggling of goods was significantly reduced. Nevertheless, demonetization would have been a fleeting event, had it not been followed by the introduction of the Goods & Services Tax (GST).

I would like to bring in a personal experience in this particular regard. The sale of our toothbrushes increased within a fortnight. It was indeed a welcome surprise. Upon thinking further, we realized that quite a few of our competitors might not have maintained systematic records. Some of them were making brushes by simply sticking nylon into the plastic handles; they had brought these in on a friendly basis from, say, China. The history behind all this was that



IN THE PRE-MODI ERA, IT WAS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT APPROXIMATELY 50 PER CENT OF THE INDIAN ECONOMY GENERATED IN THE COUNTRY COULD NOT BE TAPPED AT ALL FOR PURPOSES OF DEVELOPMENT

toothbrush manufacturing was for decades, reserved for the small scale sector. In short, overnight, an informal activity turned into a formal sector one. Apart from sales tax, the additional fear was that from the GST website and the income tax department could also monitor how much of what product was being sold by whom.

An incidental but a substantial advantage that emerged from the introduction of the GST was the drastic reduction in lorry transport time. Post-GST, an interstate lorry no longer has to stop at every state border. The lorry's photograph and registration are recorded by CCTV. Earlier, the vehicle had to queue up at the state border to obtain clearance by the states' sales tax authorities. Up to 40 per cent travelling time has thus been saved.

Without the GST, the demonetization move of eight years ago would have been say, a birth without a life to follow up. And without demonetization, the GST might have been a life without a birth. Yet another advantage of GST has been the abolition of most other indirect taxes, starting from the excise duty. Imagine the expenditure saved to the tax-

payer on the one hand and the governments, beginning with the Centre, and ending with the states, small and big. As a guess, at least one-third of India's lorry time would have been saved. Above all, the tax has taken India towards its goal of one country one tax. Moreover, the demonetization has helped India avoid its exploitation by its neighbours. The veteran political analyst and economist S. Gurumurthy has likened the 2016 demonetization to a "financial Pokharan", i.e., a nuclear strike against not only black money, but covert financial war against the nation.

Assuming that in the pre-Modi era, 50 per cent of India's economy was black; at least half this amount is currently being ploughed back into the economy as white money. In that sense, India's economy has become 25 per cent larger spontaneously. It is also a necessary step towards making India a more modern economy, which is the first necessary step, if we aspire to make the rupee into a convertible currency.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SANJAY RAUT'S BAIL HEARING

Sir — As per report the single bench of the Bombay High Court on Friday November 25 recused itself from hearing the Enforcement Directorate's plea seeking cancellation of bail granted to Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut and his aide Pravin Raut in a money laundering case. The ED had approached the HC seeking cancellation of bail granted to the Rajya Sabha MP and his aide by a special court on November 9.

The Central probe agency had sought an interim stay on the bail order, which the High Court had refused. When the matter came up for hearing, the single bench of Justice M S Karnik said, "It would not be appropriate for me to take up this matter not before me." The matter will now be placed before a new bench. Sanjay Raut was granted bail by special PMLA judge M G Deshpande, over a hundred days after he was arrested in the money laundering case related to redevelopment of Patra Chawl in suburban Goregaon. The special court, in its order, had termed the Rajya Sabha member's arrest as "illegal, without reason". With this all is not well.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

WOES OF CONGRESS PARTY

Sir — Obviously, the woes of the Grand Old Party are far from over as a couple of its leaders are hell bent upon cutting the branch they are presently sitting on given that the party veteran and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has renewed his blitzkrieg against his bete noire and DY CM Sachin Pilot by calling him a 'traitor' and even going to the extent of accusing him of hatching a conspiracy in collusion with the BJP with a view to toppling the Congress government in Rajasthan. Down playing these charges however, Mr Pilot reminded that such a behaviour was unbecoming of a senior and experienced leader like Mr Gehlot and that the priority now should be given to Rajasthan where the assembly elections are due next year. In the same vein, he advised Ashok Gehlot to concentrate on Gujarat where the polls are round the corner and he (Mr Gehlot) is an

Mass shootings in the USA



The horrifying shooting inside a Walmart store at Chesapeake, Virginia a few days ago yet again underscores the growing gun culture in the US. Though the nerve-wracking incident reignites the debate over gun-control in America, realistically it is unlikely to result in any significant reforms, as the US has a deep and enduring connection to guns, integrated into the fabric of American society. Sadly and unsurprisingly mass shootings in the US have become a common affair, and it raises again the most

obvious question that has been discussed and debated many times in the past: "why can't America stop the scourge of gun violence?"

Distressingly enough, it cannot for the reason that gun violence in the US is symbolic of a broken political system that fails to protect its own citizens. Frequent mass shootings are a stain on the country's international reputation. In a broader sense, the failure to implement bold measures against gun violence is seen as a dysfunctional system of a government incapable of protecting its own citizens, including children. In fact, Pew Research Center's survey reveals the fact that an average 83 per cent of Americans have said that the US is no longer a good model of democracy to follow. This makes for depressing reading and seemingly makes it incumbent on the Biden administration to take immediate action on gun control and the need for gun reform.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

observer. Notably, Sachin Pilot also recently asked new Congress chief Mr Mallikarjun Kharge to initiate disciplinary proceedings against Mr Gehlot's royalist legislators who had boycotted the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) meeting in Rajasthan and convened a parallel one instead, attended by the rebels. On the face of it, this internecine bickering in the Congress will simply lead to the differences among the leaders only to deepen.

Interestingly, Sachin Pilot has joined Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi in the ongoing 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', going to enter into Rajasthan in a couple of days and, hence, the party high command eagerly wants all the belligerent leaders to bury the hatchet as early as possible and unitedly campaign for the party's electoral prospects in the upcoming assembly polls getting ameliorated, or otherwise, all the hardships Mr Gandhi has been going through to amass public support everywhere during the foot march, might fall on stony ground.

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

THE SPIRIT OF CONSTITUTION

Sir — "The Constitution is not a mere lawyer's document, it is a vehicle of life and it's spirit is always the spirit of age - Father of Indian Constitution." Every year India witnesses November 26 as the Constitution day, also to honour the law minister and architect of independent India, Dr BR Ambedkar who played a pivotal role in drafting the constitution of India. Samvidhan Diwas aims to highlight the importance, of the Indian constitution.

Our Transformative Constitution teaches us about making decisions with a lot of patience among people from diverse communities. It is embedded with vision and reflection of the future. People of India are custodian of the longest written Constitution. It empowers citizens, and citizens empowers Samvidhan too by respecting it religiously. The Constitution is nobody's preserve but it is everybody's preserve.

Tashi Baheti | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

The history of India is not just about slavery...The history of India is about emerging victorious, it is about the valour of countless greats.

Prime Minister

— Narendra Modi

China would be willing to work together with North Korea for regional and global peace, stability and prosperity.

Chinese President

— Xi Jinping

I think the thing that Trump was most perturbed about (was) me asking him to be my vice president...Trump started by screaming at me at the table, telling me I'm going to lose.

Rapper

— Kanye West

The situation we were in and from there to reach 307 is a commendable total. Definitely, some things didn't go our way today but it's a learning curve, we can introspect, comeback with new ideas in the next game.

Indian cricketer

— Shreyas Iyer

During the Congress rule in Gujarat (before 1995), communal riots were rampant. Congress used to incite people of different communities and castes to fight against each other.

Union Home Minister

— Amit Shah

FIRST COLUMN

CYCLING FOR NATURE,
WITH SEED BALLS

Seeds can be conserved in balls
which can help raising trees



ALKA GADGIL

As monsoon sets in, we head to the wild for seed bombing of native fruits like mango, jambul and jackfruit, said Makarand Vaingankar, an owner of a medical store, and Yashvant Bhosale, a treasury officer from Sindhudurg district in Maharashtra. In dry areas, the shape of the seed ball gives enough shade to conserve moisture. Eventually, the seeds begin to germinate, and the ball breaks apart. The small pile of crumbs leads to a rooting system. The plants then mature and produce their own seeds and provide shelter once the second-generation seeds fall to the ground, they said.

Both Vaingankar and Bhosale have been members of Kanak Riders Kankavli, a cycling group, for seven years now. The group has been involved in raising awareness about environmental conservation among students and youth through cycling.

"We use social media to raise our voice against the destruction of biodiversity. We hold meetings with schoolchildren and college students from the Kankavli area about these issues. I am worried, what kind of world will we be leaving behind for children," added Bhosale.

On Sundays and holidays, the group plans to cover 100 km in a day on cycle. Many students, youth, and their parents join their venture. This has led to a renewed interest in cycling among the population.



While sharing significant moments they experienced while cycling, the group said: "Recently we visited Vravade dam in Kankavli, which is a reserved area. We waded through a thick green cover to reach the dam." The clouds have descended, and it was a beautiful moment."

Ever since the group decided to uncover the hidden places in the region, cycling has not only increased environmental awareness among the population but also their health. "A person who had asthma came for a ride with us. There was a steep ascent on our way. He cycled for some time, halted, and used his inhaler, and then he joined again. We were stressed, but he did not give up. Six months have passed since then. He does not use an inhaler anymore and rides for 100 km without any hassle," said Bhosale.


The group faces a lot of challenges while carrying out their campaign. When they plant trees in open spaces, people from the neighbourhood are often very unsupportive. People ask what we are doing in their precinct. Some have a very myopic view and think that trees are a menace because they get in the way. Even temple authorities object to seed bombing in their vicinity, said the group.

Reflecting on their future plans, the group shared how, despite challenges, they had come together to form an association and approach the administration to find solutions to the growing environmental concerns. Informing about their next campaign, the group said, Murdeshwar Temple is amidst a thick jungle, and there are water bodies around it. But people are defacing the flora and fauna by throwing litter. We will make the administration take note of it. We are also going to hold sessions in schools, colleges and offices across Sindhudurga district.

As a first step towards environmental sustainability, the group urges the masses to be more conscious of actions, as they put it. If you are travelling in the Monsoon, please take seed balls with you. The seeds shouldn't be discarded, as they can be used to make seed balls. Seeds of native varieties should be sown, not those of exotic species. If 10 seed balls are thrown, at least two will take root for sure.

(The writer is a development worker from Maharashtra: Charkha Features)

Under IBC, protecting minority shareholders



UTTAM GUPTA

The soul of IBC mechanism lies in timely detection of stress in a firm and selling it as a 'going concern'

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has proposed a framework to protect the interests of public equity shareholders in case of listed companies undergoing insolvency proceedings under the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). In 2016, the Modi Government enacted the IBC. This legislation overrides all other subsisting laws and gives a strong handle to the banks for resolving non-performing assets (NPAs) of lenders.

In 2017, it amended the Banking Regulation Act (BRA), giving RBI powers to force banks to act if they don't on their own. On February 12, 2018, the RBI issued a circular that provided a foundational basis for resolving NPAs. As per this circular, for accounts with aggregate exposure greater than Rs 2,000 crore, as soon as there was a default in the account with any lender, all lenders – singly or jointly – shall initiate steps to cure the default by preparing and implementing a resolution plan (RP). This needed to be done within 180 days from the date of default.

In case, the lenders fail to meet this deadline, they are required to refer the account to the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) which would initiate proceedings under the IBC. The NCLT would get 180 days to complete the resolution process. A further 90 days is allowed in exceptional circumstances. Thus, the outer limit for consummating the process is 270 days.

The raison d'être of imposing this timeline and involving RBI to shepherd the exercise was to sell the NPA afflicted entity – as a going concern in an 'objective' and 'transparent' manner and maximise the realisation from sale.

Under the current process, existing shareholders get squeezed out as the CIRP results in huge equity dilution and even delisting—a situation arising consequent to the new acquirer's shareholding becoming 100 per cent pursuant to the CIRP process.

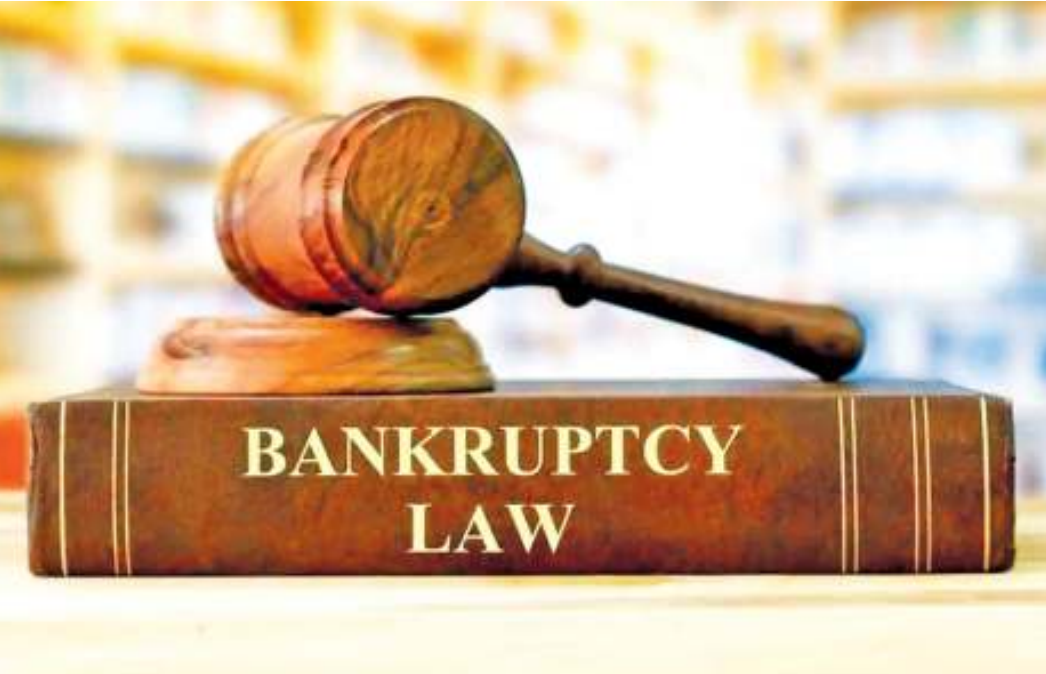
Under IBC, equity holders are considered owners of the insolvent company, and thus fall last in the resolution plan (RP) approved by the NCLT to receive any dues at the time of liquidation. They don't even get prior intimation and forget an opportunity to present their case to the committee of creditors (CoC), which steers the insolvency process even as the latter's rights are considered superior.

To address the concerns of public equity shareholders, Sebi has proposed they be given an opportunity to acquire a minimum of five per cent and up to 25 per cent in the new entity. The offer will depend on the shareholding the new acquirer gets as a result of the RP. If a new acquirer's shareholding becomes 100 per cent, the minimum offer required to be



THE RECOVERY BY FINANCIAL CREDITORS WAS A RECORD LOW OF 13.4 PER CENT OF THE ADMITTED CLAIMS DURING OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2021. MOREOVER, IN 363 MAJOR CASES, BANKS TOOK A HAIR-CUT OF 80 PER CENT ON AN AVERAGE

(The author is a policy analyst)



made for existing public shareholders will be 25 per cent and the minimum acceptance five per cent.

In the event there is no interest even for five per cent of shares, the resultant entity will be allowed to delist. If the acquirer's shareholding in the resultant entity becomes 75 per cent pursuant to the CIRP process, there will not be any requirement to make an offer to public investors as their holding will already be at 25 per cent.

The offer to acquire shares of the resultant entity (albeit consequent to the CIRP process) will not be available to associate companies, family members of promoter group companies, trusts managed by promoters, key managerial personnel, and directors, etc., as that will defeat the very purpose of helping small shareholders.

The price offered to these shareholders should be the same as the one agreed upon by the resolution applicant/new acquirer. The Sebi proposal is logical. It could give a fair opportunity to minority shareholders of the firm under CIRP process to be a partner and benefit from appreciation in share value as and when it runs profitable under the acquirer. It would also be in sync with a minimum of 25 per cent public float that the market regulator expects from a listed company. But, the situation on ground zero is different.

Even in well-run and profitable companies, the regulator is unable to enforce the 25 per cent norm.

The central government too remains keen to circumvent this norm as may be seen from its asking Sebi to exempt the IDBI bank from the public float requirement. By contrast, NPA afflicted firms under CIRP face heavy odds. They are struggling to prevent erosion of their asset value. Of the total 5,636 CIRPs, 3,637 have been closed. Of the closed cases, 1,703 have ended in liquidation.

The recovery by financial creditors was a record low of 13.4 per cent of the admitted claims during October-December 2021. Moreover, in 363 major cases, banks took a hair-cut of 80 per cent on an average (for some such as Videocon, it was even higher at 95 per cent).

When there is so much erosion in asset value and over 50 per cent of cases ended up in liquidation, any talk of rewarding minority shareholders is meaningless.

Under directions of the Supreme Court (SC), the RBI was forced to issue a revised circular dated June 7, 2019 in supersession of its February 12, 2018 order. It gives banks 180 days to come up with RP (in addition to 30 days to enter into an inter-lender agreement or ILA). If they do not, they are required to make an additional provision of 20 per cent. If they don't finalize the plan within 365 days, an additional 15 per cent provision has to be made.

Unlike the February 12, 2018, which mandates the bank to refer the account to NCLT at the end of 180 days, under the revised circular, there is no such compulsion on it. See it from another angle. If RP is not implemented within one year from the default date, the bank has to make provision of 50 per cent - 15 per cent normal ageing provision and 35 per cent additional (20 plus 15). At the end of 15 months, with normal ageing provision increasing to 40 per cent, the total provisioning requirement including 35 per cent additional, will be a steep 75 per cent.

Having provided for 75 per cent of loan amount in the balance sheet, where is the incentive for the bank to recover the money by initiating proceedings under the IBC?

In short, by taking away powers from the RBI and giving too much leeway to the banks under the June 7, 2019 circular, the SC intervention has rendered the IBC process dysfunctional. This apart, most of the NCLT rulings are challenged in the High Court and the SC, leading to inordinate delays in conclusion of CIRP proceedings and resultant erosion of asset value.

The soul of IBC mechanism lies in timely detection of stress in a firm and selling it as a 'going concern' so as to realize maximum value. Sebi's idea of protecting minority shareholders (in fact, all other efforts of the government to protect all creditors – financial and operational – through a spate of amendments in the law) will work only when the soul is preserved.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

FRANKLY, I FAIL TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE COMMENT ON PRIME MINISTER MODI WAS EITHER RELEVANT, NECESSARY OR CONTEXTUAL.
— EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON
ARINDAM BAGCHI




...SOME EXAMPLES: PRESIDENT MUGABE IN ZIMBABWE IN 2001; PM MODI IN INDIA IN 2014; THIS IS A CONSISTENT PRACTICE THAT WE HAVE AFFORDED TO HEADS OF STATE, GOVERNMENT, FOREIGN MINISTERS.
— US STATE DEPT DY SPOKESPERSON
VEDANT PATEL

No massacre, no famine, just change in trade routes

Trade and climate had turned against Greenland Norse, so they most likely just moved back to Iceland, or even to Norway

If the 20th century AD were dated at the same resolution as the 20th century BC, the two World Wars would be indistinguishable in time; and the Montgomery Bus Strike might post-date the release of Mandela." So wrote the ECHOES (Exact Chronology of Early Societies) team of palaeohistorians at Groningen University in the northern Netherlands—and then they fixed the problem.

Their new method for dating events in the distant past immediately got my attention, because the first problem they solved was the exact date of the first European settlement in the New World. It was the Viking settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows at the very northernmost tip of Newfoundland,



GWYNNE DYER

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is *The Shortest History of War*)

and the year was 1021 AD.

I was always interested in the Norse, because I grew up in Newfoundland and that was already seen as the likeliest location of the region they called 'Vinland'. I read the sagas ('Erik the Red' and 'The Greenlanders'), which were rip-roaring tales of triumph and treachery but distinctly short on geographical and chronological detail.

Then in the 1960s Norwegian archaeologists discovered the remains of eight Norse longhouses on the L'Anse aux Meadows site. So the location was known, but still not the date. The explorers came from the new Norse settlements in Greenland, which had been founded in 985 AD, but nobody knew how much later they arrived

in Newfoundland.

So what the hell! Let's say it was the year 1000 AD. The Newfoundland Museum declared that the year 2000 was the millennium of the Viking settlement, the local tourist authorities went into high gear—and somebody at the Museum contacted me to write the script for the exhibition, because... well, because I was a journalist and a Newfoundland.

I swallowed my doubts, named my price, and did the job. Not a bad job, actually, because I could play with the fact that the Norse in Newfoundland had both peaceful and violent contacts with the local indigenous people.

Those people, probably related to the extinct Beothuk of Newfoundland or the mod-

ern Innu of Labrador, were very distant descendants of the modern human beings who left Africa around 100,000 years ago, turned right, crossed all of Asia, and finally arrived in North America when the glaciers receded about 14,000 years ago.

The Norse, on the other hand, were the distant descendants of those who turned left when they left Africa, settled Europe—and eventually island-hopped across the Atlantic. After all those millennia the two streams of migration finally met up again in Newfoundland. So I called the exhibition 'Full Circle', and slid past the question of exactly when it happened.

But now we know. The ECHOES team figured it out by examining bits of wood

found on the L'Anse aux Meadows site that had clearly been cut with iron (European) axes. A huge solar flare in 993 AD left a spike in that year's tree rings, so just count rings out from there to the bark. The trees died in 1021.

The specific date of L'Anse aux Meadows doesn't really matter, of course, but the technique does. Cosmic-ray-induced surges in atmospheric radiocarbon concentrations are another new tool for figuring out the past, and that is now important work.

Two centuries ago our knowledge of the past barely reached back past classical Greece and Rome: say, 3,000 years. Now scientists are working hard to puzzle out past climate states ranging from hundreds to billions of years ago, because understanding the patterns of the past may help us through whatever happens next. Every scrap of information may be valuable.

All very well, but why didn't the Norse settlement last? They abandoned their exploration of north-eastern North America because the 'cash crop' they were looking for in Vinland turned out to be much closer to home: ivory from the abundant walrus population that they could hunt in Disko Bay, only a thousand kilometres up Greenland's west coast.

They could feed themselves by farming and fishing, but it was the ivory that paid for all the things they needed to import from Europe (timber, iron and bronze, stained glass, etc.). Up to 5,000 peo-

ple lived in the Greenland settlements for more than four centuries, apparently quite happy to ignore 'Vinland'—and then they disappeared.

Where they went or how they died has been promoted as a great mystery, but the real reason is probably that the bottom dropped out of the European market for ivory in the early 15th century as abundant new supplies became available from Africa and Russia's new Arctic settlements.

The climate had also turned against the Greenland Norse (the 'Little Ice Age'), so they most likely just upped stakes and moved back to Iceland, or even to Norway. No massacre, no famine, just a change in the trade routes. It's not always dramatic.

MONEY MATTERS

Gold imports fall 17% in April-Oct to US\$ 24 bn

Gold imports, which have a bearing on the current account deficit, declined 17.38 per cent to about USD 24 billion during April-October due to fall in demand, according to the data of the commerce ministry. Imports of the yellow metal stood at USD 29 billion in the corresponding period of 2021-22. The imports during October this year also contracted by 27.47 per cent to USD 3.7 billion, the data showed. Silver imports during the month too dipped 34.80 per cent to USD 585 million. Cumulatively, the imports, however, jumped to USD 4.8 billion as against USD 1.52 billion during April-October 2021-22. The merchandise trade deficit for April-October 2022 was estimated at USD 173.46 billion as against USD 94.16 billion in the year-ago period. India is the largest importer of gold, which mainly caters to the demand of the jewellery industry. In volume terms, the country imports 800-900 tonne of gold annually. Gems and jewellery exports rose marginally by 1.81 per cent to USD 24 billion in April-October 2022.



Indian pharma exports rise by 4.22 pc to US\$ 14.57 billion

Pharmaceutical exports from India registered a growth of 4.22 per cent to reach USD 14.57 billion during the April-October period despite a negative trend last month, according to a senior official of an export promotion body under Government of India. Udaya Bhaskar, Director General of Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil) which is an organisation under the Ministry of Commerce, said he was hopeful of ending the current fiscal at around USD 27 billion as against USD 24.62 billion during the last financial year. "There was a dip (-0.32 per cent) in July and (-5.45 per cent) and there was 8.47 per cent positive growth in September. I am optimistic that it will be revived in the coming months and may touch USD 27 billion at the end of the fiscal," Bhaskar told PTI. During the same period last fiscal, the exports fetched USD 13.98 billion.



Conclave deliberates on changing trends in HR mgmt

The changing trends in human resource management industry in the past few years and how the leaders in the sector need to adapt themselves with the new realities were moot points of discussion at a national-level meet here. The annual HR Conclave 2.0, organised by the Assam down town University (AdtU) on Saturday, brought together HR heads, staffing managers, industry leaders, entrepreneurs and social skilling organisations who shared their experiences and insights on HR trends and practices, a release said. Delivering the keynote address, Sanjay Bose, executive vice-president and head, HR, ITC Hotel group, spoke on the current business scenario and job availability. "There is room and need for greater focus, speed, boldness, and innovation. Resilient leaders view recovery as a journey for their organisation, teams and stakeholders."



CII urges RBI to moderate pace of interest rates hikes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India Inc has begun to feel the adverse impact of RBI's interest rate hikes of 190 basis points in the current financial year, industry body CII said on Sunday, as it urged the central bank to consider moderating the pace of its monetary tightening ahead of the forthcoming policy.

CII's analysis of results of 2,000-odd companies in the second quarter (July-September 2022) shows that both the top-line and bottom-line has moderated on sequential and annual basis. Thus, moderation in pace of monetary tightening is the need of the hour, it argued.

Kirit panel likely to suggest price cap for ONGC gas

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A government-appointed gas price review panel, led by Kirit Parikh, is likely to recommend price caps for natural gas produced from legacy fields of state-owned firms to help moderate CNG and piped cooking gas rates, while keeping the pricing formula for difficult fields unchanged.

The panel, which was tasked with suggesting a 'fair price to the end-consumer' while ensuring "market-oriented, transparent and reliable pricing regime for India's long-term vision for ensuring a gas-based economy", may opt to suggest two different pricing regimes, officials said.

For the legacy or old fields of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL) -- where the cost has long been recovered and which are currently governed by a formula that uses rates in gas-

NO CHANGE IN FORMULA FOR RELIANCE



The panel, which was tasked with suggesting a 'fair price to the end-consumer' while ensuring 'market-oriented, transparent and reliable pricing regime for India's long-term vision for ensuring a gas-based economy', may opt to suggest two different pricing regimes.

surplus nations such as the US, Canada and Russia -- the committee is likely to recommend a floor or minimum base price and cap or ceiling rates. This would ensure that prices do not fall below cost of production, as they did last year, or do not spike to record levels as currently.

Gas from legacy fields is sold to city gas distributors who had to raise rates of CNG

and piped cooking gas by over 70 per cent after prices went up from USD 2.90 per million British thermal unit till March to USD 6.10 in April and further to USD 8.57 last month, reflecting a surge in global rates. This rise in rates, which narrowed the gap between CNG and polluting diesel, had prompted the review.

For the gas from difficult

fields such as those lying in deepsea or which are in high-pressure, high-temperature zones, the committee is likely to suggest not tinkering with the existing mechanism of paying them higher rates based on a different formula to compensate for the greater risk and cost involved, officials said.

This would ensure that explorers, who are seeing a surge in cost of services due to the spike in global energy rates, are not put at disadvantage.

This way the concerns over investments in exploration and production (E&P) being hit would also be addressed, they said, adding that market-driven pricing would also encourage new investments and attract global players. KG-D6 fields of Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner bp plc of UK are governed by the pricing formula for difficult fields. Rates for difficult fields from October 1 is USD 12.46 per mmbtu.

India has great opportunity to make steel for domestic, global needs: T V Narendran

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Welcoming the government's move to remove export duty on steel, Tata Steel CEO T V Narendran said India has a great opportunity to make steel for domestic consumption as well as to meet global needs.

"We welcome the government's decision to roll back the export duty on steel products and iron ore, imposed to deal with the inflationary situation, and we acknowledge the same," Narendran told PTI.

India, being richly endowed with iron ore, has a great opportunity to make steel in India, for India, and for the world, he said.

China, Japan, and South Korea, together export around 150 million tonne of steel annually despite importing most of their iron ore needs, Narendran noted.

Six months after imposition of the levy on May 21, the government removed the export duty on steel items and iron ore to nil effective from November 19, 2022.

BATTLE FOR RNLIC

Nippon top brass likely to visit India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The race for acquisition of Reliance Capital's 51 per cent stake in Reliance Nippon Life Insurance Co (RNLIC) is intensifying, with the top brass of the Japanese partner in the joint venture likely to visit India this week to flag its concerns with the ongoing resolution process under insolvency laws, sources said. Japan's Nippon Life, which holds 49 per cent stake in RNLIC, is opposed to the entry of Aditya Birla Sun Life in the race to acquire Reliance Capital's stake in RNLIC.

Sources with knowledge of the matter said Nippon Life's Global President Hiroshi Shimizu along with Minoru Kimura, managing executive officer and head of global business, Nippon Life Insurance, and Tomohiro



Yao, regional CEO, Nippon Life Asia Pacific and Director, RNLIC, are likely to visit Mumbai on Monday.

Shimizu and his team may meet senior officials of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and other stakeholders, and apprise them of their position with regard to their investment in RNLIC and their long-term commitment to the Indian insurance sector.

The visit coincides with the deadline for submitting the final binding bids for Reliance Capital and its subsidiaries, including RNLIC.

Macro data, global trends to guide markets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Trading activity in the equity market this week will depend on macroeconomic data announcements, monthly auto sales numbers and global trends, analysts said.

Bulls dominated Dalal Street last week, supported by favourable triggers like buying by Foreign Institutional Investors (FII) and a drop in crude prices.

Last week, the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex rallied 630.16 points or 1 per cent. On Friday, the Sensex settled at 62,293.64 -- its record closing high. The NSE Nifty too ended at its lifetime peak of 18,512.75.

This week, our Q2 GDP numbers and monthly auto



sales numbers will be key domestic factors. On the global front, the market will keep an eye on data from the US and any further movement of the dollar index and US bond yields. Apart from this, news flow from China will continue to cause some volatility," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart Ltd.

Ajit Mishra, VP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said this week participants will be focusing on key macro-economic data -- GDP numbers and manufacturing PMI -- for cues.

"Besides, with the beginning of the new month, auto sales will also start pouring in from December 1. Apart from the domestic data set, performance of the global indices especially the US will remain on the radar," Mishra added.

GDP data for the second quarter is scheduled to be announced on Wednesday, while Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) data for the manufacturing sector will be released on Thursday.

Mcap of nine of top 10 firms climbs Rs 79,798 crore

○ TCS, Infosys biggest winners

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nine of the top 10 valued firms together added Rs 79,798.3 crore in market valuation last week, with IT majors Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys emerging as the biggest winners.

In the last week, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 630.16 points or 1 per cent. The barometer settled at 62,293.64, its fresh record closing high on Friday.

Barring Adani Enterprises, all the 10 most valued firms including Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Hindustan Unilever Limited witnessed gains in their valuation. The market valuation of TCS jumped Rs 17,215.83 crore to Rs 12,39,997.62 crore.



Infosys added Rs 15,946.6 crore taking its valuation to Rs 6,86,211.59 crore.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries rallied Rs 13,192.48 crore to Rs 17,70,532.20 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever climbed Rs 12,535.07 crore to Rs 5,95,997.32 crore.

ICICI Bank's market capitalisation (mcap) zoomed Rs 6,463.34 crore to Rs 6,48,362.25 crore and that of Bharti Airtel gained Rs 5,451.97 crore to Rs 4,71,094.46 crore.

REVIVAL OF OLD PENSION SCHEME

It will burden future taxpayers: NITI Aayog VC expresses concern

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery on Sunday expressed concern over the revival of Old Pension Scheme by some states, saying it would burden future taxpayers at a time when India needs to focus on fiscal prudence and promoting sustained growth.

In an interview to PTI, Bery also underlined the need for enhancing capital expenditure and creating a space for the private sector through fiscal consolidation.

"I am slightly more worried about the return to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). I



think that is more of a concern because the cost will be borne by future taxpayers and citizens, not the present," he said.

The OPS, under which the entire pension amount was given by the government, was discontinued by the NDA government in 2003 from April 1, 2004.

Under the new pension scheme, employees contribute 10 per cent of their basic

salary towards pension while the state government contributes 14 per cent.

"I think political parties have to exercise discipline, since we are all working for a common cause of growth of the Indian economy, and for India to become a developed economy, you know the long-term (objectives) needs to be balanced against the short-term (objectives)," Bery said. Two Congress-ruled states, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, have already decided to implement OPS while BJP-ruled Himachal Pradesh has promised to restore the scheme if voted to power in the state.

Most delayed projects in roads and highways sector

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The road transport and highways sector has the maximum number of delayed projects at 243, followed by railways at 114 and the petroleum sector at 89, showed a government report.

In the road transport and highways sector, 243 out of 826 projects are delayed. In railways, out of 173 projects, 114 are delayed, while in petroleum sector, 89 out of 142 projects are delayed,

as per the latest flash report on infrastructure projects for October 2022.

The Infrastructure and Project Monitoring Division (IPMD) is mandated to monitor central sector infrastructure projects costing Rs 150 crore and above based on the information provided on the Online Computerised Monitoring System (OCMS) by the project implementing agencies. The IPMD comes under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, shared the Nobel Prize with former US Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke and US-based economist Philip H Dybvig for their research into the fallout from bank failures.

According to the Nobel panel at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, their research has shown "why avoiding bank collapses is vital".

Asked about the continuous fall of the Indian rupee against the USD dollar, Diamond says, "It is difficult to predict the exchange rates. When the US raises rates unexpectedly, the dollar tends to appreciate. Once

IDBI Bank to continue as 'Indian private sector bank'

○ Govt's 15% residual stake to be considered public holding

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IDBI Bank will continue to operate as an 'Indian private sector bank' after its strategic sale and the government's residual 15 per cent stake in the lender post privatisation will be considered as 'public shareholding', the finance ministry said on Sunday.

An 'appropriate dispensation' for the new owner to achieve minimum public shareholding (MPS) over an



extended period is under consideration and the winning bidder will have no restriction on undertaking corporate restructuring of the subsidiaries of IDBI Bank, it added.

These clarifications are part of the responses by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), under the finance ministry, to potential investors' pre-EoI queries. The government had on October 7 invited bids for privatising IDBI Bank and said that it together with LIC will sell a total of 60.72 per cent stake in the financial institution.

The last date for putting in

Expression of Interest (EoI) or preliminary bids is December 16. The government and LIC together hold 94.72 per cent stake in IDBI Bank. The successful bidder would be required to make an open offer for acquisition of 5.28 per cent public shareholding.

Pursuant to the transaction, the government will own 15 per cent stake and LIC 19 per cent shareholding in IDBI Bank, taking their total holding to 34 per cent.



FPIs flock to Indian mkt; buy shares worth Rs 31,630 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors have rediscovered their liking for Indian equities, making a net investment of Rs 31,630 crore in November on hopes of an end to the aggressive rate hikes, and positivity about overall macro-economic trends.

According to experts, after remaining net sellers in August and September, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) are unlikely to be major sellers going forward.

Rising expectations of aggressive rate hike cycles nearing an end on relatively easing inflationary curve, better than expected US macroeconomics data and resilience of the Indian economy compared to global counterparts are also driving FPI inflows.

According to data available with the depositories, FPIs invested a net sum of Rs 31,630 crore in equities during November 1-25. In comparison, there was a net outflow of Rs 8 crore and Rs 7,624 crore in October and September, respectively.

In August, FPIs were net buyers to the tune of 51,200 crore and they purchased equities worth nearly Rs 5,000 crore in July.

Prior to this positive trend, FPIs remained net sellers for nine straight months starting October 2021 amid a continuous rise in the dollar.

Going ahead, FPI flows are expected to remain volatile in the near term given the geopolitical concerns, Shrikant Chouhan, Head - Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities, said.

So far this year, the total outflow by FPIs in equities stood at Rs 1.37 lakh crore.

The spurt in net inflows in November could be attributed to recent surge in equity markets, stability in the Indian economy compared to its global counterparts and stabilisation in the rupee, Morningstar India Associate Director - Manager Research Himanshu Srivastava said.

'Rupee should stabilise once US cuts speed of its rate increases'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Douglas W Diamond, winner of this year's Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, says it is difficult to predict exchange rates but the rupee should stabilise once the US "reduces the speed of its rate increases".

In an email interview to PTI, the American economist also said that when the US raises exchange rates unexpectedly, the dollar tends to appreciate and things will normalise when interest rates are closer to each other in the US and India.

Diamond, a Merton H Miller Distinguished Service Professor of Finance at the

University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, shared the Nobel Prize with former US Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke and US-based economist Philip H Dybvig for their research into the fallout from bank failures.

According to the Nobel panel at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, their research has shown "why avoiding bank collapses is vital".

Asked about the continuous fall of the Indian rupee against the USD dollar, Diamond says, "It is difficult to predict the exchange rates. When the US raises rates unexpectedly, the dollar tends to appreciate. Once



the US reduces the speed of its rate increases, the rupee should stabilise."

On Friday, the rupee appre-

ciated 16 paise to 81.54 against the US dollar.

Diamond, who had once observed that delegated mon-

itoring allows savers to get access to safe and high returns, says bank monitoring works well when banks are well capitalised and there is little lending to bank insiders.

"I expect this to continue in the future. For savers to get high returns, a reasonable amount of bank competition is needed as well," he argues.

Diamond, who had collaborated with former RBI governor Raghuram G Rajan on the theory of banking in 2001, says one of their conclusions was that banks need to be a bit fragile to discipline them.

"This remains true. Short-term debt provides discipline

because banks must continue to appear healthy to retain their funding. This possible loss of funding does make them fragile," he says.

The research paper on 'Liquidity Risk, Liquidity Creation, and Financial Fragility: A Theory of Banking' was published in the Journal of Political Economy.

Diamond is known for his research in financial intermediaries, financial crises and liquidity. His research agenda for the past 40 years has been to explain what banks do, why they do it and the consequences of these arrangements.

My hands were full in Brazil, but my aspirations didn't die: Jeniffer Piccinato

Brazilian model and actress Jeniffer Piccinato gets candid with *The Pioneer* over an exclusive chat, tracing us back to her Brazilian roots, playing the role of geologist in *Ram Setu*, working with Akshay Kumar, and much more.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

In the public consciousness, Jeniffer Piccinato is known for her stunning physique, good looks, and her acting skills. Nevertheless, the fact that she has survived in the industry coming from Brazil for as long as she has is proof of her professionalism and audience-pulling power!

When we first put together the questions for this interview, we added about two very relevant questions for her – tracing us back to her Brazilian roots and giving a head-on to Akshay Kumar on the sets of *Ram Setu*.

She first answered, “Born and raised in a very small town, it's going to be interesting for the readers to know where I hail from. My family had no idea about taking such a gigantic step in my life and landing in India all the way from Brazil. At the age of nine, my interests were in modeling, and took it up professionally in my hometown. My parents agreed for me to pursue any ‘artistic’ career only if I graduate. Post that, I started to train myself then and there. In my country, the beauty pageant world is very competitive! However, I didn't give up and tend to do well there at the fashion shows too by stealing the show. Simultaneously,

was a helping hand to my mum who runs a beauty salon in Brazil. You see, my hands were full but my aspirations didn't die. I am not just a graduate, I am a certified fashion designer, hairstylist, make-up artist and an actress today.”

She revealed that while growing up she was rather exposed to Hollywood films than Bollywood. She said, “I have my extended family in Europe too. Could have grabbed an opportunity in European films too, prominently, Italy. I had nothing to do with an Asian country! I was called to India for the first time in anticipation of doing a television commercial for the brand Pantene, couldn't say no to it. An advertisement also was a challenge to me back then. They informed me that the advertisement will be showcased during festivities, and my logistics rang the bell in terms of ‘promotion’. But I had no idea about what we do on Diwali (she laughs). The same year, the Barbie in red saree that went viral in the country — was me. Pantene gave me a substantial platform and I was the next international model in the running. Was signed by ten countries one by one, it was huge for me.”

For the past ten years or more, she's living in a suitcase and got exposed to multiple cultures. “After my stint in New York, my film journey began. The recent hit, *Ram Setu* will always remain definite for me because the role of a geologist wasn't based on my

appearance or sex appeal. They saw potential in me! Noticed another side to me while auditioning which was – my natural hair texture is curly but I kept straightening them while this film realised me to use it as my USP. I got a chance to be the real Jeniffer in *Ram Setu*! My freckles were showing, it was even more liberating as a woman to me on the sets that the crew isn't discriminating against the actress.”

The role of a geologist didn't come easy to her. She had to undergo so much investigation about the instruments they use too. She narrated, “A geologist uses a specific machine and I had no elms about it. I was spending most of the time in a laboratory made in the film city which was nothing less than a real one! I took a break from my fitness regime and stopped going outdoors for a while. The majority of the scenes are shot around the sea, as much as I wanted to swim I couldn't because I was totally immersed in my character. But then came up a scene where I had to do the swimming bit too because I was drowning. Divers were around me for safety protocols, yet there we were freezing to death in the middle of the sea because it was winter. I was given the option to refuse too, nonetheless, I didn't because I wanted to enjoy it. It was all for that close-up shot! So, from childhood, had a nerdy side to me and I got to play that on-screen which was interesting to me too.”

Not everyone chooses to be a geologist in the mainstream, it was evident her research had to be doubled. She added, “The AMS machine technique was something I was supposed to specialise in. Learned about the era of Lord Ram, and so many surprising facts came up to me. The proper and best approach was with the real geologist; although the groundwork was so exhausting but the creativity in it was giving me a kick with a human approach to my character.”

Sharing her closeness with Akshay Kumar, she said, “He had no tantrums to throw: always on time despite being a biggie in our industry. He's razor-sharp while delivering his stunts, he amazed me. A well-known actor was doing action scenes in front of me, what better could I have witnessed on the sets? He hardly asks for a retake, that's another revelation. I got to know he's such a busy actor in the industry, that we had to finish our sequences in a limited time frame without skipping our dialogues. Parallely, his other projects were going on too and he was least distracted.”

She has seen almost all of this country, she accepts more than her own country and bursts into laughter. “A ship was built in a studio location, submarine scenes were shot on a green screen. Felt nothing less than Hollywood! Water stunts were scary, it was deep, especially in the open sea with a speed boat having Akshay, Jacqueline, Satyadev, and me.”



Using content creation as a tool to decolonise Indian minds



TEJAL SINHA

There have been different ways through which people have worked towards making the nation a better place.

Over time, social media has become a very powerful tool. While many NGOs and government organisations collaborate to address various social issues, there's Abhiraj and Niyati, aka Abhi and Niyu, the content creator duo who use their content to decolonise Indian minds and make a better India.

Before the duo got together and made content, content creation initially began for Abhiraj in 2017, after he realised he was spending a lot of time translating his client's vision into a concrete prod-

uct. He wanted to spend time sharing his own voice, and he wanted to talk about India. The initial idea was to travel across India and talk to people, then make short documentary-style videos with edited excerpts from these conversations. That's how “Following Love” started in 2017. Later, in 2018, when they got married, Niyati also joined Abhiraj in front of the camera.

Today, in just a span of over 4 years, they have over 2.7 million followers on Instagram and over 3.25 million subscribers on YouTube. They have come across several series that have helped people connect with India more closely over time; one of them being “100 Reasons to Love India.”

This series marked the

time when they dove into content creation full-time without having a backup plan as such.

Sharing more about the series Niyati said, “We noticed that social media feeds had become increasingly negative. Everyone only spoke about the problems in the country. We felt we Indians needed to know more about our own country, culture, and traditions. We must be proud of those who have worked tirelessly to solve people's problems. We wanted to showcase the positive aspects of India that existed apart from the negativity online. The motive was never to find the top 100 reasons to love India; that would not have been possible. But it was to conclude the discussion with the

Abhiraj and Niyati, aka Abhi and Niyu, one of the most viral content creators, will soon be representing India at the COP27 in Egypt. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, the duo gets candid about their journey, working towards different social campaigns, and the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) of the UNFCCC.

numerous reasons we had not discussed. It was to take people on a journey with us and end with them feeling pride for their country and giving them a glimpse of everything.”

Similarly, they had recently also released a video on YouTube and discussed the incredible solution to blood cancer on National Cancer Awareness Day, and over 40,000 people had signed up within 2 months of the video release.

Talking about the challenges, Niyati said, “The first challenge is sceptical people. People do not want to believe that India can do anything good or fix its problems. That India had a rich past, we have been trained to look down on anything that is Indian. So when we made videos, we had many people who repeatedly told us that we needed to focus on the problems. And because India had so many issues, it could just not have any good elements in it. There are still people who refuse to believe there can be anything good about the country. There are many people who have given up and refused to think that the problems in the country can be solved. But that cynicism doesn't actually help the country. The other challenge is that even when we give solutions, people are sceptical and keep saying they won't work. But whenever there is a problem, it can only be fixed if all of us start

talking about solutions.”

With their continuous positive work towards society, they have become the only group of Indian content creators to represent India at COP27 in Egypt and act as a bridge between Indians and the global climate conference. In fact, they're the only duo that has been invited from all over Asia to attend the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Talking about how COP27 had happened, Niyati went on to say, “We had a friend reach out to us and say that he knew an organisation that wanted to take people to cover COP27. We frequently talk about environmental issues and thought this would be a good platform to talk to world leaders, startups, NGOs, and other organisations that are trying to make a difference. We shared our work links, and after a few weeks, we heard back saying we were accepted and we would be going to Sharm El Sheikh for COP27. It was also important for us to be there because we represent the new age of internet media from India. People who watch our videos consider us a credible information source. Although our content is targeted toward the Indian masses, being recognised by an international organisation is really exciting.”

Go-to regime of experts to treat dry skin

Factors such as low humidity levels, temperature, dry indoor heat, and harsh wind can all zap your skin of moisture. This can leave your skin looking a lot less radiant — not only your face, but also your hands, feet, and other areas can be exposed. The dryness of skin can affect many people, and the severity of the symptoms can vary significantly.

Dr. Geetika Mittal

Gupta, skin expert, and cosmetologist, shares a few simple steps that you can take to ensure that your skin looks healthy, even during weather changes, or when the temperature dips.

Check your diet

Apart from external skin care routines, it will be instrumental for you to adopt some dietary changes that include antioxidant rich food to nurture your skin from the inside. Foods like whole grains, cereals and nuts like almonds are rich in vitamin E, which helps increase blood flow to the skin, thus making it smooth and supple. Eating almonds daily in place of typical calorie-matched snacks may be an effective means of improving the appearance of facial wrinkles and skin tone.

Almond oil all the way

Face oils are packed with ingredients such as polyph-

nols, fatty acids, and antioxidants which help reduce inflammation and give skin a dewy glow. Face oils have become a beauty cabinet staple thanks to their natural ability to hydrate and nourish a variety of skin types. You can use a variety of oils



that are known to work wonders. Almonds have long been used in beauty remedies to nourish the skin and keep it beautiful. Almonds are a great source of vitamin E and fatty acids that provide intensive moisture to the skin. It therefore makes for a great body lotion ingredient to bring back life to dry and dull skin.

DIY face masks for dry skin

A facial mask can replenish and moisturize your skin. These are effective treatments because the ingredients are able to sit on your skin for about 10 to 30 minutes. The nutrients and vitamins penetrate your pores, deep cleaning your pores and removing the outermost layer of dead skin. You can quickly churn a DIY face mask using ingredients in your kitchen like avocado, oatmeal, honey, turmeric, almonds or banana. One of the easiest face masks that you can make at the comfort of your home is almond and milk face mask which can be made using two ingredients. Mix 1 tablespoon of almond powder and 2 tablespoon raw milk together and you're ready to go. Keep this mask on your face for 20 minutes and then rinse your face thoroughly with lukewarm water. You may apply this mask on your arms and legs too.

for your skin such as olive oil, mustard oil, coconut oil, almond oil, sunflower oil, etc. However, one must do a patch test when using face oils and avoid using them on acne-prone skin as the oils can clog pores.

Nourishing body lotions

right after shower will help One of the must-dos in your beauty routine is to moisturize your skin every day. Focus on the kinds of ingredients that make up the body lotion and pick those



The Vysya Limelight awards recently ended on a grand note at JRC Conventions. Several entrepreneurs including Padmaja Manepalli, Palakurti Bramaramba, and Neha Gupta among the rest had won different titles at the event.



Jaslok Hospital & Research Centre, a leading hospital in Mumbai, announced the launch of its clinic in Hyderabad. The clinic will focus on Functional Neurosurgery which has been practiced in Hyderabad for more than a decade.

TRAIL RUN OR RIDE THROUGH WORLD'S LARGEST MIYAWAKI FOREST

Woods by Stonecraft and Aditya Mehta foundation (AMF), who aids people with disabilities to pursue sports, is organising a Trail Fest at Shamshabad on December 4. One of its kind trail fest begins with a 5k & 10k run and 15k cycle ride. The run/ride is organised to commemorate the World Disable Day. This trail fest is one-of-its-kind, where the participants run or cycle through the world's largest Miyawaki forest located in Hyderabad. Participants can enjoy the open air and the joy of connecting to the earth.

The event is planned on the lines of morning to dusk for families to spend quality time amidst nature. There will be performances by live bands like Best Kept Secret. It is a ticketed event and registrations for the run begins from November 26 at <http://woodstrailfest.com> or 040 4189 1199 or hello@woodstrailfest.com
Date: Sunday, December 04, 2022
Time: 7 am onwards
Venue: Woods @ Shamshabad, Kavaguda, Shamshabad

LISTINGS

WORLD'S LARGEST HANDMADE CARPET CRAFTED BY PATODIA CONTRACT

In the summer of 2021, when the world was in the throes of the pandemic, looking for every sign of hope, courage and resilience, a colossal project was underway in the bustling carpet city of Bhadohi, India. The making of the world's largest handmade carpet, in the Patodia production facility. Commissioned for The Grand Mosque of Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, the largest mosque in Central Asia. At 12,000 m², the world's largest handmade carpet stands as one of the rarest feats in the history of art. Here are a few highlights of the colossal

carpet. This rare accomplishment in carpet making artistry and scale is not just a product of masterful craftsmanship but also of a manufacturing process driven by excellence. From the spinning of the yarn to the installation of the carpet on site, everything was executed by Patodia Contract. Today, as the carpet lies in its permanent abode, The Grand Mosque of Nur-Sultan, it tells a compelling tale of hands that have honoured time and tradition. Elevating creativity and its scale. For the world to behold.



FUN

ARCHIE



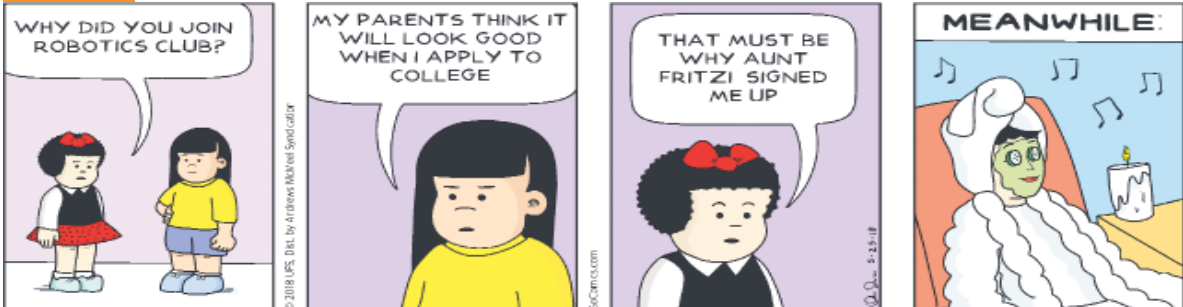
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



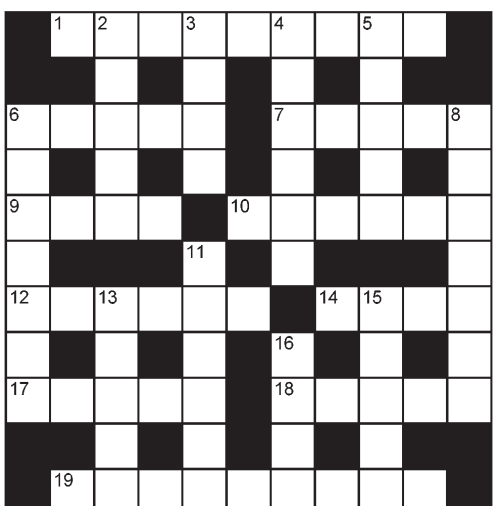
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



ACROSS

- A four-sided shape
- A month
- A number of people or things together
- Change direction
- A road in a town
- To tremble or shake a little
- Female horse
- Choose by votes
- A grown-up
- Put together from parts

DOWN

- Mistake
- Chatter
- These are longer in winter

5 Baggy

- An old object
- Someone sick in hospital
- Middle
- Thoughts
- Make laugh
- A baby sheep



Madhu Babu Thokala is all set to bring to us his first-ever feature film *Anantha* on Dec 9. In an exclusive interview with *The Pioneer*, the director shares some exclusive insights about the upcoming film.



'I have Indianised the westernised concept with *Anantha*'

AMARTYA SMARAN

Scientific thriller *Anantha* which is all set for its theatrical release on December 9, marks Madhu Babu Thokala's first-ever feature film. The film is a remake of *The Man from Earth* which was released in 2007.

In his first, Madhu Babu discusses what inspired him to be a filmmaker, legendary director Mani Ratnam, and what *Anantha* as an ultra-low budget film is set to offer to the Telugu audience.

Although the filmmaker Madhu Babu was super passionate about films from childhood, due to various circumstances, he took the usual route of pursuing a degree in Canada. However, his incredible passion for films couldn't keep him away from the movie world for too long.

Here's debutant Madhu Babu sharing how his passion for movies began from a young age, "Right from childhood, it has always been a dream to work in the film industry. To begin to trace what actually made me choose films over anything is kind of tough. But I found myself doing something or the other related to films while growing up. Other kids would prefer playing cricket, whereas I would be hell-bent on watching a film. I studied in Canada and once I returned home, I was actually heading a huge team at Tata Docomo Services in South India. During that time, coincidentally, my roommate got an opportunity to become a director and it was in 2016 that I got the chance to be a

part of a project. Even as a young student in Canada, I used to look out for film-related work, but the directors whom I approached were not so active in the Indo-Canadian filmmaking scene."

Director Mani Ratnam has been an inspiration for generations of filmmakers in India. Gautam Vasudev Menon publicly admitted on multiple occasions that Mani Ratnam's *Nayakan* was what pushed him to pursue filmmaking. Looks like the long list of young filmmakers taking the Ponniyin Selvan director as their inspiration isn't slowing down at all. "The body of work that Mani Ratnam created over the years inspires me a lot as a filmmaker. He is a master at expressing emotions through nature and I am a nature lover. Thalapathy, Iruvay and Bombay are some of my favourite films," said Madhu.

Sharing some exclusive details about *Anantha*, Madhu enthused, "*Anantha* is a scientific thriller which is set up in a confined location where the entire story unfolds progressively. We haven't dealt with aliens or time travel-based stories in a long time. I can assertively say that the audience down south is up for an interesting experience. Perhaps they might've not seen a film like this before on the silver screen. I have always been intrigued by the stories set up in pre-historic times. I believe that the advancements in the past were superior to what we are seeing today. During prehistoric times, in terms of technological advancements, the human race experienced things which

are beyond our grasp now. *Anantha* reveals something of this nature."

A director who holds his/her cast and crew in high regard has a long way to go in the industry. Madhu Babu absolutely missed no chance in expressing his gratitude towards the people whom he worked with on the project, "RGV's *Konda* fame Prashanth Karthi is playing the lead character and Malayalam actress Laya Simpson who portrayed important characters in films like *Drishyam* and *Bro Daddy* is also a part of our film. Extraordinary artists like Geddam Srinivas who last appeared in *DJ Tillu*, filmmaker-actor Anish Kuruvilla, Ramesh who is doing well for himself in the OTT space and Anil who has been a part of every Bandi Saroj film, are all playing prominent characters in the film. There are about eight characters that drive the narrative forward and each of them has its importance. I must say it's been a blessing to work with all these experienced actors."

It is always challenging to adapt a story that has been made for a different world. However, Madhu says, his exposure to both the western and eastern worlds has enabled him to seamlessly make the necessary changes to the script. "It's interesting how we adapted the story. It is a remake of this Hollywood film called *The Man from Earth* directed by Richard Schenkman and written by Jerome Bixby who is best known for the *Star Trek* series and *The Twilight Zone* franchise. Richard Schenkman adapted this one interesting episode

from the *Star Trek* series which eventually materialised into *The Man from Earth*. In order to actualise the project, we took the license from Falling Sky Entertainments. I have Indianised the westernised concept and I am honestly satisfied with the output. With the content that people have been exposed to with the advent of OTT, I think they will really take a liking to the film. *Anantha* is a film that is a good blend of knowledge and entertainment. I am sure the film would haunt their minds for a day or two," concluded the *Anantha* director.

A special appeal from the creator is that people should encourage ultra-low-budget movies and support the new age content. The director is looking forward to the release of the film, hoping that the Telugu audience will enjoy the new-age experience.



Aishwarya Raj's powerful character in *Sasanasabha*

Political Thriller *Sasanasabha* is generating immense interest with its content. The film stars Aishwarya Raj in the lead role while Rajendra Prasad plays an important role. Indra Sena is played the antagonist role in the movie directed by Venu Madikanti. On Sunday, the makers released the film's trailer.

Rajendra Prasad is seen as a Gandhian and a good samaritan while the trailer showed the current politics and how politicians ignore people after getting their votes. Indra Sen and Aishwarya Raj are introduced in a powerful manner in this trailer loaded with political struggle.

The film also stars Sonia Agarwal, Prudhvi Raj, Jabardasth Apparao, Anish Kuruvilla, and Amit in important roles while Hebba Patel is sizzling in a special song. Ravi Basur's background music and Krishna Murali's cinematography made an impact. Raghavendra Reddy penned powerful dialogues. Thulasi Ram Sappani and Shanmugam Sappani are bankrolling the film on Sabro Production Pvt Ltd banner of Sapro Group.



Allu Arjun & Sree leela to shoot for a commercial ad

Icon Star Allu Arjun is currently enjoying his pan-India stardom and movie lovers are waiting eagerly for the release of his film *Pushpa The Rule*, the sequel to the blockbuster film *Pushpa The Rise*. Almost all the actresses dream of sharing screen presence with him.

Now, young and happening heroine Sreeleela who shot to fame with *Pelli SandaD* got the golden opportunity to act oppo-

site Allu Arjun. Allu Arjun and Sree Leela will be shooting a commercial for Aha Platform. The commercial has been shot and Ravi K Chandran, a popular cinematographer shot it in a lavish way.

Sreeleela is making waves in Tollywood and she is romancing Ravieja in Damaka. Apart from it, reports are coming that the makers of Mahesh Babu-Trivikram's film are planning to cast her as the second heroine. She is also playing the role of Balakrishna's daughter in his next under the direction of Anil Ravipudi.



Trisha's look from *PS-2* goes viral

Mani Ratnam's Magnum Opus *Ponniyin Selvan Part 1* has created history at the Box-office and emerged as Industry Hit in Tamil Nadu. The film amassed Rs 500 crores including all versions all over the world.

The second part of *Ponniyin Selvan*, *PS2* is gearing up to release on April 28, 2023. The major part of filming for the *Ponniyin Selvan: Part II* has already been com-

pleted and is into post-production works.

Trisha Krishnan as Chola Princess Kundavai steals the show in *Ponniyin Selvan: I* with her stunning looks and elegant performance. Infact, *Ponniyin Selvan 1* has resurrected Trisha Krishnan's career and once again made her the center of attraction in the glamour field.

The latest is a pic of Trisha Krishnan from *PS2* that has surfaced online. No wonder, she looks captivating carrying the elegance of a princess. She looks gorgeous in a red outfit with all jewellery. Let's wait for the makers to release some pictures officially.



Dhanush to join hands with H Vinoth?

The versatile actor Dhanush has been delivering some memorable performances like *The Gray Man*, *Naane Varuven*, and *Thiruchitrambalam*. His lineup is also equally exciting with projects including *Vaathi/ Sir*, *Captain Miller*, and *The Gray Man 2*. According to the latest buzz, he will soon be collaborating with director H Vinoth. Both the actor and director are busy with their work commitments at the moment and hence, the yet-to-be-titled movie will go on the floors by 2024.

Further details about the cast and crew of this untitled drama will likely be out after an official announcement. The filmmaker is presently shooting for Ajith Kumar starrer *Thunivu*. After this, the director will reportedly collaborate with superstar Kamal Haasan for the film tentatively named KH 233.



On the other hand, Dhanush will next grace the silver screens with the bilingual drama *Vaathi/ Sir*. The highly-awaited film will be released on 2nd December this year. Made under the direction of Venky Atluri, the movie features Samyuktha Menon as the female lead, along with Sai Kumar, Tanikella Bharani, and



Narra Srinivas in pivotal roles, along with the rest. Meanwhile, Dhanush is currently busy with Arun Matheswaran's directorial *Captain Miller*. Priyanka Arul Mohan has been roped in as the female lead of the drama, which is likely to be released in the second half of 2023. The venture will further see Sundeep Kishan, Priyanka Mohan, and John Kokken in significant roles, along with others.

Ram Charan's *RC16* to be locked soon

Mega Power Star Ram Charan has gained immense fanbase with *RRR*, not only from the North and even other countries audience praised Charan's looks and performance in the film. Ram Charan's next tentatively titled as *#RC15* is currently filming at New Zealand. Visionary Director Shankar is helming this project in Dil Raju's production. All eyes are on Charan's next project. From a longtime project is supposed to be under UV Creations in *Jersey* fame Gowtham Tinnanuri. As story didn't fell in place the project has been called off and several names were heard to direct *RC 16*. But, things have been finalised and the subject along with director and producers are locked for Ram Charan's next.

Buchi Babu Sana who has made a Blockbuster debut with *Uppena* last year is directing *#RC16*. He recently met Ram Charan and narrated the story which impressed Charan alot. As he is also protegee of Sukumar, Ram Charan has an idea about his working style while they were doing Rangasthalam. This might also be one of the reasons for Charan agreeing to do this film. Buchi Babu has said to be came up with a very interesting subject that bowled over Charan. The official announcement of the film will be out today at 11:11 AM.

Sukumar's banner Sukumar Writings is one of the banner and it is being heard that Satish Kiluru who has been looking after finances for big production houses is making his debut as a producer with this film. News is also that the makers are considering DSP and AR Rahman to score the music. Many things are yet to be finalised. The film will launch for Pongal, 2023 and regular shoot will be from February. Meanwhile, more details about the cast and crew will be locked soon.



IND VS NZ: RAIN PLAYS SPOILSPORT AGAIN



PTI ■ HAMILTON

The elegant Shubman Gill and the marauding Suryakumar Yadav briefly entertained a sizeable Sunday crowd before inclement weather and forced abandonment of the second ODI between India and New Zealand, here Sunday.

India were 89 for 1 in 12.5 overs when a second stoppage sealed the fate of the game as there was no possibility of having a minimum 20-over per side match within the stipulated cut-

off time. The match was reduced to 29-overs-a-side as the first interruption caused a four-hour break. India were 22 for no loss in the fifth over at that time.

After resumption, the visitors lost skipper Shikhar Dhawan (3 off 10 balls) trying to up the ante. Gill (45 not out, 42 balls) and Suryakumar (34 not out, 25 balls) added 66 effortless runs under eight overs before heavens opened up once again. Gill had four boundaries and a pulled six off Matt Henry while Suryakumar hit three different sixes — slog sweep over

mid-wicket, reverse sweep behind square and a pull-shot to carry his T20I form into the longer format. The short six-game white ball series against New Zealand has been one of the most rain-interrupted series of recent times. The first T20 in Wellington was also abandoned without a ball being bowled.

Even the third T20I match in Napier was a rain-marred. The final match of the series will be held in Christchurch on November 30.

International teams usually tour the New Zealand between

December and March and poor scheduling where the vagaries of weather wasn't factored in, has spoilt the limited overs series.

The ongoing series is being held during receding monsoon and there won't be any take-aways from the series where no player got enough opportunity to get into the groove. There isn't a big sample size of performance to evaluate but Surya certainly has been a shining star and Gill with his phenomenal talent is making a serious case for himself for a permanent place in the ODI playing eleven.

Cricket an outdoor sport, should be played under sun as much as possible: NZ coach

PTI ■ HAMILTON

Retractable roof stadiums could be an option but there's no substitute to playing cricket under the sun as it makes the sport a spectacle, feels New Zealand coach Gary Stead.

Four matches in the recently-concluded T20 World Cup in

There is still room for pure batsmanship in T20 cricket: Stead

PTI ■ HAMILTON

Unperturbed by criticism of their conservative approach to batting in the T20 World Cup recently, New Zealand coach Gary Stead on Sunday said there's "still room for pure batsmanship" in the slam-bang format.

The Black Caps failed to win a global ICC white-ball tournament once again when they lost to Pakistan by seven wickets in the semi-finals in Australia earlier this month after their batters failed to fire and managed a modest 152/4.

"I know there's a lot of chat around a number of players around the world in the T20 game but, in my opinion, many of the wickets we play on, it's not just about the game of crash bash the whole time," the 50-year-old told reporters.

"We have a couple of players with Devon (Conway) and Kane (Williamson) who probably put in that crafty kind of batsmanship as opposed to those crash-bash style from ball one. There is still a place for those players in my opinion."

"The World Cup in Australia actually showed a number of times that the batsmanship side of it comes into it."

England, who became the only team to hold both the ODI and T20 World Cups titles in the same cycle, have been successful with the template of playing fearless and aggressive cricket from ball one.

"You have to look at the resources within your group and then you got to look at what the gameplan is. Some teams are going down the method of boundary-hitting the whole time."

"But we showed in a couple of games that there's a different way of playing as well. The team selected are the best XV or XI that we had," the former Kiwi Test batter said, defending their strategy.

"For us, that's still the way we are playing the game. That may change again we have to keep



reviewing our style of play and making sure that we keep up with play."

Stead further said they had a par score against Pakistan in the semis, but it's their bowlers who let them down.

"It's more than just batting in T20 cricket, it's also your bowlers. Pakistan bowled exceedingly well at us, but we had a score that was potentially defendable. We just didn't start best with the ball in the game," he said.

SURYA, A HUGE FORCE

The Kiwi coach hailed India's latest white-ball sensation Suryakumar Yadav who sizzled with his powerful performances during the T20 showpiece.

"He makes it look terribly easy at times and extremely hard to bowl to because he can access both sides of the ground, he starts from ball one and puts you under enormous pressure."

"He's very innovative as well, his shots are a little bit different. He can look up to the field and have 2-3 options, it makes him very hard to defend against."

"He's a huge force in world cricket at the moment. He's probably one of the most sought-after wickets i would imagine in world cricket," he added.

Irritating to see matches being affected by rain: Gill

PTI ■ HAMILTON

Rain-affected matches are an irritant for both players and the paying public, and hence, having closed roof cricket stadiums won't be a bad option, feels young India opener Shubman Gill.

In a six-match white-ball series in New Zealand, two matches (1st T20I in Wellington and Sunday's ODI) were abandoned and one game (Napier T20I) was decided on Duckworth-Lewis method.

Gill, who scored 50 in the first game and was looking in good touch during his unbeaten 45 here, said that it does get frustrating at times.

"This is a decision (playing in indoor stadiums) to be taken by the boards. As a player and as fans, it is irritating to go in and out and see so many matches being affected by rain. But I don't know how I can take a stand for it as it is a big decision. "Obviously closed (retractable) roof (stadiums) would be good," the youngster told mediapersons.

The issue with rain-affected games is planning of the innings as 50 overs was curtailed to 29 overs on the day after a four-hour delay.



"It was very frustrating. You don't know how many overs so you can't plan your innings," Gill, who had hit a purple patch in 50-over cricket, said.

Gill is a strong contender for a place in the squad of 15 for next year's ODI World Cup but he said that he isn't looking that far ahead.

"I am not looking that far ahead and my aim is to make most of the opportunities that I am getting. That's what I am trying to do and make most of the opportunities that I get, trying to score big runs for the team," he stated.



Australia thrash India 7-4 in 2nd hockey Test

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

India could play well only in patches as Blake Govers slammed a brilliant hat-trick to guide Australia to a dominating 7-4 win in the high-scoring second hockey Test here on Sunday. Skipper Harmanpreet Singh struck even before the home team could settle, firing India to a third-minute lead with his precise and powerful penalty-corner conversion.

India looked threatening up front and Harmanpreet almost converted a second one but the home team began to call the shots soon with Govers and Jack Welch leading the goal spree.

The Men in Blue dished out an inspiring show in the third quarter and trailed by just one goal at 3-4, but were blown away in the final 15 minutes due to a sloppy defense.

India endured its 12th straight loss to the world num-

ber one side and now need to win the next two games to keep the five-match series alive.

The third Test of the World Cup build-up series will be played on Wednesday.

Having scored the winning goals in their close 5-4 victory in the first Test, Govers was once again in the thick of action.

He scored his goals in the 12th (PC), 27th and 53rd (penalty) minutes, while Welch secured his brace with his strikes in the 17th and 24th minutes.

Jake Whetton (49th) and Jacob Anderson (48th) were the other goal scorers for the Kookaburras led by Eddie Ockenden, who became the only seventh player in history to make at least 400 International appearances. Hardik Singh (25th) and Mohammed Raheel (PC 36th) struck the other two goals for India, while Harmanpreet completed his brace in the final minute (60th) of the match from a penalty.

England arrive for 1st Test series in Pakistan since 2005

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

England's cricket team arrived in Islamabad early Sunday to play its first Test series in Pakistan since 2005.

Led by Ben Stokes, England will kick off the tour in Rawalpindi -- an adjacent city to Islamabad -- which hosts the first Test from next Thursday. The second Test will be played at Multan from December 9-13 before England round off the tour with the final Test at Karachi from December 17-21.

England had played a seven-match T20 series in Pakistan prior to the T20 World Cup in Australia where it went on to beat Pakistan in the final.

England was due to tour Pakistan last year before the T20 World Cup in the United Arab Emirates but abandoned the tour due to security concerns after New Zealand had aborted its tour to Pakistan just minutes before the toss in the first ODI at Rawalpindi.

There were some concerns over England's Test tour to Pakistan after former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan was wounded in Wazirabad, a district in eastern Punjab province, during his protest against the sitting government.

Pakistan had hosted England twice in a Test series at UAE over the last 17 years with foreign teams reluctant to travel to Pakistan after the Sri Lanka cricket team was attacked in Lahore in 2009.



The three-Test series will be part of World Test Championship where Pakistan is sitting in fifth place while England is seventh. Pakistan needs to win the three-Test series to keep its hopes alive for next year's final.

Pakistan will be without its key fast bowler Shaheen Afridi, who has been ruled out of the series due to knee injury. The home team has also dropped middle-order batter Fawad Alam and ace leg-spinner Yasir Shah due to poor form.

Uncapped fast bowlers Haris Rauf and Mohammad Ali have been called up to the

squad along with mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed, who is expected to make his debut during the series.

England also has injury concerns ahead of the first Test with fast bowler Mark Wood in doubt due to a hip injury. Stuart Broad has been given paternity leave from the tour as England will be banking on its experienced fast bowler James Anderson to trouble Pakistan batters.

England has included 18-year-old Leicestershire all-rounder Rehan Ahmed in the squad after originally drafting him as a net bowler for the tour.

PT Usha set to get elected as IOA chief unopposed

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The legendary PT Usha is set to become the first woman president of Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as she emerged as the lone candidate for the top post for the December 10 elections. The 58-year-old Usha, a multiple Asian Games gold medalists and a fourth-place finisher in the 1984 Olympics 400m hurdles final, filed her nomination papers for the top job on Sunday, along with 14 others from her team for the various posts.

The deadline to file nomination papers for the IOA elections ended on Sunday. IOA elections returning officer Umesh Sinha did not receive any nominations

on Friday and Saturday but 24 candidates filed nominations for various posts on Sunday. There will be contests for one post of vice president (female), joint secretary (female). There were 12 candidates in the fray for four executive council members.

The IOA polls will be held to elect one president, one senior vice-president, two vice-presidents (one male and one female), one treasurer, two joint secretaries (one male and one female), six other Executive Council members, out of which two (one male and one female) shall be from the elected SOMs.

Two members of the Executive Council (one male and one female) will be the Athletes' Commission representatives.

India ends campaign with 11 medals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reigning Asian champion Ravina displayed splendid tenacity to punch her way to gold in the 63kg category final as India ended the Youth Men's and Women's World Boxing Championships with 11 medals in La Nucia, Spain.

Ravina was up against Megan deCler of Netherlands in her final bout. In spite of not getting off to the best of starts, the Indian pugilist utilised her technical ability and quick movement to mount an impressive comeback against her Dutch opponent.

The fiercely contested bout finished in favour of the 2022 Asian Youth gold medalist Indian who won 4-3 by split decision after the bout was reviewed.

In the other final, Kirti (81+ kg)



lost 0-5 to 2022 European youth champion Cliona Elizabeth D'Arcy of Ireland to settle for a silver.

India was a dominant force at the event as the 25-member team bagged 11 medals — four gold, three silver and four bronze.

Overall, 17 Indians had qualified for the quarterfinals of the tournament which was more than any other country in this edition.

India won the highest number of medals — eight — in the women's section, followed by Kazakhstan (5) and Uzbekistan (4).

In the men's category, youth Asian champions Vanshaj (63.5kg), Vishwanath Suresh (48kg) grabbed a gold each while Ashish (54kg) took a silver.

This year's championships witnessed participation of close to 600 boxers from 73 countries.

UAE to host Afghanistan's home games for next 5 years

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The UAE will host Afghanistan's home games for the next five years, as per an agreement signed between the two cricket boards. The move was prompted by the political situation in Afghanistan which has not hosted international teams.

As part of the agreement, Test-playing nation Afghanistan will play UAE in a three-match T20I series in each of the five years. "We are happy to support the ACB in ensuring that they have a home for their cricket," general secretary of the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) Mubashir Usmani said in a statement.

"We are also thankful to the Afghanistan Cricket Board for

agreeing to play a series of T20I matches against UAE team each year. "This will provide our UAE team with invaluable exposure and help in their development," he added.

Until now, the Afghanistan team has been playing and conducting its training sessions on a series-by-series basis. The ECB would also provide logistic support to the ACB.

As per the ICC's Future Tours Programme (FTP), Afghanistan are set to host Australia, Pakistan and West Indies in three ODIs each, as well as Zimbabwe across formats, next year leading into the 2023 ODI World Cup. The matches will be played across venues in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah.