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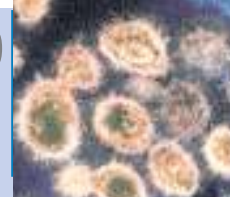
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Curbs on sugar exports extended **P 6**



World must stop misuse of new tech by non-state actors **P 5**



Scientists identify in humans pan-variant antibody **P 10**

In brief

Passenger injured due to turbulence in SpiceJet flight dead, says airline

Akbar Ansari, a passenger who was injured due to turbulence in a SpiceJet flight in early May, passed away last month. Family members of Ansari, who was 48 years old, said he was on ventilator support for more than a month before succumbing to injuries on September 26. On May 1, SpiceJet's Mumbai-Durgapur flight encountered severe turbulence during its descent phase, injuring 14 passengers and three cabin crew members. The family members alleged that Ansari did not receive proper treatment. According to the death certificate issued by the Mission Hospital at Durgapur on September 29, Akbar Ansari, age 48, died of sepsis in shock caused by polytrauma with Spinal injury.

50 dead, dozens feared missing as storm lashes Philippines

Floods and landslides set off by torrential rains left at least 50 people dead, including in a hard-hit southern Philippine province, where as many as 60 villagers are feared missing and buried in a huge mudslide laden with rocks, trees and debris, officials said Saturday. At least 42 people were swept away by rampaging floodwaters and drowned or were hit by debris-filled mudslides in three towns in Maguindanao province from Thursday night to early Friday, said Naguib Sinarimbo, the interior minister for a five-province Muslim autonomous region governed by former separatist guerrillas.

Millennials, Gen Z plan to ask for pay raise in next 6 months

A majority of millennial and generation Z professionals are planning to ask for a pay hike in the next six months amid an uncertain economic climate, according to a survey. More than 2 in 5 professionals in India (41 per cent) feel well compensated for their work while 45 per cent of respondents are planning to ask for a raise in the next six months, as per the report. This is being helmed by India's younger professional generations, Gen Z (51 per cent) and millennials (51 per cent), who are most likely to ask their boss for a raise as compared to Gen X (40 per cent) and Boomers (26 per cent), LinkedIn Workforce Confidence Index said.

1 lakh houses for poor

900.97 acres allotted for affordable housing ■ Gazette notification issued

SAMBASIVA RAO M
■ AMARAVATI

In a surprising move, the YSRCP-led State government has proposed to construct affordable houses for more than one lakh poor people in the Amaravati capital city in an extent of 900.97 acres, by altering the existing Master Plan. The proposed change of land uses from U1- Reserve zone, C5- Regional Centre Zone, I3- Non-polluting Industry Zone, C4-Town centre zone, S2-Education zone, I1-Business park zone, and C3-Neighbourhood centre zone to R5-Affordable/EWS Housing Zone for an extent of 900.97 acres in Krishnapalem, Nidamaru and Kuragallu villages in Mangalagiri (M), Mandadam and Inavolu villages in Thullur (M), Guntur district, is published in a Gazette notification.

As per Section - 53(d) of the APCRDA Act, 2014, at least 5 per cent of total area pooled under the Land Pooling Scheme (LPS) may be allotted for providing affordable housing for the poor. Now, the government has issued AP Gazette No: 13, dated October 28, 2022, making certain amendments to the Act. These modifications are proposed sanctioned Master Plan or Zonal Development Plan based on a reference from the local body concerned or special officer.

The government further observed that any objection and

MASTER PLAN MASTERSTROKE IN AMARAVATI



“It is a welcome development as the poor people will have a chance to live in the capital. By providing affordable houses to the poor, the Chief Minister is making Amaravati everybody's capital instead of allowing it as somebody's capital. The CM has the vision of developing the entire State, not just one or two regions. Hence, he introduced the three capitals plan.”

-LELLA APPIREDDY, YSRCP MLC



suggestion with contact details (Mobile/phone number/e-mail) that may be received from any person before the expiry of 15 days from the date of publishing the No: 13, dated October 28, 2022, making certain amendments to the APCRDA.

In fact, the YSRCP government has proposed to construct houses for the poor under the affordable housing scheme in the Amaravati capital city, when it first launched the distribution of land for the poor across the State. At that time,

there were many Public Interest Litigations (PILs) filed in the AP High Court, objecting to the government's move claiming that it was against the Master Plan and APCRDA Act and rules. Due to legal constraints, the government did not take this forward then. Now, with the new enactment of an amendment to the APCRDA Act in the recently-concluded Assembly session, the State government introduced these modifications and changes in the Master

Plan. Speaking to this correspondent, YSRCP MLC Lella Appireddy said, “It explains the commitment of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in providing opportunities to each and every section of the people in society to have a house in the capital. It is a welcome development as the poor people will have a chance to live in the capital. By providing affordable houses to the poor, the Chief Minister is making Amaravati everybody's capital instead of allowing it as somebody's capital. The CM has the vision of developing the entire State, not just one or two regions. Hence, he introduced the three capitals plan.

Even in the proposed Legislative Capital, the Chief Minister is providing opportunities to all sections of people. The CM is always striving to avoid another possible bifurcation of the State in the name of concentrated development. Andhra Pradesh could not afford one more bifurcation for development. With the three capitals proposal, the entire State will be developed.”

Reacting to it, Lanka Dinakar, BJP leader, observed that the State government landed in legal trouble by altering the Master Plan against the interim judgment of the AP High Court.

He said that the present change in the Amaravati Master Plan is a clear violation of the AP HC judgment.

'RAYALASEEMA PRADARSHANA' A HUGE HIT



Thumbs up for 3 capitals

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

After the success of the recent 'Visakha Garjana', the Rayalaseema people took out a huge rally called 'Rayalaseema Atma Gourava Maha Pradarshana' in Tirupati in support of the YSRCP government's three capital plan on Saturday. The rally was taken out on a 3-km stretch from Krishnapuram Thana on Saturday. NGOs, lawyers, people's associations, intellectual forums, writers, and student associations along with the general public participated in the rally. The march was supported by Tirupati MLA Bhumana Karunakar Reddy and MP Dr M Gurumoorthy.

Many associations displayed placards thanking CM Jagan Mohan Reddy for honouring the Sribagh Pact which stated that capital need not be established in the Rayalaseema region. Lawyers too carried posters stating that Kurnool was being named as the judicial capital.

Tirupati MLA Bhumana Karunakar Reddy, who held a

Tirupati MLA Bhumana Karunakar Reddy, who held a unique placard that read 'Mana Atmagaurava? Kapa?ukunda?, Nyaya Rajadhani Sadhiddha?' (Let's protect our self-respect and establish a judicial capital).

unique placard that read 'Mana Atmagaurava? Kapa?ukunda?, Nyaya Rajadhani Sadhiddha?' (Let's protect our self-respect and establish a judicial capital). On the occasion, Karunakar Reddy said, “This 'maha garjana' is a reflection of the aspirations of the people of Rayalaseema. This is just the beginning. Development here is possible only with the establishment of a capital in Rayalaseema.”



Name housing scheme after PM: Veerajulu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State president Somu Veerajulu took strong objection to the name 'Jagananna Illu' to the houses given to the poor across the State. He said that if the name of the houses for the poor is not named 'Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojana', he would complain to the Centre and stop the funds, Veerajulu said.

He slammed the ruling party leaders and said that right from the Assembly Speaker and Ministers are speaking nonsense. He said that if Rs 800 crore is spent, the Srikakulam district can be transformed into lush green fields for agriculture.

The BJP State president asked the ruling party leaders who talk about decentralisation to understand what development is.

He asked if Speaker Tammineni Sitaram and Minister Dharmana Prasad Rao have the guts to talk to CM Jagan Mohan Reddy and get funds for North Andhra. Veerajulu said that Rs 8 lakh crore was spent on development which was not in the Reorganization Act. He said that decentralisation of development is needed and told the ruling party leaders to stop three capitals drama as CM Jagan welcomed Amaravati as the capital of AP earlier.

'Seriously working on Rozgar Mela'

PNS ■ GANDHINAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said his government was working on providing ten lakh jobs.

In a video message to a 'Rozgar Mela' (employment fair) organized by the Gujarat government here, he also said that the number of government jobs for the youth will rise.

As many as 5,000 persons got appointment letters from the Gujarat Panchayat Service Board while 8,000 persons were given appointment letters by the Gujarat Lok Inspector Recruitment Board and Subkrakshak Recruitment Board during the event, held ahead of Assembly elections in the BJP-ruled state.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel distributed the appointment letters. On the auspicious day of Dhanteras, we held a Rozgar Mela at the national level where we distributed appointment



letters to 75,000 candidates, PM Modi said in his address. Such Melas will continue to be organised at the national and state levels in the coming months, he said.

The Central government is working on providing ten lakh jobs, the states and Union territories are also getting associated with the campaign. The number of government jobs given to the youth will rise significantly, he said. Your appointment will hugely reinforce the campaigns for last-mile delivery and saturation of coverage of government schemes.

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nificantly, he said. Your appointment will hugely reinforce the campaigns for last-mile delivery and saturation of coverage of government schemes,” he told the new recruits.

Modi credited the new industrial policy of Gujarat for creating job opportunities and praised reforms like the abolition of interview process for Class 3 and 4 government posts.

JSP leaders get HC bail, meet Pawan

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Jana Sena president Pawan Kalyan has called upon the party leaders to fight against the corruption of YSRCP leaders across the State and give a befitting reply to the ruling party.

Interacting with the party leaders at the party headquarters in Mangalagiri on Saturday, he spent some time with his party leaders who got bail from the High Court in a case related to the Vizag clashes between Jana Sena and YSRCP.

He appreciated their efforts in fighting against the YSRCP government in Visakhapatnam, despite facing false cases lodged against them. The nine leaders, along with their family members, had a friendly



interaction with Pawan Kalyan. Kona Tatarao, Sundarapu Vijay Kumar, Sandeep Panchakarla, PVS N Raju, Peetala Murthy Yadav, Kolluru Rupa, Rayapureddy Krishna, Rinishiva Patnaik and Chittibilli Srinu got bail in the Vizag case. Jana Sena PAC chairman Nandendra Manohar and other senior leaders were present.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: **Tithi:** Oct 30 05:50 AM to Oct 31 03:28 AM
Shraddhi: Oct 31 03:28 AM to Oct 31 03:28 AM
Saptami: Oct 31 03:28 AM to Nov 01 01:11 AM

Nakshatram: **Moola:** Oct 29 09:05 AM to Oct 30 07:25 AM
Purva Ashadha: Oct 30 07:25 AM to Oct 31 05:47 AM
Uttara Ashadha: Oct 31 05:47 AM to Nov 01 04:15 AM

Rahukalam: 4:16 PM to 5:42 PM
Yamagandam: 11:59 AM to 1:25 PM
Varjyam: 01:17 PM to 02:46 PM
Gulika: 2:50 PM to 4:16 PM
Amritakalam: 01:19 AM to 02:48 AM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:36 AM to 12:22 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly sunny
Temp: 32°C
Humidity: 59%
Sunrise: 6:04 AM
Sunset: 5:38 PM
Updated: OCTOBER 29, 2022 5:00 PM

OBTUSE ANGLE



TROLLING OF WOMEN

Vasireddy complains to DGP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Vasireddy Padma, AP Women's Commission Chairperson, on Saturday approached the Director General of Police (DGP) to look into the allegations made by Jana Sena cadre against her on social media.

In a letter to the DGP, Padma maintained, “Observe the conspiratorial attitude of political parties using women in politics by way of targeting, degrading and insulting women with obscene words. They are using women as pawns in politics, morally defaming them through character assassination on social media.”

Padma further said, “It is requested to form special teams with technical support to curb malicious war against women on social media and control those social media accounts trolling by targeting them wantonly.”



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Will hike outlay on education, health: Rahul Gandhi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The next Congress government in Telangana would hike the expenditure on education and public health to the maximum extent possible, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said on Saturday.

Rahul, who is in Telangana as part of his Bharat Jodo Yatra, held a meeting with senior Congress leaders on the education sector in Yengonda of Mahbubnagar district. He also interacted with the students, PhD scholars and JAC representatives of Osmania University.

Declaring that the spending on education and health by the TRS



government as highly deplorable, he said that it was the duty of the government to spend the maximum on

education and public health. He said Telangana's spending on both education and health was the least

ABHISHEK'S BAIL PLEA IN EXCISE POLICY SCAM

Court seeks CBI's response

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Saturday sought the CBI's response on the bail application moved by Hyderabad-based businessman Abhishek Boinpally in connection with a case related to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

The agency had arrested Boinpally earlier this month on the allegation of lobbying in Delhi's Excise Policy. Special Judge MK Nagpal issued notice to the CBI and directed the agency to file its response by November 4, when the court will further hear the matter.

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The CBI had earlier told the court that Abhishek had been arrested in the ongoing investigation after it was revealed through the statements of witnesses and the perusal of Bank accounts that he was part of repeated meetings at Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad with other accused persons and other liquor traders in connection with the for-

mulation of liquor policy.

He was part of the conspiracy in pursuance of which he transferred money through hawala channels to co-accused Vijay Nair through the other co-accused Dinesh Arora prior to the implementation of the policy during the period November 2021 to July 2022, the CBI alleged.

The money transferred by the co-accused Sameer Mahendru of M/s Indospirits has also finally landed in the account of Abhishek Boinpally and he has not been able to satisfactorily explain regarding the receipt of said money, it said.

among the 29 states in the country. Congress MP Capt. N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, along with AICC General Secretary Jairam Ramesh, AICC National Coordinator (SC/ST/OBC/Minorities) Koppula Raju, CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka and TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki Goud addressed a press conference to give a brief on the discussion Rahul Gandhi had on the education sector. Uttam said Rahul was informed that the TRS came to power in 2014 promising free KG to PG education. But the KCR government ruined the education sector in the last eight years. Nearly 4,000 government schools were shut down in the name of rationalisation and other reasons. Over 30,000 teacher posts are vacant. Over 90 per cent of residential schools have no buildings of their own and other facilities. The careers of over 12 lakh students are at risk due to non-clearance of fee reimbursement dues by the TRS government, he said. Rahul explained about the non-clearance of fee reimbursement dues by the TRS government from 2020-21. There were dues of Rs 828 crore in 2020-21 while not a single rupee was released in the academic years 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Understanding invasion of privacy and technology

The Oxford dictionary defines 'privacy' as the state of being alone and not watched or disturbed by other people. Broadly speaking, privacy is considered as one of the fundamental human rights of a person by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). It includes choice to be let alone, free from interference or intrusion. Protecting privacy is the key to ensuring human dignity, safety, and self-determination.

Information is power. Knowledge of somebody else's personal information puts the victim in a vulnerable position. Public authorities justify invasion of individual privacy in the name of serving larger public interests. Acquisition of this information beforehand equips the law-enforcing agencies to prevent the activities of anti-social elements. In ancient times, kings used to maintain a network of spies to obtain feedback on the activities of their opponents and any advance information about conspiracies hatched against them by their adversaries. In modern times, access to

Information is power. Knowledge of somebody else's personal information puts the victim in a vulnerable position. Public authorities justify invasion of individual privacy in the name of serving larger public interests. Acquisition of this information beforehand equips the law-enforcing agencies to prevent the activities of anti-social elements.

Unauthorized private information is used as one of the most important tools to settle commercial and political scores. In so far as modern communication is concerned, the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 provides the framework for interception of signal on the occurrence of any public emergency or in the interest of the public safety. The appropriate government or any officer especially autho-

rised, after recording reasons in writing, can order non-transmission or interception or detention of messages. This is primarily done in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of the country, security of the State, friendly relations with other States, or maintaining public order, or for preventing incitement to the commission of an offence. Invasion of privacy has become more sophisticated



DR SHAILENDRA KUMAR JOSHI,
Advisor of Telangana govt and former chief secretary of Telangana

and pervasive with the advent of digital and modern communication technologies. In this regard, the facial recognition system, network of closed circuit cameras, and a system with artificial intelli-

gence can maintain round-the-clock surveillance. The system can trace exact location of a person within the coverage area. Several authorised as well as unauthorised agencies have access to mind-boggling information about citizens. The satellite networks, other listening devices and bugs/malware are capable of capturing mobile phones despite being switched off. The Siris and Alexas of the world constantly listen in on each and every word we utter. As we proceed towards more digitization, our vulnerabilities in the cyber space are increasing at an exponential rate. As we know, CIBIL score is a 3-digit number (ranging from 300 to 900 based on personal details) indicates financial reputation, credit

health and worthiness of, and credit utilisation by a person. It also helps build credit profile and protect from identity theft. The CIBIL score has now been accepted as loan application process by most of the financial institutions. On the lines of CIBIL score, one of our neighbouring countries had developed a new "social credit system" and is widely using it. While maintaining a total tracking and surveillance of the entire population, socially productive activities on the one hand are given positive credits and on the other hand, activities such as criticism of the system, gossip mongering etc., attract negative markings. A person with a higher social credit rating system is considered as a better citizen and positively

discriminated while granting state favours. Everyone, including system administrators, even in a democratic set-up loves power. The worrisome fact is that temptation to convert even a free society into an animal farm is very strong. As technology is freely available, in addition to state actors various non-state actors (large business conglomerates and multinational corporations) are in a position to invade privacy of citizens. To sum up, the invasion of individual privacy has become pervasive. Despite having no or a little footprints in the cyberspace, none can prevent being targeted to be part of a 'social credit system' of one kind or the other with enormous financial and social consequences.

India successful in bringing down poverty: Ex-RBI chief

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

SRM University-AP hosted the 15th edition of the 'University Distinguished Lecture' series on the topic 'India at 75 and beyond' on Saturday. Dr C Rangarajan, renowned economist and former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India was the chief guest of the programme. On the occasion, Rangarajan gave a comprehensive outlook on the economic performance of India since Independence. "India has made momentous



progress on reducing multidimensional poverty. The incidents of multidimensional poverty were almost reduced by half to almost 27.5% during the 2005-06 and 2015-16 periods due to deeper

progress among the poorest. Thus, within 10 years, the number of poor people in India fell by more than 270 million, a truly massive achievement," he said during the lecture.

Dr Rangarajan further explained the importance of reform agendas and measures, the subsisting triad of economic policies and the future challenges of progressing into being a developed nation. The lecture was followed by a Q & A session moderated by Dr S Ananda Rao and Dr Erra Kamal Sai Sadharma from the Department of Economics. Prof Kamaiah Bandi, Dean School of Liberal Arts and Social, Prof D Narayana Rao, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and others participated in the programme.

Heavy rain forecast in south coastal AP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema on Monday, Meteorological Centre said on Saturday.

In a daily weather report here, it said the same situation would prevail in Rayalaseema on Tuesday and heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places over South Coastal Andhra Pradesh on Sunday and November 1. Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are likely at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh & Yanam, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema from Monday to Wednesday. Rain occurred at one or two places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema while dry weather prevailed over Yanam of Puducherry during the last 24 hours. The lowest minimum temperature of 18.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Kalingapatnam in the plains of the state on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday, the report added.

Chess will be encouraged in all schools: Minister Roja

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Tirumala Tirupati All India Open Fide Rapid Rating Chess Tournament jointly organised by the SAAP (Andhra Pradesh Sports Authority) and AP Chess Association began in Tirupati on Saturday.

The two-day event was inaugurated by AP Sports and Tourism Minister R K Roja and SAAP Vice chairman and MD N Prabhakar Reddy along with District Collector K Venkata Ramana Reddy at Srinivasa Sports complex by grandly lighting the lamp. Speaking on the occasion, Sports Minister RK Roja said that playing Chess would be encouraged in all schools. The government is extending all kinds of support to sports. She said the credit for transforming AP into Kreedandhra Pradesh should go to AP Chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. The minister said interest in chess should begin among the students from school days. The SAAP would appoint coaches at all schools to promote chess among students with a pilot program titled "Chaduranga Bharati." As part of the programme, 33 coach-



es would train students on a virtual basis and conduct contests at village, town and district levels. R K Roja said the SAAP would promote Sports competitions between village sports clubs and city sports clubs in Kabaddi and Volleyball from November to December 21 with prize money of Rs 50 lakhs and the prizes would be presented on AP CM's birthday. District Collector Venkata Ramana Reddy said the prize money in the tournament was Rs 5 lakhs. SAAP MD said a Jagannanna sports youth club app has been conceived with the Sports Ministers initiative and all youth should register so

that they could be supported by SAAP in the games of their interest. He said as many as 350 chess players including 100 international players from ten states along with 6 grandmasters besides a Sri Lanka expert have registered for the tour. He said all under 7, and 11,13,15 years, women, and other talented people including senior citizens could register and participate in the tournament. President of AP chess association Sharma, TTD board member and vice president of AISF DP Anant and CEO Setvin and DSA Murali Krishna were among those who were present.

Vasireddy complains to DGP

Continued from page 1

It may be worth mentioning that as a counter-attack to the notice issued by the Women's Commission to Jana Sena president Pawan Kalyan, they trotted Twitter with the hashtag #AP Women Commission Exposed, recently. In the notice, the Commission asked Pawan Kalyan to tender an unconditional apology to the womenfolk for his earlier remarks on three marriages and using the word "Stepney" to refer to women.

Poonam Kaur meets Rahul

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Tollywood actress Poonam Kaur met former AICC president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday and explained to him the problems being faced the handloom workers. Poonam Kaur participated in the Bharat Jodo Yatra along with All India Handloom Workers Union leaders on Saturday. She urged Rahul Gandhi to ensure that 5 per cent GST imposed on handlooms is withdrawn. She had a meeting with Rahul Gandhi for 15 minutes along with All India Handloom Workers Union Leaders.

Stop AP from drawing excess water from Tungabhadra: TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana has objected to Andhra Pradesh inviting tenders for five works without approval from the KRMB and the apex council. In a letter to KRMB, TS said that AP has invited tenders for the construction of a pump house and for laying a pipeline to pump water from the Gandikota foreshore area to Mangapatnam cheruvu near Mangapatnam village in Muddanur Mandal of YSR District, for construction of a pump house and laying pipeline to pump water from the Gandikota foreshore area to Gangadevipalli Cheruvu near Gangadevipalli (V) in Muddanur (M) of YSR district, for the construction of an OT



sluice near Satya Sai Ganga Canal at 106.900 km at Nirpa Kota Village, B.N. Kandriga to supply drinking water to Sulurupeta Municipality, for the investigation, design and construction of the Jilledubanda Reservoir near Mudigubba including construction of two offtake sluices, surplus weir and offtake cum cross regulator on HNSS main canal km 377.100 and for the distributing system including the construction of CM/CD works in Mudigubba, Battalapalli, Tadimarri & Dharmavaram Mandals in Ananthapuram District and the Ananta Venkata Reddy HNSS Project Phase-II, Package No: 52 lift works under the main canal of the HNSS project at km 203.500 (First stage-Main canal) (Pumps, Motors, laying of Pipelines works etc. required for the pumping of water).

Continued from page 1

While CM Jagan is fulfilling the wish of the public to establish a judicial capital in Kurnool, Chandrababu Naidu is spreading false propaganda on decentralisation. He is afraid that he will lose his political relevance if all areas are developed equally. The rally in Visakhapatnam and now in Rayalaseema is proof enough of the people's support for CM Jagan's decision to establish three capitals." Tirupati MP Gurumoorthy appealed to the opposition parties to end politics over

Thumbs up for 3 capitals

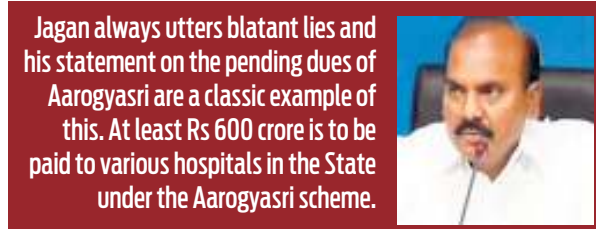
the establishment of the capital and heed the demands of the public. "This rally is to put an end to selfish politicians who want to satisfy the demands of the real estate mafia and establish only a single capital. Rayalaseema has been discriminated against for a very long time and development is possible only with the establishment of a judicial capital here," he said.

TTD Chairman YV Subbareddy thanked the public for turning out in huge numbers. "Over one lakh people joined the rally. This in itself means a lot to us. YSRCP is a party of the people, for the people, by the people. The public is the real king. We will go out of our way to ensure that they get what they want. We promise to fulfil their aspirations," he asserted.

Corruption reached its peak in AP: TDP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Former minister and senior TDP leader, Pattipati Pulla Rao, and the vice-president of the State party unit, Buragadda Veda Vyas on Saturday said that the financial condition of the State has touched the bottom level after Jagan Mohan Reddy has become the Chief Minister. The hospitals are sending back the patients without treatment as the government is not making payments under the Arogyasri scheme. It is a fact that lakhs of rupees are being paid as salaries to the employees of the media houses owned by Jagan, the TDP leaders told media persons at the party headquarters here. "The people of the State are now witnessing how the administration functions if an economic offender becomes a Chief Minister," Pattipati Pulla Rao said. Observing that corruption has reached its peak during the YSRCP rule, he said that the media houses owned by Jagan are born out of this corruption and all the branches of these media houses besides the head office are



Jagan always utters blatant lies and his statement on the pending dues of Arogyasri are a classic example of this. At least Rs 600 crore is to be paid to various hospitals in the State under the Arogyasri scheme.

functioning under the supervision of the ruling dispensation. No other State in the country is witnessing such a situation, Pulla Rao felt and said that the Rythu Bharosa centres are not functioning impartially in any corner of the State. The former minister is of the strong opinion that the three capital issue is a big drama being utilised only for political purposes and that the very idea is not possible for implementation. Stating that the people of the State accepted Amaravathi as the capital long ago, Pulla Rao said that the people in the Rayalaseema region do not have any respect for the ruling YSRCP. "Is it not a fact that Jagan too openly declared that Amaravati is the capital of the State and that he is building his residence here," the former minister asked. The people of the State are eagerly waiting to send home Jagan at the earliest possible as they are not in a position to bear his rule any longer, he said. Jagan always utters blatant lies and his statement on the pending dues of Arogyasri are a classic example of this. "At least Rs 600 crore is to be paid to various hospitals in the State under this scheme," Pulla Rao said. The YSRCP leaders have resorted to Gobel propaganda that the then TDP government had appointed 35 police officers as DSPs belonging to the Kamma community, he said and asked how the YSRCP now appointed 854 officers belonging to a particular community. Mr Pulla Rao said that the

public money is being misused in the shape of salaries to the employees working in Jagan's media houses. The YSRCP Government knows only demolitions but not constructions, Pulla Rao observed and said that except taking political gains, the Jagan Mohan Reddy Government has till now not taken any measures with regard to the development sector. People will no longer believe Jagan, he added. Pulla Rao is of the opinion that Jagan lost people's confidence but the Chief Minister is only trying to bring in division among the people in the name of three capitals only for political gain. "How can the people expect the Chief Minister, who could not complete the construction of the buildings which are nearing completion, will go for three capitals," he asked. The former minister wants the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to interfere in this matter as already enough time has lapsed. "The five crore people of the State want Modi to interfere and put an end to this three capital slogan," Pulla Rao said.



Relief given away to victims of fire mishap

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The month of October is observed as 'Charity Month' at Nirmala High School, Vijayawada. In this regard, the students were asked to save a handful of rice a day. And on October 26, the students brought to school their savings from their pocket money and rice which they collected. The parents and the students generously contributed and the rice collected weighed above 2,500 kg.

And on October 27, a few students along with the staff visited the area which was affected by a fire accident at Pakeergudem in the city. There were around 17 families who were left without anything due to the fire accident. The students distributed 25 kgs of rice and grocery items like oil, dal, wheat flour etc. to each family. On October 31, the students will be distributing the same in another slum area where there are around 150 families.

Spurned lover commits suicide

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

A 24-year-old spurned lover has committed suicide at Baswapur village under Bhiknoor mandal in Kamareddy district. According to the police, Chetukuri Yellesam was in love with a girl of the same village for sometime. On finding out about the love affair, Yellesam's father, Yellaiah, approached the girl's parents with a marriage proposal. But the girl's parents did not show interest in the proposal, the police said. As the girl's parents rejected the marriage proposal, Yellesam on Thursday consumed pesticide on the outskirts of the village. Earlier, he called his friend on the phone and told him about his decision to commit suicide. He was found unconscious near a tank on the outskirts of the village. He was rushed to Ramayampet hospital and later to Yellareddy hospital.

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'Focus on increasing milk procurement in villages'

Sets daily target of collecting 2 litres of milk from every dairy farmer

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao has directed the officials concerned to focus on increasing milk procurement in villages under the 'Jagananna Pala Velluva' scheme. He set a daily target of collecting 2 litres of milk from every dairy farmer. All line departments should coordinate with one another to create awareness among milk producers as they must be sold their milk at Automatic Milk Collection Units (AMCU) through the 'Jagananna Pala Velluva' scheme, he said.



Cooperative Federation Limited. Milk collection is not happening as expected in some mandals, and he suggested that the mandal-level teams show special interest in those mandals.

He further said that there are 96 AMCUs in the district and they have procured about 10 lakh litres from 5,449 milk producers in the last nine months. If officials collect 2 litres per day from the milk producers, it may reach 3 lakh litres per month, and it might be 27 lakh litres for nine months. Compared to targeted and collected milk, there is a difference of 17 lakh litres. So, the officials should focus on these gaps, he

suggested.

The Collector further said that the Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development officials should conduct a review meeting at the division level once a week. At the mandal-level, MPDO, tahsildars, assistant project managers of the Veterinary, Animal Husbandry and Rural Development departments should take the responsibility for increasing the milk collection, he added.

He directed the officials to steps to collect milk which is abundantly available in the winter season. Despite the presence of high milk-yielding breeds of cattle in the district, the milk collection is not up to

the mark, he said.

"As of now, there are 96 AMCUs at Tiruvuru, Gampalagudem, A Konduru, Vissannapaet, Mylavaram, G Konduru, and Reddigudem mandals. Some societies are not working properly and their nature of work is not satisfactory. CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy intends to give financial support to all dairy farmers under the 'Jagananna Pala Velluva' scheme. NTR district should stand in the first place by collecting more milk in the State," he said.

Joint Collector S Nupur Ajay Kumar said that the Krishna District Cooperative Central Bank (KDCCB) sanctioned Rs 1.68 crore to 540 beneficiaries as working capital in the district. The officials should concentrate on payments, she said, and directed the mandal and village-level teams to take the responsibility for collecting milk from dairy farmers through volunteers.

Vijayawada Sub Collector Aditi Singh, Tiruvuru RDO Prasanna Lakshmi, NTR District Animal Husbandry Officer Dr.K Vidyasagar, District Panchayat Officer J Suneetha, District Agricultural Officer M Vijaya Bharathi, District Cooperative Officer Ch Sailaja, and others participated.

Velampalli dares Pawan to contest from Vja-West

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former minister and YSRC MLA Velampalli Srinivasa Rao has challenged Jana Sena founder K Pawan Kalyan to contest from his Vijayawada-West Assembly Constituency and claimed that he will defeat Pawan in the election with public support. The ruling party MLA visited the houses in the 47th division as part of the 'Gadapa Gadapaku Mana Prabhutvam' programme on Saturday.

On the occasion, he said that the adopted son of TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu is on a holiday to Vijayawada as today is Saturday and weekend. Velampalli said that Pawan should accept the challenge and contest against him in the Vijayawada West constituency in the next elections. He further slammed TDP leader Buddha Venkanna and said that Venkanna feels like a hero but in fact is a big zero. Velampalli criticized Venkanna for not being able to do Diksha for an indefinite period and called the police to disrupt Diksha and all the people know the tricks and dramas of Venkanna.

Velampalli commented that TDP leader Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu grew old, but his wisdom didn't. Both Venkanna and Ayyanna Patrudu can't save the TDP from sinking, said Velampalli.



TDP demands white paper on utilisation of funds by VMC

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) TDP floor leader N Balaswamy has demanded that the ruling YSRC disclose the details of the expenditure of about Rs 150 crore which was released by the State government in two installments. He also wanted Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi and MLAs to release a white paper on the issue.

Speaking to media persons at the TDP office in Vijayawada on Saturday, he said that the State government had released Rs100 crore as the first installment, and Rs.50 crore as the second installment. But, they did not disclose the expenditure details of the grants. Though the State government had diverted all the 14th and 15th finance commission funds, not even a single paisa was credited into the VMC account, he alleged.

He further alleged that without inviting tenders, the VMC officials allotted the work to

State government had released Rs100 crore as the first installment, and Rs.50 crore as the second installment. But, they did not disclose the expenditure details of the grants. Though the State government had diverted all the 14th and 15th finance commission funds, not even a single paisa was credited into the VMC account, he alleged.

private entertainment company for arranging amusement items in Rajiv Gandhi Park. Ruling YSRC leaders colluded with contractors and settled a deal for Rs.25 lakh per annum, he alleged. Had the VMC invited tenders, the Corporation would have earned an income of about Rs 1 crore income per annum, he said. YSRC leaders were denoting the income of VMC, he commented.

He said that TDP would fight against corruption in the allotment of work to companies picked by YSRC leaders without inviting tenders. The

ruling party is also resorting to corruption in developing greenery at several parks in the city, he said. They are looting the VMC by purchasing plants at Rs.70 each, instead of Rs 10 and they are manipulating the accounts of the VMC, he added. VMC Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar should take action against the ruling party's corporators and stop corruption at all levels, he demanded.

VMC Corporators Chunnupati Usha Rani, Mummineni Prasad, Potluri Sai Babu, and Veeramachineni Lalitha were present.

Spl trains to clear extra rush

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In order to clear the extra rush of passengers, Railways decided to run special trains between Dibrugarh-Kanyakumari for three trips. Train No 05906 Dibrugarh-Kanyakumari special will leave Dibrugarh on November 01, 08, and 15 (Tuesdays) at 07.25 pm which will reach Visakhapatnam on Thursday at 03.30 pm departure at 03.50 pm and will reach Kanyakumari at 10.00 pm on Friday. The train No 05905 Kanyakumari - Dibrugarh special will leave Kanyakumari on November 06, 13, and 20 (Sundays) at 05.20 pm which will reach Visakhapatnam at 11.45 pm and departure at 12.05 am (Midnight of Monday) and will reach Dibrugarh at 08.50 pm on Wednesday. The train will have stoppages at Bhadrak, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Khurda Road, Brahmapur, Palasa, Srikakulam Road, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, and Duvvada over East



Coast Railway jurisdiction. Composition: 2nd AC-1, 3rd AC-4, Sleeper Class-11, General Second Class-3, Second class cum luggage/Divyangjan coaches-1, AC Pantry Car-1 & Generator car-1. Train services on KK Line to be short-terminated. In view of security reasons, the train services on KK Line will be regulated from October 30 to November 4. The train No 18514 Visakhapatnam-Kirandul express leaving Visakhapatnam will be short-terminated from October 30 to November 04 at Dantewada and will return as 18513 from Dantewada to Vizag instead of Kirandul from October 31 to November 05. Similarly, Train No 08551 Visakhapatnam - Kirandul passenger special train leaving Visakhapatnam will be short-terminated from October 31 to November 05 at Dantewada and will return as 08552 from Dantewada to Visakhapatnam instead of Kirandul from November 01 to 06. People are requested to note these changes and act accordingly.

Devotees throng Vizag zoo on 'Nagula Chavithi'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA



On the occasion of the 'Nagula Chavithi' festival on Saturday, a large number of devotees flocked to Vizag zoo to worship the Snake God. The festival is an important day for IGZP for many decades and local people have a close association with the zoo on this auspicious day to celebrate the festival with their family and friends, said Dr Nandani Salaria, Curator, IGZP.

She said that security was tightened at the two main gates and every vehicle and visitor was thoroughly checked before entering the zoo premises and prohibited items were not allowed inside. The warning boards were displayed at the two main gates and at various places in the zoo park to ensure that crackers are not burnt. All arrangements were made to ensure that the visitors did not face any inconvenience. Total 11,981 people visited the zoo on the occasion of 'Nagula Chavithi'.

Drumstick saplings distributed to NREGA workers

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao has said that drumstick leaves will serve as medicine for all diseases and improve immunity. The drumstick green leaves are useful for pregnant women to stay healthy.

The NTR District Water and Management Agency (DWAMA) organised the distribution of the drumstick plants to MGNREGA workers at Kethanakonda of Ibrahimpatnam, near Vijayawada, on Saturday.

Earlier, he visited the acid-lemongarden, as the farmer who raised the orchard received financial assistance under the MGNREGA scheme.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that drumstick leaves have medicinal properties and

the doctors are also advising the people to have curry made of them. Drumstick (Munaga) is the only plant that contains Potassium, Calcium, Zinc, Proteins, and mineral salts.

He further said that drumstick leaves prevent heart attacks, cancer, diabetes and other diseases and improve memory power.

"Foreign countries have obtained patents for neem, amla, and basil, and made several medicines. Likewise, in the future there will be a chance to take patent rights for drumstick leaves," he said.

The DWAMA Project Director J Suneetha, Ibrahimpatnam MPP Paladugu Jyostna, PACS president Shaik Jilani Basha, Kethanakonda sarpanch N Asha Latha, MPDO B Ramakrishna Naik, Tahsildar M Suryarao, and others were present.

3RD PHASE OF RIVER RETAINING WALL IN VJA TENDER NOTIFICATION ISSUED

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The government has issued a tender notification for Rs 118.64 crore for the construction of a retaining wall for River Krishna from Padmavathi ghat to Kanaka Durga Varadhi. The last date for the tender is November 10 and the construction of the retaining wall should be completed in two years. The financial bid will be opened on November 15. Reverse tendering will be conducted on the same day and the work will be awarded to the contractor who is interested in doing the work at the lowest price.

If the construction of this retaining wall is completed, even if there is a maximum flood of 12 lakh cusecs in the Krishna River, the water will not even reach the low-lying areas of Vijayawada. At present, if the floodwater in Krishna River is 3 lakh cusecs, the low-lying areas in Vijayawada of Krishna Lanka to



Yanamalakuduru would be inundated creating panic among the people of the low-lying areas.

As promised by CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy during the padayatra, the construction work of a 1.25 km-long retaining wall from Kotinagar to Tarakarama Nagar was started on May 31, 2021, at a cost of Rs 125 crore and completed in record time. Even though 12 lakh cusecs flood water was released downstream from Prakasam barrage, the retaining wall prevented flood from

entering the low-lying areas. Recently, 6 lakh cusecs floodwater was released from the Krishna River, but the water did not reach the low-lying areas in Vijayawada.

In Vijayawada, CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has sanctioned Rs 138 crore for the construction of a retaining wall from Padmavathi Ghat to Kanakadurga Varadhi. The officials of the Water Resources Department issued a tender notification for Rs 118.64 crores.

After the construction of the

retaining wall, if 12 lakh cusecs of flood water were released from the Prakasam barrage, there will be no threat of flood to the people from Krishna Lanka to Yanamakuduru, according to ENC C Narayana Reddy.

NTR District collector S Dilli Rao spoke to The Pioneer and said that the state government has sanctioned Rs 138 crore for the construction of third phase retaining wall downstream of Krishna River.

The retaining wall will be constructed from Padmavathi Ghat to Kanakadurga Varadhi which is 1.05 km in length with a height of 8.9 meters. After the Judicial preview clearance, the tenders are being called for Rs 118.64 crore.

The last date for sealed tender submission is November 10 and the tenders will be opened on November 15, and the retaining wall should be completed in the stipulated time prescribed, said the collector Dilli Rao.



SAAP tennis league tourney begins

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) Tennis League for U-8, U-10, U-12, U-14, and U-16 boys and girls, and Under-18 mixed event for men and women categories began in Vijayawada on Saturday. The two-day SAAP Tennis League is being conducted at the Tennis complex at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) stadium in Vijayawada.

The SAAP is conducting leagues to encourage budding players at the district, zonal, and state levels to identify tal-

ented players. At all stages, there was a good response from both boy and girl players and they fought for victory.

At the inaugural function, SAAP Tennis League Convenor S Durga Kumar said that the State government is giving top priority to sports and games. The SAAP is providing the best facilities for Tennis, he added.

Krishna District Tennis Association president K Radha Krishna Murthy, NTR District Sports Authority Chief Coach SA Azeez, NTR district Tennis coach Y Sivaramakrishna, Guntur coach Sk Ahmed, and others were present.

Award for Vizag oncologist

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Digumarti Raghunatha Rao, Chief Medical Oncologist (Medical Oncology), KIMS ICON Hospital, & Founder Director of Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, has been conferred with the lifetime achievement award during the 20th Biennial conference of the Indian Society for Medical and Paediatric Oncology (ISMPO) & Indian Society of Oncology (ISO) held in Chennai on Saturday.

The award was presented by Dr T Soundararajan, Governor of Telangana and Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry for pioneering efforts for the



establishment of cancer centres, medical oncology departments and courses, doctoral labs, cancer registries and cancer clinics.

More than 1,000 delegates from across India and abroad

participated in the three-day conference for updates on various aspects of cancer.

Raghunatha Rao delivered a presidential oration on 'Building Institutes of Excellence'.

8th Andhra Pradesh Netball Tournery begins

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Two-day inter-district Sub Juniors and Seniors Netball Tournament began at the Vikas College of Physical Education (BPEd) at Nunna on the outskirts of Vijayawada on Saturday.

As many as 48 teams are participating in the tournament across the State. Vikas Educational Institutions secretary and correspondent Naredla Satyanarayana Reddy inaugurated the tournament and the officials introduced players to him.

Vikas BPEd College principal Dr G Raju (Wesley), vice principal B Uday Kumar, Krishna District Netball

Association secretary B Hima Bindu, NTR district secretary B Venkat, BPEd College lecturers G Raghuram, D Ratna Babu, Nagaraju, and Balaji participated.

Nellore Sub Junior boys team registers two wins

On the first day of the tournament, the SPSR Nellore Sub Junior boys team registered two wins and maintained the lead in its groups. Also, the host Krishna district boys' team won its first match against the Prakasam.

RESULTS

Sub Junior Boys: SPSR Nellore beat Visakhapatnam, 11-3 goals,

SPSR Nellore beat Vizianagaram, 8-1, Kurnool bt Guntur, 4-0, Krishna beat Prakasam, 11-4

Sub Junior Girls: Srikakulam beat East Godavari, 1-2 goals, Kadapa beat Prakasam, 12-2, Visakhapatnam beat Guntur, 12-2 goals

Senior (Men): East Godavari beat Vizianagaram, 15-1, Kadapa beat Chittoor, 14-3, Kurnool beat Guntur, 3-2, Visakhapatnam beat Anantapuram, 13-1, West Godavari beat Vizianagaram, 17-1, SPSR Nellore beat Chittoor, 13-4, Prakasam beat Guntur, 11-2

Senior (Women): Vizianagaram beat Kurnool, 17-1 goals, Kadapa beat Prakasam, 6-2 goals.



Motivate beneficiaries to build houses: Civic chief

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Municipal Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri has directed the amenity secretaries to motivate the beneficiaries to construct houses in the Jaganna layouts.

The Municipal Commissioner on Saturday inspected the Jaganna layout located at Perecherla, near here, along with Municipal Corporation engineering and housing department officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Keerthi Chekuri said that every beneficiary should construct a house in the allocated plot in the Jaganna layout. The officials should ensure that the construction of houses should be expedited.

The construction of roads in the Jaganna colony should be expedited. The contractors who were constructing the houses in the colonies should submit a report on the progress of the construction every day to her. She instructed the sec-



retariat volunteers to cooperate with the amenity secretaries in collecting information about the beneficiaries.

Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri, interacting with the beneficiaries, told them that the government had an objective of providing a house to every houseless poor and allocated plots. She asked them to construct houses in the plots. All facilities would be provided to

the colonies, she assured them.

Later the municipal commissioner inspected the major outfall drain at Chuttugunta centre. She directed to modernize the drain as water overflowed from the drain causing severe inconvenience to the denizens. SE Bhaskar, EE Sundarrami Reddy, DE E Ramesh Babu, and Housing EE Shankar Rao were among those who accompanied her.

Meanwhile, Tadikonda YSRCP MLA Dr. Undavalli Sridevi submitted a memorandum to District Collector M Venugopal Reddy here on Saturday urging him to take steps to expedite the construction of houses in the Jaganna layouts located at Perecherla.

She told the Collector that the Perecherla Jaganna layout is the biggest colony in the State and works should be expedited to provide amenities to the colony.

"There is a need to lay special focus on the construction of houses and providing required infrastructure including construction roads, drains, providing drinking water and electricity to the Perecherla colony since it is the biggest in the state," she told the Collector.

MLA Sridevi appealed to the Collector to release funds to the contractors so that they would carry out the construction works in the colony without any break.

Check maternal mortality rate: DC

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

District Collector P Prasanthi warned the medical and health staff of stringent action, if negligence is found to be the reason for maternal mortality.

The Collector here on Saturday held a review meeting on maternal mortality with the medical staff. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the staff of medical and health and women and child welfare departments should work in such a way that there is no chance for maternal and child deaths.

High-risk pregnant women should be given medical help by giving advice from time to time, she told them, adding that it is the responsibility of the Anganwadi workers to provide nutritious food to the pregnant women. Collector Prasanthi said that two maternal deaths and four infant deaths in the months of September and October were reviewed today.

Medical officers should be available all the time and provide full services. Instead of filling reports, medical staff should provide medical assistance with sincerity according to the actual conditions of



pregnant women, she directed them.

The Collector informed that the deaths occurred in postnatal deaths, the causes of death, anaemia, malnutrition, and other causes in pregnant women were thoroughly analyzed. "Ensure that there should be no maternity and child deaths in the upcoming review meeting. A magisterial inquiry will be held if such deaths take place in the district", the Collector warned.

"In the six cases reviewed today, the records revealed that the medical examinations were good and they were given good food. You should tell us how they died,"

she told them, lamenting that the deaths occurred in Bhimavaram and Palakollu in the heart of the district. "The mother is healthy and the child dies, how this happens," she questioned the medical staff.

If a woman is given regular medical care from the time of conception and special care is taken by Anganwadis to provide nutritious food, then deaths could be prevented, the Collector told them.

Medical officials should strive for normal deliveries in hospitals. In view of the health of pregnant women, they should provide necessary med-

icines to avoid anaemia, the Collector said and directed the medical and health staff to examine the causes of maternal deaths of Kolla Vijayalakshmi (32), Ballipadu, Palakollu mandal and Bagu Urmila (21), Garuru Peta, Bhimavaram and submitted a complete report. She was also ordered to submit a report on the causes of death of four children.

DMHO Dr. D Maheswara Rao, Additional DM&H Dr. Bhanu Naik, District Medical Officer Dr. Devasudha, and DCHS Dr. M Veeraswamy were among those who were present.

Minister directs officials to widen Bhattiprolu roads

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Minister for Social Welfare Merugu Nagarjuna has directed the officials concerned to take steps to widen the roads of Bhattiprolu village.

The minister held a review meeting with the officials in the Collectorate on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that the roads at Bhattiprolu had been in a bad condition for the last 50 years and directed the officials to take steps to widen the roads.

The minister brought to the attention of Collector Vijaya Krishnan that the roads from Addepalli Masjid to Bhattiprolu Railway Gate, from



Addepalli Masjid to Chavali, and from Chavali to Bus Stand are narrow in Bhattiprolu Panchayat.

The people of Bhattiprolu village have appealed to the district Collector to take immediate action for the widening of the road.

District collector Vijaya Krishnan responded to the

issue, directing the Panchayat Raj and R&B revenue officers to undertake the survey work to widen the roads. Joint Collector K Srinivasulu, R&B Department SE Srinivas Rao, District Panchayat Officer Ramesh, Bhattiprolu Tehsildar Shrawan Kumar, MPDO Chandrasekhar, and others participated.



'VVIT Balotsav' from Nov 12 to 14

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The children's festival VVIT Balotsav 2022 will be organised from November 12 to November 14 on the campus of Vasireddy Venkatadri Institute of Technology (VVIT).

VVIT chairman Vasireddy Vidyasagar on Saturday released pamphlets on the programmes. Speaking on the occasion, he said that in a bid to explore the creativity and proficiencies among the students the prestigious VVIT Balotsav is organised.

The Balotsav programmes help to relieve stress and infuse enthusiasm among the students. He said that over 10,000 students participated in the

last Balotsav and more than 10,000 students are expected to participate this year.

The objective of organising the Balotsav is also to pass the significance of Indian culture, and traditions to posterity, he stated. Balotsav Convenor Dr. Kande Giribabu said that Andhra Pradesh School Education Department is supporting the Balotsav and he thanked APSDC and APN-RTL. He said that competitions would be organized in 59 categories of 20 items and in each category; first, second and third prizes will be given. VVIT Principal Dr. Y Mallikharjun Reddy was among those who were present.

Rs 2 lakh financial aid given to kin of suicide victim

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh was given to the kin of a youth who committed suicide here on Saturday. The amount was donated by YSRCP leader Peddireddy Suryaprakash Reddy and handed over to the bereaved family members through District Collector AS Dinesh Kumar.

Dosakayalapati Anjaneyulu committed suicide on October 10 by jumping into the Gundlakamma rivulet near Peddaanagulavaram road. Anjaneyulu is survived by wife and two children.

YSRCP leader Peddireddy Suryaprakash Reddy was moved by the plight of the chil-



children and the young widow. He consoled the bereaved family and promised to extend financial assistance for the education of the two children. He handed over Rs 2 lakh financial assistance to the bereaved family for the education of the two

children through the District Collector and in the presence of Pullaiah, Principal of the Kamala Educational Institutions, Markapuram. The wife of the deceased thanked Peddireddy Surya Prakash Reddy for his help.



700 kg of stale chicken liver, meat seized

PNS ■ NELLORE

The District Medical and Health officials seized 300 kgs of stale chicken liver and 400 kg of meat here on Saturday.

The officials, on a tip-off, conducted a raid and seized 300 KGs of the stale chicken liver which was brought from Chennai. The officials also seized 400 KGs of stale meat while being made ready for sale. The officials held a person named Arif in this connection. The health department officials warned of stringent action if stale and rotten meat is sold.

Rein in road accidents, officials told

PNS ■ ELURU

Eluru District Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh and SP Rahul Dev Sharma have directed the officials to take the required steps to curb road accidents.

The district road safety meeting was held here on Saturday for which Collector Prasanna Venkatesh, SP Rahul Dev Sharma, and other officials attended.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Venkatesh said that over speed is the main reason for road accidents. Several people lose their lives in road accidents, he said.

"Stringent steps should be taken to regulate the over-speeding of vehicles on the National Highway. Steps should be taken to ensure that drivers should not drive in an inebriated condition. Accident-prone areas should be identified and steps should be taken to prevent road accidents at the spot", the Collector told the



officials.

The speed guns should be used to calculate the speed of vehicles on the highway where accidents are likely to occur, the Collector said and ordered the officials to take necessary surveillance and control measures to contain the speeding of vehicles.

Venkatesh directed the officials to ensure that there should be no liquor shops along the national highway, identify the

areas where accidents are most likely to occur on the national highway, the areas where people travel a lot, and set up danger indicators.

Cases should be registered against those who drink and drive vehicles. Counseling should be given to the minors who drive motor vehicles and also their parents, Collector Venkatesh said.

The Collector directed the Medical Officers to ensure

that doctors are available 24 hours a day in the government hospitals along the road and that emergency medicines and blood reserves are available to provide immediate better treatment to those injured in accidents. The Collector directed the Roads and Buildings department officials to immediately carry out repairs to the roads wherever needed.

SP Rahul Dev Sharma said that the district police had focussed on the drunk drivers and were registering cases against them. Awareness programmes are being organised on road safety and traffic rules to the people by the police, the SP informed.

Deputy transport commissioner Purenra, additional SP Chakravarti, R&B SE GV Subba Rao, DMHO Dr. B Ravi, GGD coordinator Dr. AVR Mohan, district Panchayat officer N Balaji and municipal commissioner Sk. Shahid were among those who attended the meeting.

Failed promises, blatant lies

■ TRS lambasts Centre, releases charge-sheet

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Lashing out at the BJP, the Working President of the TRS, KT Rama Rao, released a charge-sheet against the BJP for 'miserably failing' the country and for its indifference towards Telangana. KTR vehemently criticised the BJP-led Central Government for its failed promises and blatant lies.

Mentioning a host of contemporary issues in the charge-sheet filed by the TRS, KTR came down heavily on the ruling dispensation at the Centre. He said they are filing this charge-sheet on behalf of all aggrieved sections of society.

Speaking at the Telangana Bhavan here on Saturday after releasing the charge-sheet, he said that the BJP government has not allocated even a single Rupee to Telangana in the last eight years. They won't give anything in future too, he added.

"We are asking for votes by showcasing the development we have achieved in the last eight years and promising what we will do in Munugode if we win. On the contrary, the BJP is resorting to personal abuses and making degrading remarks against our Chief Minister,"



KTR said. The charge-sheet said the BJP's gross injustice towards Telangana like dishonouring the promises in the Reorganisation Act and the party's decisions against the interests of Telangana.

The document also highlighted the effect of the skyrocketing prices of essentials on commoners and how Modi's anti-farmer policies are sounding the death knell for the farming sector.

The 13-page also explained in detail how the BJP government and some BJP-ruled states cheated Backward Classes. It also spoke about how the BJP misled citizens and how they fooled the youth and the way they discriminated against the students of Telangana.

KTR said the BJP has sold the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and many navaratna and miniratna companies. He said the Modi government has tripled the price of cooking gas making life miserable for crores of people.

KTR went all guns blazing at the BJP for helping its 'corporate friends'.

"Prime Minister Modi wrote off corporate loans amounting to Rs 11,500 billion. But he is terming the welfare schemes for the poor as freebies," KTR said. He added that after Independence all PMs cumulatively contracted a debt of Rs 55,097 billion while Modi himself contracted a debt of Rs 1,10,000 billion in just eight years.

KTR appealed to the voters of Munugode to be aware of the 'jumlas' and 'jhootas' of the BJP and asked them to punish the saffron party in the by-poll.



Fervour marks 'Nagula Chavithi' at Tirumala

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

'Pedda Sesa Vahana Seva' was held with religious fervour in Tirumala in connection with 'Nagula Chavithi', on Saturday evening. Sri Malayappa in all His grandeur, flanked by Sridevi and Bhudevi on either side took out a celestial ride on the seven hooded mighty Pedda Sesa Vahanam to bless devo-

tees all along four Mada streets. This procession took place between 7 pm and 9 pm and was telecasted live on SVBC for the sake of global devotees. One of the chief priests Venugopala Deekshitulu, DyEO Ramesh Babu, EE Jagannathan Reddy, Health Officer Dr. Sridevi, Peishkar Sreehari, VGO Bali Reddy, and others were also present.

TTD mulls 'Kartika Masa Vishnu Pujas'

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

In connection with the advent of the auspicious 'Kartika Masam', TTD is all set to observe 'Karthika Masa Vishnu Pujas' at Vasanta Mandapam in Tirumala as was done last year.

Sri Maha Vishnu Pujas in the holy 'Kartika Masam' will be conducted as per Vaikhanasa Agama Sastra. The Vishnu Pujas include 'Sri Vishnu Salagrama Puja' between 3 PM and 4:30 PM on November 4, 'Kaisika Dwadasi Tulasi-Damodara Puja' on November 5 between 3 PM and 4:30 PM, 'Gopuja' between 8:30 AM and 10 AM on November 11 and Dhanvantari Jayanti between 10 AM and 11 AM on November 21. The SVBC will telecast these religious events live for the sake of global devotees.

'We will clean TS contaminated by KCR'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Reacting strongly to TRS Working President KT Rama Rao's Tweet, "It is a sin that Bandi Sanjay touched Lord Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy with the hands with which he carried the shoes of Amit Shah. Appeals to Yadadri Temple authorities to perform 'Samprokshana' to undo the blaspheming of the deity by Sanjay," Telangana BJP

president Bandi Sanjay Kumar said the BJP will clean Telangana as it was contaminated by deceivers like Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his son KT Rama Rao. KTR, who does not believe in God, has no right to speak about 'Samprokshana' (cleansing). KCR, who consumes liquor, and KTR, who takes nar-

cotic drugs, are not fit to pronounce the name of Sri Laxminarasimha Swamy, Sanjay said.

The BJP will cleanse the mouths of the father and the son (KCR and KTR), he said, adding that 16 Ministers and

TRS MLAs are addicted to drugs. The BJP will conduct drug tests on them after coming to power, he said.

Addressing the media on Saturday at the BJP candidate Komatireddy Rajagopal Reddy's camp office in Munugode, Sanjay said that Telangana soil has been contaminated by KCR and KTR, who had deceived the people by not implementing their assurances and that there is a need to cleanse (Samprokshana) Telangana after exposing their deceptions.

Law will take its own course

○ CM will respond in a benefitting manner: KTR on poaching of MLAs

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TRS Working President KT Rama Rao said on Saturday that the law will take its own course in the MLAs poaching case. "The law will take its own course and I am confident that investigating agencies will do their job well," he said in his first reaction to the poaching drama which unfolded on October 26 with the arrest of three alleged BJP agents while trying to buy four TRS MLAs. KTR declined further comment saying that he would not like to say something which may be interpreted as influencing the investigation. "We are responsible people running a government. If I speak something, they may say that I am influencing the

investigation. The law will definitely take its own course," he said. The TRS leader also said that at an appropriate time either investigating agencies investigating the criminal act or Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will respond appropriately.

KTR was talking to reporters at the Telangana Bhavan, the TRS headquarters. Facing questions on the poaching case, he merely said that everything has come before people and the people know the guilty.

He recalled that he had already asked TRS leaders not to comment on the case. He said when he had given this direction to party leaders, it would not be proper for him to comment.

KTR appealed to the voters of Munugode to be aware of the 'jumlas' and 'jhootas' of the BJP and asked them to punish the saffron party in the by-poll.

World must stop misuse of new tech by non-state actors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Saturday pitched for global efforts to stop possible misuse of new technologies such as encrypted messaging and crypto-currency by "non-state actors" with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar cautioning that the social media platforms have turned into potent instruments in the "toolkit" of terror groups.



In an address at a special meeting of the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), he also said terrorist groups, their "ideological fellow-travellers" and "lone wolf" attackers have significantly enhanced capabilities by gaining access to the new technologies.

He also said the counter-terror sanction regime of the United Nations has been effective to put countries on notice that turned terrorism into a "state-funded enterprise", seen as an apparent reference to Pakistan.

Representatives from all 15 member nations of the UN Security Council are attending the second day's meeting that is taking place in Delhi. The first day's events were held in Mumbai.

Reaffirming India's com-

mitment to combat terrorism, the external affairs minister also announced that New Delhi would make a voluntary contribution of half a million dollars in the UN Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism this year.

In his remarks, Jaishankar said the technological innovations of the past two decades have been transformative in the way the world functions and the new and emerging technologies -- from virtual private networks, and encrypted messaging services to blockchain and virtual currencies -- are offering a very promising future for a wide array of economic and social benefits.

However, he said there is a flip side to it, especially where terrorism is concerned.

"These very technologies have also thrown up new chal-

lenges for the governments and regulatory bodies due to their potential vulnerability for misuse by non-state actors, given the very nature of some of these technologies and the nascent regulatory environment," Jaishankar said.

"In recent years, terrorist groups, their ideological fellow-travellers, particularly in open and liberal societies and 'lone wolf' attackers have significantly enhanced their capabilities by gaining access to these technologies," he added.

The external affairs minister said these forces use technology and money, and most importantly, the ethos of open societies, to attack freedom, tolerance and progress.

"Internet and social media platforms have turned into potent instruments in the

toolkit of terrorist and militant groups for spreading propaganda, radicalisation and conspiracy theories aimed at destabilising societies," he said.

"Another add-on to the existing worries for governments around the world is the use of unmanned aerial systems by terrorist groups and organised criminal networks," he said.

Jaishankar noted that the "misuse" of these unmanned aerial platforms for nefarious purposes by terrorist groups such as delivery of weapons and explosives and to carry out targeted attacks have become an "imminent danger".

"They are, therefore, a challenge for security agencies worldwide. The possibilities of using weaponised drones for terrorist purposes against

strategic, infrastructure and commercial assets call for serious attention by the member states," he said.

It is for the first time that the UN Security Council is holding a meeting, in any format, in India.

Describing terrorism as "one of the gravest threats" to humanity, Jaishankar said the UN Security Council, in the past two decades, has evolved an important architecture, built primarily around the counter-terrorism sanctions regime, to combat the menace.

"This has been very effective in putting those countries on notice that had turned terrorism into a state-funded enterprise," he said.

"Despite this, the threat of terrorism is only growing and expanding, particularly in Asia and Africa, as successive reports of the 1267 Sanctions Committee Monitoring Reports have highlighted," he said.

The external affairs minister said holding of the special meeting by the UN Security Council in India is also the product of the fact that counter-terrorism has become one of the top priorities during New Delhi's ongoing tenure in the top body.

Along with environment, job protection is a concern

PNS ■ KAZIRANGA

Union Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijiju on Saturday said that protection of jobs in India is a concern while safeguarding the environment during economic progress.

The per capita GDP in India is still very less compared to other mid-level and developed nations, Rijiju said after inaugurating a seminar here.

"When we talk about growth of the economy, we only talk about protection of the environment. But we are also concerned about protection of jobs," he said.

Addressing the seminar on 'Environment and Sustainable Development - Role of Judiciary' and 'Digitisation of Indian Judiciary - its Impact in Dispensation of Justice', Rijiju said all stakeholders must come together to deliberate on the issues.

PREZ TO UN PANEL 'Zero tolerance to all acts of terror should continue'



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that India has been a victim of terrorism for decades, President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday said zero tolerance to all acts of terror, irrespective of its motivations, should continue to be the guiding approach of the international community in shaping the global counter-terror architecture.

Addressing the heads of delegations of the United Nations Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee (UNSC CTC), who had called on her, the president said India has a national commitment to fight the evil of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations.

The president emphasised that zero tolerance to all acts of terror, irrespective of its motivations, should continue to be the guiding approach of the international community in shaping the global counter-terror architecture, according to a Rashtrapati Bhavan state-

ment. Welcoming the delegation members, President Murmu appreciated their gesture of commencing their visit by paying tributes to the 26/11 terror attack victims in Mumbai.

She said that India as the world's largest democracy, with one of the most open and diverse societies in the world, has been a victim of terrorism for decades. During the meeting, Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations (UN), in her capacity as chair of the CTC, informed the president about the working of the UNSC CTC and its priorities. Michael Moussa Adamo, President of the UN Security Council and Foreign Minister of Gabon, and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also made brief interventions apprising the president of the salient aspects of the UNSC CTC's deliberations and the way ahead, as outlined in the Delhi Declaration adopted earlier on Saturday, the statement said.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Remove illegal content as fast as possible: IT Minister

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Saturday said while social media norms require platforms to remove illegal content within 72 hours of being flagged, he feels the timelines are "too long" and platforms should take down such content "as fast as possible".



the unity and integrity of the country as well as "objectionable" content that promotes "enmity between different groups on the grounds of religion or caste with the intent to incite violence".

The rules provide for social media platforms to take down certain contentious content within 72 hours of reporting.

Under the new IT rules that came into effect on Friday, platforms will have greater onus to do due diligence and make reasonable effort to remove illegal content on their own.

"If you are unable to do it with your content moderation, algorithm, people etc when reported, that content has to come down in 72 hours," he said, but added that all efforts need to be made to take down such content much more quickly.

it at 72 hours and then progressively as the platforms gain capacity and capability, we will create a shorter window," the minister said.

His message to social media platforms: "Letter of IT rules says 72 hours but the spirit should be as fast as possible".

The complaints around illegal content could range from child sexual abuse material to nudity to trademark and patent infringements, misinformation, impersonation of another person, content threatening

Kejriwal is a symbol of anarchy: Anurag Thakur

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Union Minister Anurag Thakur here on Saturday lashed out Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, calling him "a symbol of anarchy".

The Union minister of information and broadcasting was responding to a query during his press conference regarding Kejriwal's appeal to incorporate images of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha on currency notes.

"Arvind Kejriwal who used to oppose (construction of a grand) Ram temple is a symbol of anarchy. He does fake talking. He does new propaganda to divert attention of the people from his fakeness," Thakur said. The Union minister further asked AAP supreme Kejriwal that will his government also provide Rs 18,000 to temple priests, gurudwara granthis and church priests on the pattern of maulvis in Delhi.

Gujarat to form panel for implementation of Uniform Civil Code

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat government has decided to form a committee to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), it said on Saturday.

The decision was taken at a cabinet meeting which could be the last meeting under the present BJP government as Assembly elections are expected to be announced in the state by the next week.

Gujarat Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi and Union minister Parshottam Rupala informed the reporters about the decision.

"The committee will be headed by a retired High Court judge and have three to four members. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel has been given powers by the cabinet to select members of the committee," Rupala said.

The committee will be formed before the model code of conduct for elections comes into force, he added.

Sanghavi said the decision was taken as per the provisions



of Article 44 of Part 4 of the Constitution which expects the state government to apply common law for all citizens.

"This is a historic decision by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel. Our government has honoured the wish of common people as well as BJP workers to have such a code," Sanghavi said.

Rupala asserted that the proposed UCC will not violate the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The Hindu Marriage Act and Muslim personal laws will be covered under the UCC as these laws are not part of the Constitution, the Union minister added.

INDIA CORNER

TEEN STABBED TO DEATH BY TWO JUVENILES IN DELHI



A 17-year-old youth was allegedly stabbed to death by two juveniles following an argument over one of them harassing his sister, police said on Saturday. The teen had allegedly slapped one of the juveniles earlier for harassing his sister, they added. The police received information about the stabbing at 9.22 pm on Friday. Manoj Kumar Negi of Kumau Gali in Baljeet Nagar was taken to Sardar Patel Hospital where he was declared dead, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Shweta Chauhan said. Both the juvenile assailants have been apprehended and the weapon of offence recovered, the police said. A purported CCTV footage of the incident circulating on social media shows a scuffle between two youths. During the scuffle, a third person is seen arriving at the spot with something in his hand and attacking the victim. After the two assailants flee, a visibly faltering victim is seen taking out his mobile phone and ostensibly calling someone for help. He then collapses near a bike with the knife stuck on his back. The video also shows people watching the youth lying there but no one tries to help him. Based on a statement from Negi's father, a case under sections 302 (murder) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered, Chauhan said. Complainant Chandan Singh Negi alleged that while he was taking his son to the hospital, he revealed that the two juveniles had passed lewd comments at his sister, Chauhan said. Negi warned the two juveniles and even slapped one of them a few days ago. The aggrieved juveniles stabbed Negi multiple times when he was returning from computer class as revenge, Chauhan said.

Legacy of Modi govt after 8 years is no jobs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Saturday attacked the Centre over the issue of unemployment, alleging that the legacy of the Modi government after eight years is "no jobs".

The Congress has been attacking the government over alleged lack of jobs for the youth and rising unemployment.

"After 37 lakhs in Uttar Pradesh applying for Grade 'C' jobs, we have 35 lakh applicants for 40,000 Agniveer jobs. Is the government listening to the anguished voices of the young men: 'we are desperate, we have no choice'," Chidambaram said in a tweet.

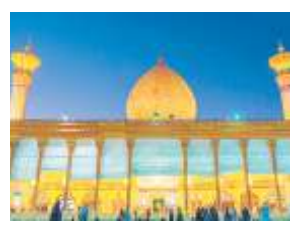
India condemns terror attack at Shah-e-Cheragh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Saturday strongly condemned the terror attack at Iran's Shah-e-Cheragh shrine and said it is yet another reminder that terrorism continues to pose one of the biggest threats to international peace and security.

According to reports from Iran, at least 15 people were killed and 40 others injured in the attack on the shrine in the city of Shiraz on Wednesday evening.

"India strongly condemns the terror attack at the Shah-e-Cheragh shrine in Shiraz, Iran. We extend our deep condolences to the families of the victims and the people of Iran," the Ministry of External



Affairs (MEA) said. It said the world must unitedly combat terrorism.

"This heinous attack is another reminder that terrorism continues to pose one of the biggest and critical threat to international peace and security and the need of the hour is for countries of the world to unite and combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations," the MEA said in a statement.

BJP slams Uddhav for 'Marathi Muslim' article in 'Saamana'

● Calls it politics of appeasement

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Saturday accused the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) of indulging in the politics of appeasement after the latter's mouthpiece 'Saamana' carried an article on "Marathi Muslims" supporting the former chief minister.

"Saamana" carried a front-page article on October 22 about the Marathi Muslim Seva Sangh backing Uddhav Thackeray, adding that the outfit is active in Mumbai, Konkan, Marathwada, Vidarbha and western



Maharashtra.

"The Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Party wants to garner Marathi and Muslim votes, but it cleverly played with the words by calling them Marathi Muslims," Mumbai BJP president Ashish Shelar said at a

press conference.

He said his party would organise 'Jagar Mumbaicha Yatra' in November to spread awareness among the residents of the metropolis about this "politics of appeasement" as well as "corruption" in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.

Shelar said Thackeray was getting frustrated as he was staring at defeat in the BMC polls. The city's civic body, currently under an administrator after the terms of corporators ended, has been ruled by the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena for several years now.

EXTRACTING GROUNDWATER ILLEGALLY

NGT directs closure of errant commercial establishments

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Groundwater vests in the state and its extraction is not permissible without consent, the National Green Tribunal has said while directing the closure of all establishments in Uttar Pradesh which are operating without mandatory permissions and withdrawing water illegally.

The NGT said that according to the Central Ground Water Authority's report, more than 70 per cent of hotels or commercial establishments across nine districts in Uttar Pradesh were found to be extracting groundwater illegally.

"Under the circumstances, case appears to be made out for directing sealing of all establishments operating without mandatory consents to operate as per Water Act, till compliance and registering criminal cases for theft of groundwater against owners of the establishments.

"The groundwater vests in the State and extraction is not permissible without consent of the State. Further, such extraction can only be on payment of laid down charges, the tribunal said.

A bench headed by chairperson Justice A K Goel said that the situation was alarming as shown by rampant violations,



defeating the directions of the Supreme Court for control and regulation of groundwater extractions.

There is a grey area of about 25 per cent for want of information being furnished or collected, the bench said, adding, We have no other option but to hold that there is an all-round

failure of the statutory authorities in complying with the mandate of the judgement of the Supreme Court."

The approvals for groundwater extraction were being granted mechanically, while alternatives to groundwater extraction were not being considered, resulting in a shortage

of potable water for drinking purposes, the bench said.

"Under the circumstances, the case appears to be made out to direct sealing of all establishments operating without mandatory consent to operate as per the Water Act, till compliance and registering criminal cases for theft of groundwater against owners of the establishments, the green panel said.

Determining the amount of interim compensation, the bench said it was Rs 50 lakh per establishment having more than 100 rooms, Rs 25 lakh per establishment having 50-100 rooms and Rs 10 lakh per establishment having up to 50 rooms. "We direct interim compensation at

the above rate be deposited by all the establishments identified as extracting groundwater without permission as well those not having consent to operate under the Water Act, the NGT said.

The deposit has to be made within one month with the respective District Magistrates, failing which theft cases would be registered against the establishments concerned and borewells sealed, the NGT said.

The already constituted joint committee of the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) had to assess the final compensation after giving an opportunity to the establishments concerned, within three months, it said.

VANDE BHARAT TRAIN HITS CATTLE IN GUJARAT, THIRD INCIDENT THIS MONTH



The Mumbai-Gandhinagar Vande Bharat Superfast Express rammed into cattle near Atul railway station in Gujarat on Saturday morning which damaged its front panel, an official said. This was the third such incident since the Vande Bharat train service started on this route from September 30. The train halted for 15 minutes after hitting a bull that had strayed on the track around 8.20 am but all the passengers were safe, said Sumit Thakur, chief public relations officer of Western Railway. The train's front panel was damaged and the underbody equipment of its first coach was also dented, he said. There is no damage to the train, except to the Nose Cone Cover of the front coach, that is the driver's coach. The train is running smoothly," Thakur added. The damaged panel will be replaced once the train reaches Mumbai, he said. On October 6, the train, which has a maximum speed of 130 kmph, ran over four buffaloes between Vatva and Maninagar stations in Gujarat on its way to Gandhinagar from Mumbai. Its nose panel had to be replaced overnight. The next day (October 7), the train hit a cow near Anand in Gujarat while on its way to Mumbai. The indigenously designed and manufactured semi-high speed train, a third under the Vande Bharat series, was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 30.

OCTOBER 31, 2023

Curbs on sugar exports extended

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has extended restrictions on sugar exports till October 31 next year, a move aimed at increasing availability of the commodity in the domestic market.

Earlier, the restrictions were imposed till October 31 this year.

"Restriction on export of sugar (raw, refined, and white sugar) is extended beyond October 31, 2022 till October 31, 2023, or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Other conditions will remain unchanged," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification dated October 28. However, it said these restrictions will not be applicable on sugar being exported to the EU and the US under CXL and TRQ duty concession quotas. A specified amount of sugar is exported to these regions under CXL and TRQ (tariff rate quota).

India has been the highest producer and the second largest exporter of sugar in the world in the current year.

An exporter would require a licence or permission from the government to export sugar, which is under the



On exports, the industry body has said that the window for exports appears to be quite short for Indian sugar this year as Brazilian sugar will hit the global market by May 2023. Further, most mills have already contracted sugar for export supplies in the current season. So, an early announcement of sugar export policy by the government should be highly appreciated, it added.

restricted category.

The country's sugar production is projected to be 36.5 million tonnes in the 2022-23 marketing season, an increase

of 2 per cent compared to the year-ago period, industry body ISMA has said. The production in India stood at 35.8 million tonnes during the 2021-22

marketing season. The season

is from October-September. With an estimated increase in production despite higher diversion for ethanol, ISMA

expects export to be around 9 million tonnes this season.

Releasing the first estimate, the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said "after accounting for the reduction of 45 lakh tonnes in sugar production due to diversion of cane juice/ syrup and B-molasses to ethanol, ISMA estimates sugar production in 2022-23 at around 36.5 million tonnes of sugar."

On exports, the industry body has said that the window for exports appears to be quite short for Indian sugar this year as Brazilian sugar will hit the global market by May 2023.

Further, most mills have already contracted sugar for export supplies in the current season. So, an early announcement of sugar export policy by the government should be highly appreciated, it added.

Sugarcane crushing has started in the southern region and is expected to start soon in other regions. Therefore, a better picture would emerge after a few months when actual trend of yields and sugar recoveries would become available.

As has been the practice, ISMA will again review the sugarcane and sugar production estimates in January 2023.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri to inaugurate India Pavilion at ADIPEC

PNS ■ DUBAI

Petroleum and Natural Gas minister Hardeep Singh Puri will inaugurate the India Pavilion at the Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference 2022 on Monday, officials said on Saturday. ADIPEC 2022 will be held from October 31 to November 3 in Abu Dhabi and the India pavilion is being organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) with the support of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

With attendees from over 160 countries, and featuring 28 dedicated country pavilions, ADIPEC 2022 will be the largest and most inclusive energy forum this year, driving the conversation around a pro-climate, pro-growth energy transition.

Taking place a week before COP27, and as the UAE prepares to host COP28 next year, ADIPEC 2022 will help accelerate pragmatic solutions to the world's most pressing energy challenges and provide the pathway to navigate a successful and inclusive energy transition. CII has been setting up the India Pavilion in ADIPEC since 2014. India Pavilion won the Best International Pavilion Award in ADIPEC 2018. This



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is the 7th time CII has mounted a large India pavilion with more than 75 Indian companies. Exporters in India pavilion will showcase their products and services offered for oil and gas industry like industrial valves, gas analysis components, pressure regulation, liner hanger system, packer system, and flow control, officials said.

They will also showcase pressure vessels and heat exchange-

er, joining sheets and materials, gas handling equipment, gas analysers, steam turbines, industrial project management, marking equipment, safety wear and various other products and services.

The India pavilion at the exhibition will provide a global stage to engage with the host country and the large number of buyers from the private and public sector and influencers.

NTPC Q2 net dips over 7 % to Rs 3,418 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-run power giant NTPC on Saturday reported an over 7 per cent dip in its consolidated net profit at Rs 3,417.67 crore for the September quarter, mainly due to higher expenses.

The consolidated net profit of the company stood at Rs 3,690.95 crore in the quarter ended September 30, 2021, it said in a BSE filing.

Total income rose to Rs 44,681.50 crore in the quarter from Rs 33,095.67 crore in the year-ago period.

Total expenses jumped to Rs 40,000.99 crore in the second quarter of this fiscal from Rs 28,949.53 crore earlier.

Average power tariff of the company during April to September this year was at Rs 4.77 per unit, compared to Rs 3.86 per unit in the same period in 2021.

Plant load factor (PLF or



capacity utilisation) of coal-based thermal power plants climbed to 74.08 per cent in the second quarter from 69.29 per cent. The imported coal supply rose to 5.58 MMT from 0.42 MMT in the same period a year ago.

The domestic coal supply also increased to 48.72 MMT from 44.83 MMT.

Coal production from cap-

itive mines stood at 4.32 MMT as against 2.79 MMT a year ago.

The total installed capacity of the NTPC Group (including JVs and subsidiaries) rose to 70,254 MW as on September 30, 2022. Its gross power generation climbed to 85.48 billion units (BU) in the quarter from 77.42 BU in the same period a year ago.

Malaysian govt picks Temenggong Holdings, Raizing Global to provide visa services to Indians

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Malaysian government has awarded a contract to Temenggong Holdings Company and India's Raizing Global to provide visa services to Indian citizens travelling to Malaysia as tourists and workers.

Temenggong Holdings and Raizing Global have commenced accepting visa applications for Malaysia in Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai through their centres and all across India via their remote offices and website, according to a statement issued on Friday.

"As Malaysia continues to grow and increase its bilateral trade with India, our official visa application centres, operated by Raizing Global, are sure to offer a

growing number of applicants a more efficient and convenient visa process," Temenggong Holdings said in the statement.

The company is honoured to partner with Temenggong Holdings, owned by the Royals of Malaysia, and is looking forward to a fruitful partnership, Raizing Global Managing Director Bharat S Rai said.

"Furthermore, we are committed to providing a seamless experience for each and every one of our applicants in line with the superior service our group has maintained globally," he added.

India-based Raizing Global has expertise in providing visa, consular, citizen, biometric and e-visa services across the globe.

Fusion Ltd plans to raise about Rs 600 crore

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Microfinance company Fusion Limited is planning to raise around Rs 600 crore through fresh issuance of equity shares in its initial public offering (IPO), a top official said on Saturday.

The initial share sale will open for public subscription on November 2 and conclude on November 4. The company has fixed a price band of Rs 350-368 a share, its MD and CEO Devesh Sachdev said at a press conference. The IPO comprises fresh issuance of equity shares worth Rs 600 crore and an offer of sale of 1,36,95,466 equity shares by promoters and existing shareholders. The company is expected to raise Rs 1,104 crore at the upper end of the price band.

MONEY MATTERS

Bengal govt to launch revamped single window industry portal in two months



The West Bengal government on Friday said it is revamping its industry-focused single window portal Shilpasathi for a truly 24x7 service and it is likely to be launched within two months. The new portal will have more features to facilitate greater ease of doing business, state industry Minister Shashi Panja said. The Shilpasathi portal had been in place for business and industry as a single point of contact for some time and now it is being rebuilt. The Revamped Shilpasathi portal is expected to be launched by December. This will improve existing services for greater ease of doing business, Panja said at the 191st AGM of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. She said that the state is working towards framing a state logistics policy. Logistics is a highly prospective sector that can attract huge investment in the state. The Centre has recently announced a logistics policy that aims to exploit multi-modal transport to reduce costs. Panja, calling for investment in West Bengal, asserted that the state does not discriminate between small and big industries and supports everybody equally.

IOC reports first-ever back-to-back quarterly loss

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) on Saturday reported a net loss of Rs 272.35 crore for July-September despite booking over Rs 10,800 crore of LPG subsidy it received from the government after the quarter ended.

The net loss of Rs 272.35 crore compares to a profit of Rs 6,360.05 crore in July-September 2021, according to a company's filing with the stock exchanges. The decline comes on the back of a Rs 1,992.53 crore loss incurred in the previous April-June quarter. This is the first time that IOC has booked losses in two straight quarters - all because it sold petrol, diesel and cooking gas (LPG) at rates below cost.

The loss in the second quarter of the current fiscal was despite accounting for Rs 10,801 crore of one-time grant that the government had announced on October 12.

The government on October 12 extended a one-time grant of Rs 22,000 crore to three state-owned fuel



This is the first time that IOC has booked losses in two straight quarters - all because it sold petrol, diesel and cooking gas (LPG) at rates below cost. The loss in the second quarter of the current fiscal was despite accounting for Rs 10,801 crore of one-time grant that the government had announced on October 12.

retailers to cover the losses they incurred on selling domestic cooking gas LPG below cost in two years starting June 2020.

An official explained that though the subsidy was provided by the government after the quarter had ended but it was for the period up to September 2022 and so it was considered following the principle of 'accrual-based' accounting.

"The company had suffered under-recoveries from the sale of domestic LPG in the financial year 2021-22 and in six months ended on September 20, 2022. To compensate for under-recover-

ies, the Government of India has recently approved a one-time grant of Rs 10,801.00 crore. This grant has been recorded under revenue from operations in financial results for the period April-September 2022," IOC said in the filing. IOC, as well as other state-owned fuel retailers, had booked heavy losses in the first quarter of the current fiscal and did not revise petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG prices in line with the cost to help the government contain runaway inflation. The three firms, who are supposed to revise petrol and diesel prices daily in line with the cost, haven't changed rates for over six-and-half-months now - the longest

freeze in rates since fuel pricing was deregulated. In April-June (the first quarter of 2022-23 fiscal), IOC booked a net loss of Rs 1,992.53 crore. For the first half of the current fiscal, the company has now accumulated a Rs 2,264.88 crore net loss against a profit of Rs 12,301.42 crore in the year-ago period.

This was despite a record refining margin of USD 25.49 per barrel during April-September compared to USD 6.57 a barrel in the same period last year. "The core gross refining margin (GRM) or the current price GRM for the period April-September 2022 after offsetting inventory loss/gain comes to USD 22.19 per barrel.

Housing market will continue to remain buoyant

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The housing market would continue to remain buoyant in the second half of the year on the back of end-user demand, a top official of Sundaram Home Finance Ltd said on Saturday.

The city-based company has drawn up plans to expand into Tier II and III cities in the south with the opening of 10 new branches by March 2023 to disburse business loans to small entrepreneurs, managing director Lakshminarayana Duraiswamy said. Sundaram Home Finance recorded a 26.7 per cent rise in its net profits for the quarter ending September 30, 2022 at Rs 50.3 crore as compared to Rs 39.7 crore registered same period last year. Disbursements during the quarter under review went up to Rs 940 crore from Rs 797 crore registered in the corresponding period last year.

The Assets Under Management (AUM) grew to Rs 10,176 crore breaching Rs 10,000 crore from Rs 9,134 crore registered corresponding

quarter previous year. "We registered record disbursements in the first half of over Rs 1,700 crore driven by continued growth in tier II and III towns and the strong appetite for home ownership," he said. "The continued momentum from the previous quarters helped sustain disbursements at higher levels this quarter."

Sundaram Home Finance has forayed into small business loan segment where it plans to disburse loans of up to Rs 20 lakh to small shop owners in Tier III and IV towns to help small entrepreneurs expand their business. Three exclusive small business loan branches were opened in Madurai, Tenkasi and also in Theni recently. On the outlook for the year, Duraiswamy said, "we believe that the housing market will continue to remain buoyant in the second half primarily on the back of end-user demand."

"There is potential to expand in Tier II and III towns in the South and we plan to open 10 new branches by March 2023.

Centre sanctions Rs 43.59 crore aqua park to Arunachal



The Centre has sanctioned an integrated aqua park for Arunachal Pradesh with an overall cost of Rs 43.59 crore for developing the fisheries sector in the state, an official said here on Saturday. The aqua park will be set up at Tarin in Ziro Valley area of Lower Subansiri district, where a fish farm is already there. Ziro Valley, mainly inhabited by the people belonging to the Apatani tribe, is known for paddy-cum-pisciculture cultivation in which paddy and fish are cultivated together in agricultural fields. The Centre's share of the project will be Rs 39.23 crore and the fund will be given in four instalments, the official said. The state government received a letter in this regard from the Union ministry of fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying on Friday. Tarin Fish Farm was set up at a high-altitude village in the district in 1985-1986 under a scheme of the North East Council (NEC), a nodal agency for the economic and social development of the region.

Sumangala Steel eyes Rs 1,000 crore revenue



Steel manufacturer Sumangala Steel Pvt Ltd is looking to garner revenue of Rs 1,000 crore during the current financial year, a senior company official said here on Saturday. The company reported revenue of Rs 679 crore in the last financial year, the steel firm's chairman and managing director Rajendran Sabanayagam said here. Talking to reporters, Sabanayagam said the company spearheaded the use of large induction furnaces in 1994 to produce steel belts and it has been the only supplier of steel billets in south India between 2002 and 2012. The company also forayed into the production of high-quality TMT bars, he said and added that the company installed a 30 tonne induction furnace in 2019 to increase capacity to about two lakh tonne per year. Sumangala Steel has over 600 employees and manufactures different grades of TMT such as 500D, 550 and 550D across all sizes from 8 mm to 32 mm, he said. On future plans, the company's president Ashwin Sabanayagam said Sumangala Steel is aiming to enter the ready-made steel segment with imported equipment from Italy and is also in the process to set up a modern scrap shredder to process end-of-life vehicles and white goods. Towards this goal, an investment of about Rs 50 crore has been planned to enable the company report higher profitability, higher EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation) and achieve sales of Rs 1,500 crore over the next 24 months, he added.

Gadkari: IITians must focus their research on use of bio-tech

PNS ■ MUMBAI

With the country moving towards clean fuels, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Saturday urged IITians to focus their research on the use of biotechnology for the production of bio-CNG, bio-LNG and green hydrogen from biomass. Green hydrogen will be used in various industries like chemicals, fertilizers, and also in the transportation sector in the future, Gadkari said, urging the young engineering man-power of the country to do research on manufacturing green hydrogen from electrolysis of sewage water and bio-digestion of organic

wastes. This will also help municipalities of the country in implementing the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' along with value-addition in the form of waste to wealth, the minister said while speaking at Alankar-2022, a global leadership summit organised by Shailesh J Mehta School of Management in IIT Bombay. "We require prioritising needs-based research... research should come up with import substitute, cost-effective, pollution free, indigenous solutions. We need to identify the commodities being imported into the country and then focus on developing 'Swadeshi' alterna-

tives for those. This will lead to a decrease in imports, increase in exports and making our economy stronger," the minister said. Proven technology, economic viability, availability of raw materials and marketability should be considered for all research projects, Gadkari added. The minister also said 65 per cent of the country's population depends on agriculture, though agriculture GDP is only 12 per cent. He urged the IITians to focus on research for forest-based industries, agriculture and rural technology, and tribal sectors in those districts. "We need to identify the

rural, agricultural raw materials which have the potential to bring about a revolution. It will bring about a lot of development and create employment opportunities," he added. Stating that research organisations should not work in silos, Nitin Gadkari urged that research papers should be made public. "This calls for cooperation, coordination and communication between the stakeholders," he added. A lot of successful start-ups have started from IITs, Gadkari said, adding that young talents should focus their research more for the upliftment of villages, poor, workers and farmers.



DON'T LET THAT STROKE STRIKE YOU



Work-related stress, low physical activity, and long working hours are taking toll on our youth, leaving them more at the risk of stroke than heart attack. The HEALTH PIONEER shares findings from a study published in the journal JAMA on the 'World Stroke Day 2022' on October 29.

A team of researchers has found a sharp increase in the incidence of stroke in young adults, especially among the working professionals. Among young people who had a stroke, there was a significant increase in the proportion who were in more skilled occupations, particularly for professional or managerial jobs.

The findings analysed the rate of new stroke cases in Oxfordshire in the UK over the last 20 years, reflect emerging evidence that young stroke is a growing problem in high-income countries.

"Establishing the importance of known risk factors in young stroke will help to raise general awareness of the need for better control. We also need better ways of identifying young people at high risk of stroke, as current risk models are based on predictors of stroke in older people," said Medical Research Foundation Fellow, Dr Linxin Li, from the University of Oxford.

Stroke is a major health problem that can have devastating consequences. It happens when the blood supply to the brain is cut off, causing the death of brain cells and dysfunction in one or more parts of the brain.

The restricted blood supply can be the result of an artery supplying blood to brain becoming blocked, a blood vessel rupturing causing a bleed inside the brain, or a brief reduction in the blood supply to the brain.

The traditional view is that vascular risk factors, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity, play a minor



"Stroke is the second most common cause of death and the third-leading cause of death and disability combined in the world. Typically, stroke is considered to be a disease of the elderly. However, recent data suggest that stroke is occurring commonly in the younger population as well. "Other than traditional risk factors like hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and hyperlipidemia, some other risk factors are said to be unique to the young Indian population, according to reports. Cardioembolic stroke secondary to rheumatic heart disease is the most common cause of stroke in young in India."

DR SANJAY PANDEY
Senior Dermatologist
Head, Department of Neurology,
Amrita Hospital, Faridabad

role in young stroke, but recent studies have begun to contradict this view. Dr Li's research focuses on multiple types of stroke, such as ischaemic



"This is to be expected given the changing lifestyle worsen by low physical activity and consuming junk food. Cases of stroke have grown four times in the past 30 years. So, if a person adopts a healthy lifestyle, they will reduce the chances of such health complications. Besides, habits such as consuming good food and taking adequate rest also result in a healthier body and a healthier brain, thereby reducing the risk of stroke."

DR RAJINDER K DHAMIJA
Neurologist and Director of Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences, Delhi

A stroke, also known as a brain attack, occurs when the blood supply to the brain gets blocked or a blood vessel in the brain bursts. According to doctors, strokes lead to damage or death of parts of the brain and this condition can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death.

According to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a stroke is a serious medical condition that requires emergency care. The CDC also stresses that when the flow of blood to the brain gets blocked, due to the absence of oxygen the brain cells start to die within minutes.

strokes, caused by a blockage of arteries, 'mini-strokes' (transient ischaemic attacks) and bleeding in the brain (intracerebral haemorrhage and subarachnoid haemorrhage).

The researchers found that between 2002-2010 and 2010-2018, there was a 67 per cent increase in stroke incidence among younger adults (under 55 years), and a 15 per cent decrease among older adults (55 years or older).

A similar divergence in incidence was not found for other vascular events, such as heart attacks. "Historically,

we've thought of stroke as only affecting older adults, but studies like this suggest a growing problem in young adults," said Dr Angela Hind, Chief Executive of the Medical Research Foundation.

"Stroke in young adults can have a huge impact, often occurring when they are starting a family or already have young children to look after, and have yet to reach the peak of their careers. The economic, social and personal consequences can be devastating," Hind added.

Feeling Chirpy: Being Around Birds is Linked to Lasting Mental Health Benefits



New research from King's College London has found that seeing or hearing birds is associated with an improvement in mental wellbeing that can last up to eight hours.

This improvement was also evident in people with a diagnosis of depression – the most common mental illness worldwide – indicating the potential role of birdlife in helping those with mental health conditions.

Published in Scientific Reports, the study used smartphone application Urban Mind to collect people's real-time reports of mental wellbeing alongside their reports of seeing or hearing birdsong.

Lead author Ryan Hammoud, Research Assistant at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience (IoPPN), King's College London, said: "There is growing evidence on the mental health benefits of being around nature and we intuitively think that the presence of birdsong and birds would help lift our mood. However, there is little research that has actually investigated the impact of birds on mental health in real-time and in a real environment. By using the Urban Mind app we have for the first time shown the direct link between seeing or hearing birds and positive mood. We hope this evidence can demonstrate the

importance of protecting and providing environments to encourage birds, not only for biodiversity but for our mental health."

The study took place between April 2018 and October 2021, with 1,292 participants completing 26,856 assessments using the Urban Mind app, developed by King's College London, landscape architects J&L Gibbons and arts foundation Nomad Projects.

Participants were recruited worldwide, with the majority being based in the United Kingdom, the European Union and United States of America.

The app asked participants three times a day whether they could see or hear birds, followed by questions on mental wellbeing to enable researchers to establish an association between the two and to estimate how long this association lasted.

The study also collected information on existing diagnoses of mental health conditions and found hearing or seeing birdlife was associated with improvements in mental wellbeing in both healthy people and those with depression. Researchers showed that the links between birds and mental wellbeing were not explained by co-occurring environmental factors such as the presence of trees, plants, or waterways.

Senior author, Andrea Mechelli, Professor of Early

Intervention in Mental Health at IoPPN, King's College London said: "The term ecosystem services is often used to describe the benefits of certain aspects of the natural environment on our physical and mental health. However, it can be difficult to prove these benefits scientifically. Our study provides an evidence base for creating and supporting bio-diverse spaces that harbor birdlife, since this is strongly linked with our mental health. In addition, the findings support the implementation of measures to increase opportunities for people to come across birdlife, particularly for those living with mental health conditions such as depression."

Research partner & Landscape Architect Jo Gibbons, of J & L Gibbons said: "Who hasn't tuned into the melodic complexities of the dawn chorus early on a spring morning? A multi-sensory experience that seems to enrich everyday life, whatever our mood or whereabouts. This exciting research underpins just how much the sight and sound of birdsong lifts the spirits. It captures intriguing evidence that a biodiverse environment is restorative in terms of mental wellbeing. That the sensual stimulation of birdsong, part of those daily 'doses' of nature, is precious and time-lasting."

Secret Tips for Flawless Skin

Anybody can have great skin. Just like anybody can have bad skin days, just like anybody can have bad hair days, just like anybody can have bad skin days, just like anybody can have bad skin days longer. Sometimes for weeks, which seem with no ending!

A few problems are related to the weather. Let's understand them and deal accordingly!

ACNE

It is an inflammatory condition of the skin partially caused by increased sebum production and an abnormality of the bacteria found normally on the skin. The result can be red and enlarged patches on the skin, whiteheads or blackheads in monsoon. The oily activity on skin is more and can produce rash and pimples. Use some homemade facepacks to remove excessive oils from the surface and keep face glowing and smooth: fuller earth based packs with curd shall be best for oily and combinations skin types. Also, applying antibacterial creams like Benzoyl Peroxide 2.5%-5%, Nadiifloxacin etc shall also help. But avoid the condition with a few tips like washing the face 4-5 times a day with a gentle soap free cleanser, drinking 3-4 Liters of water during monsoons will definitely help. Also, switch to a non comedogenic, gel-based sunscreen during this season to maintain your flawless beauty. A mild face wash is good for the face. You can also opt for some home remedy like a mixture of gram flour, rose water and milk. Apply evenly on the face and wash off after 15 -20 minutes. Always follow your cleansing, toning and moisturizing routine to keep your skin youthful and bright. Cleansing should be followed by toning



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using an alcohol-free toner. This is helpful since increased humidity could open up your pores.

HAIR CARE

Never let your hair get wet in the rain. Pollution, suspended particles in the air especially few dangerous acids which are suspected to be there in the rain now at certain times can settle on your scalp. Hence, the itchy feeling, after getting wet in the rain. Always cover your hair with cheerful and colourful umbrellas or raincoats. Combined effect of sun heats and humidity can damage your hair. Keep your hairstyles simple and easy. Elaborate hairstyles are more difficult to manage. Using bangs and layered hairstyles are best. Using an Anti Dandruff shampoo once a week will also help. Do not comb wet hair. Also do not tie your hair tightly as it may lead to breakage.

FUNGAL INFECTIONS

A fungus thrives in humidity -- wet skin folds rubbing against each other get macerated easily, providing easy entry to fungi and yeast. As a result, you develop itchy, circular, reddish, flaking patches on the body, especially in skin folds at the groin (Jock

Itch), underarms and around the breast in women.

Fungal infections can also affect your feet, especially if closed shoes are worn all day. Staying dry is the best way to avoid them. Carry a set of dry clothes and footwear to office and change immediately if you've gotten drenched on your way.

Once you are at your desk, take your shoes and socks off to allow air circulation around your feet. Wear sandals or floaters as far as possible. Use plenty of dusting talc to prevent accumulation of sweat and moisture in skin folds. Those prone to repeated fungal infections can use medicated powders like Absorb, Tyza, Mycoderm C, Candid, etc.

Athlete's Foot is a combined bacterial and fungal infection. Starting from the toes, the skin turns whitish or greenish itches terribly and there may even be a foul-smelling discharge or pus seeing the state of our city with exposure to a lot of grime and muck Athlete's foot is quite common. Prevent this by keeping feet as dry as possible. If the water is dirty, it's advisable to soak your feet for a few minutes in a tub of warm water with three or four cups-full of betadine solution in it. Also a visit to a dermatologist is required as an antibiotic is needed.

THERE'S MORE

- From hot cup in the morning, switch to a cool, mint based green-tea.
- Flavor your food with green herbs and tomatoes instead of garlic, onions and red chilli.
- Switch to loads of salads and greens in your diet. Drink lots of water even in the winters.

NTDs: High R&D Investment Need of the Hour

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) like Lymphatic Filariasis, Dengue and Malaria affect one in five people in the world. Globally, the number stands at a staggering 1.7 billion, mostly from the poorest communities. Given the severity of the problem, experts from world over converged at the five-day 20th International Congress for Tropical Medicine and Malaria (ICTMM), 2020, in Bangkok to discuss threadbare the issue at hand. ARCHANA JYOTI, who covered the event, reports.

The ICTMM event (October 24-28) saw the attendance of around 1000 participants from 60 countries, an indicator of their commitment towards helping end the NTDs scourge. The underlining call was for higher investment in Research and Development (R&D) to bring in new vaccines and drugs in the sector.

The event provided the key players in the sector an opportunity to discuss and debate tropical medicine and Malaria including communicable and non-communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases, emerging and re-emerging diseases, Covid 19, Smallpox, drug resistance, parasitology, zoonosis, food-borne and water-borne diseases, travel medicine and other public health issues.

Hosted by the Parasitology and Tropical Medicine Association and Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Thailand, the mega event at the Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre (BITEC) was declared opened by Dr Yongyuth Yuthawong, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and the former Minister of Science and Technology. It was themed 'Stamping out Tropical Diseases: The Countdown Begins.'

The participants also focused on opportunities in the post-Covid-19 scenario and the need for more investment in the R&D arena to tackle the neglected diseases caused by vectors like mosquitoes which are rearing their ugly head helped by climate change-induced surging temperatures.

NTDs are a group of diseases affecting the poorest and



most vulnerable, causing permanent disabilities, impacting mental and emotional health and well-being.

As per the World Health Organisation, NTDs include: Buruli ulcer, Chagas Disease, Dengue and Chikungunya, Dracunculiasis (Guinea-worm disease), Echinococcosis, Foodborne Trematodiasis, Human African Trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), Leishmaniasis, Leprosy (Hansen's disease), Lymphatic Filariasis, Mycetoma, Chromoblastomycosis and other Deep Mycoses, Onchocerciasis (river blindness), Rabies, Scabies and other Ectoparasitoses, Schistosomiasis, soil-transmitted Helminthiasis, snakebite Envenoming, Taeniasis/Cysticercosis, Trachoma, and Yaws and other endemic Treponematoses.

Formally welcoming all the attendees, Associate Prof Pratap Singhavanon, Chairman and Secretary, ICTMM2020, highlighted the need to improve the current preventive measures

and treatment regimen. One out of 5 people are suffering with the NTDs worldwide.

Later, talking to reporters from the South-East Asia attending the conference, Singhavanon stressed on higher investment in the healthcare sector, pointing out that of all the neglected diseases, Dengue is the most neglected one, despite its high rate of infections.

Up to 50-100 million infections are now estimated to occur annually in over 100 endemic countries, putting almost half of the world's population at risk.

"The vector-borne mosquito is highly adaptable. It is predicted that the rise in Earth's temperature, linked to climate change, will fasten viral amplification of the disease. In fact, the mosquito is spreading its wings now even in the USA, European and many other countries. More people are likely to come into its grip," he said in the backdrop of reports of recent Dengue cases emerging from France.

On the sidelines of the event, Kavita Singh, Director, DNDi South Asia, shared the status of Dengue in India with The Pioneer. In India too, the situation is grim. Last year, India reported 1,64,103 cases of Dengue, she said, adding that every year, hundreds of people die due to this mosquito infection in the country.

"As there is no specific treatment that can prevent progression of the infection to severe Dengue, it is critical to find therapeutic solutions to this climate-sensitive disease that spreads at a rapid pace," she said. The DNDi has developed and registered nine new treatments for neglected diseases such as sleeping sickness, visceral and cutaneous leishmaniasis, Chagas, and pediatric HIV since 2003.

The research on cost-effective treatment for Dengue is done by the Transitional Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI), an autonomous institute of the Department of Biotechnology

in the Union Ministry of Science and Technology. We are also part of the research," Singh said, adding, "However, more needs to be done in the sector."

Prof Dr Prasit Watanapa, former Dean and Consultant at the Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University, which is working with global bodies to tackle NTDs, especially Dengue fever, echoed similar sentiments. He lamented that NTDs are largely ignored by mainstream medical science because they do not represent clear viable commercial markets for the private sector. "This continues to hinder the progress in medical research and development, and therapeutic solutions."

Filariasis disease head (DNDi) Dr Sabine Specht talked about drug development in the Filariasis sector. "New drugs enabling reversal of lymphoedema would be highly beneficial. This has also become imperative in view of SDG goal 3.8, which targets individual wellbeing and thus calls for individual cure and not merely epidemiological "control as a public health problem," she said.

The second generation of Covid 19 vaccine Dengue vaccines as well as novel drug development was also discussed at the Congress. Another focus was on the discussion on Malaria elimination in Thailand by 2029.

The ICTMM brings together every four years thousands of researchers, experts, like vaccinologists, social scientists, tropical medicine infectious diseases and policy makers in the field of tropical medicine and Malaria. The next ICTMM will be held in Malaysia in 2024.



I'm not one icon. I'm every icon. I'm an icon that is made out of all the colors on the palette at every time. I have no restrictions. No restrictions
—Lady Gaga

Konrad Lorenz (1903-1989), the author of the best-selling book *On Aggression*, wrote in *Man Meets Dog*, "The whole charm of the dog lies in the depth of the friendship and the strength of the spiritual ties with which he has bound himself to man," writes HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

MAN'S BEST FRIEND UNDER SCANNER



Why do stray dogs bite humans? It is important to find out in the light of several recent reports of their attacking humans. Three foremost questions arise at the beginning: Are dogs by nature aggressive and hostile to humans? Is the aggression they sometimes show a response to human oppression and provocation? How does one reduce the incidence of stray dog bites?

Konrad Lorenz (1903-1989), the author of the best-selling book *On Aggression*, wrote in *Man Meets Dog*, "The whole charm of the dog lies in the depth of the friendship and the strength of the spiritual ties with which he has bound himself to man." Lorenz should know. An Austrian zoologist, ethnologist and ornithologist, and recipient of the 1973 Nobel Prize in Physiology of Medicine along with Nikolaas Tinbergen and Karl Von Frisch, he is regarded as one of the founders of modern ethology as well as the study of animal behaviour.

To find the reasons for stray dogs biting humans, one must delve into the history and nature of human-dog relationship from the earliest times. According to Lorenz in *Man Meets Dog*, dogs had already become domesticated at the beginning of the later Stone Age when humans seem to have established their first settlements. The later Stone Age, also known as the Neolithic age, began around 10,000 BCE, which is 12,000 years ago. The period since then has witnessed the evolution of a relationship which has led dogs to be called "man's best friend" and the expression, "dog-like devotion."

DEVOTION AND LOYALTY

Epics, mythology and history offer many examples of dogs' deep devotion and loyalty to humans. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Argus, Odysseus' dog, was the only one who instantly recognized him as he returned home in disguise after 19 years of warfare and travel. Even his wife, Penelope, son Telemachus, and loyal servant Eumaeus, could not do that.

The fact that in the *Mahabharata*, Dharmaraja assumed the form of a little brown dog while following the Pandavas in their final journey, is not without significance. Kritibhas Ojha's Bengali translation of the *Ramayana*, relates how Ram, ruling in Ayodhya following his return from his victory over Ravana, punished, on the complaint of a street dog, a *sanyasin* for hitting it on the head with a stick. More, the punishment was what the dog had wanted.

In comparatively recent history, Shivaji's dog, Waghya, who was by his side in every battle he fought, jumped on to his funeral pyre as he was being cremated following his death. Two memorials stand next to each other in Raigad fort—the larger one for Shivaji and the smaller for Waghya.

Dogs are often prepared to die for humans they love. JN Gupta, a member of the Indian Civil Service, was commissioner of Burdwan division in Bengal in the early 1920s. His official residence was at a place called Chinsurah on the Ganges, in which he bathed every day. One evening, a crocodile moved to attack him. While the others

watched in horror from the shore, a stray dog, whom he fed occasionally, jumped on the head of the crocodile. This disoriented the latter so much that Gupta could wade ashore, where the stray dog joined him with a leap. Thenceforward, he became a much-loved member of the Gupta family.

In *Drawing the Line: Science and the Case for Animal Rights*, Steven M Wise, founder and president of the United States-based Nonhuman Rights Project, and one of the world's foremost scholar of jurisprudence pertaining to animal issues, cited the instance of the primatologist, Roger Fout's dog, Brownie, diving under the family's backing pick-up truck which was about to hit his nine-year-old brother Ed. He quotes Fout, who was then four years old, as writing subsequently that not a family member "doubted for a while that Brownie had sacrificed her own life to save my brother."

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Protecting children and babies is an instinct with dogs. On 25 May, 1996, the Bengali daily, *Aajkaal*, published from Kolkata, carried on its front page a report, by Pinaki Majumdar, along with a photograph by Tapan Mukherjee, of three stray dogs guarding an abandoned new-born baby—a girl—near a dustbin in a Kolkata street. They remained there from May 23 night to May 24 morning when they followed her to a local police station to which she was taken by some local people, returning to their own turf only after the baby was taken to a home by car. They had not even gone to look for food in the interim.

In Tumkur, Karnataka, three dogs saved the life of a new-born baby abandoned by its mother in Devarayanadurga reserved forest. According to a report in the Bangalore edition of *The New Indian Express* of March 10, 2007, a forest department employee had refused to marry the mother, a young girl, whom he had made pregnant. Fearing social ostracization, the mother, accompanied by a person whom the report described as a "caretaker", went into the forest and delivered the baby. She and the "caretaker" came away but three dogs from the village, who had accompanied them into the forest, stayed back guarding the baby. Next morning, their barks attracted the attention of a man who had gone to the forest to gather tamarind. He brought the baby back to the village and returned it to the mother after finding her.

The episode had a happy ending. The villagers patted the dogs profusely for saving the baby's life and resolved to get the woman married to the man who had made her pregnant.

WHY DO STRAY DOGS BITE?

These are just a few examples from the long narrative of warm human-dog ties. Why then do stray dogs bite? The search for an answer takes one to human settlements—cities, towns, villages—in which humans and stray dogs interact and where human and animal psyches evolve. While many stray dogs have referral homes in these that feed and care for them or have animal welfare organisations doing the same, the large—if not overwhelming—majority have to fend for themselves. The search for food takes them to

restaurants, roadside vendors of food, shops, homes, and dustbins for left-overs thrown in the latter. They are shooed off, hit or threatened with sticks, or have stones thrown at them at most places. They are left hungry and resentful. Besides, when bitches have puppies, these are often killed or taken away and abandoned somewhere else by people who don't want them around. Stray dogs react to such acts, sometimes in the form of biting. More, as victims of such aggression they become aggressive not only against the perpetrators but humans as a species. Hence, attacks on people who have in no way harmed them but are humans. It is, as in the case of most other animals, reactive and not instinctive aggression.

AGGRESSIVE HUMANS

On the other hand, attacks on stray dogs reflect the intense aggressiveness inherent in the human psyche. Erich Fromm, one of the most significant social philosophers and psychologists of our time, says in his *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, "Man is the only mammal who is a large-scale killer and sadist." He says elsewhere in the same book,

"If human aggression were more or less at the same level as that of other mammals—particularly that of our nearest relative, the chimpanzee—human society would be rather peaceful and non-violent. But that is not so. Man's history is a record of extraordinary destructiveness and cruelty and human aggression, it seems, far surpasses that of man's animal ancestors and man is, in contrast to most animals, a real killer."

According to Fromm, indulgence in destruction and cruelty can always cause "intense satisfaction" to men, masses of whom can suddenly be "seized by the lust for blood. Individuals and groups may have a character structure that makes them eagerly wait for—or create—situations that permit the expression of destructiveness." Anyone who knows about the behaviour patterns of German Nazis and Italian Fascists or any communally or racially charged mob, would agree. Animals, on the other hand, says Fromm, "...do not enjoy inflicting pain or suffering on other animals, nor do they kill for nothing." No dog has committed genocide, which humans done repeatedly in history.

If dogs bite humans, infinitely more numerous humans strike and hurt other humans, not to speak of the innumerable cases when they hit and/or kill dogs. Chorus of alarm go up in the rarest of rare cases in which a dog-bite causes a person's death. No call for killing all humans is heard when a person kills another. Murder is treated as an aberrant act by an individual and not caused by a human proneness. This is because humans have created the moral and juridical order prevailing in the world. Dogs and other animals may have a very different view.

“EPICS, MYTHOLOGY AND HISTORY OFFER MANY EXAMPLES OF DOGS' DEEP DEVOTION AND LOYALTY TO HUMANS. IN HOMER'S ODYSSEY, ARGUS, ODYSSEUS' DOG, WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO INSTANTLY RECOGNIZED HIM AS HE RETURNED HOME IN DISGUISE AFTER 19 YEARS OF WARFARE AND TRAVEL. EVEN HIS WIFE, PENELOPE, SON TELEMACHUS, AND LOYAL SERVANT EUMAEUS, COULD NOT DO THAT”



Let that be. One way of reducing the incidence of stray dog bites will be for most humans to cease treating stray dogs savagely. Simultaneously, their population should be reduced to minimise the scope of their interaction with humans. The answer lies in implementing the sterilization and vaccination programme as laid down by the Animal Birth Control (Dog) Rules. It provides for the removal of stray dogs for sterilization and vaccination against rabies and their return to the places from which they had been taken. The latter is important. Dogs being territorial, neutered and vaccinated dogs keep un-neutered and unvaccinated dogs away from the area and those carrying out the programme can forget about it and carry on with neutering and vaccinating stray dogs at other areas.

THE ONLY EFFECTIVE AND HUMANE WAY

The ABC programme constitutes the only effective and humane method of controlling stray dog populations. In its report, *Technical Report Series 931*, the World Health Organisation's Expert Consultation on Rabies, which met in Geneva from October 5 to 8, 2004, states: "Since the 1960s, ABC programmes coupled with rabies vaccination have been advocated as a method to control urban street male and female dog populations and ultimately human rabies in Asia."

The killing of stray dogs serves no purpose. Dr K. Bogel, Chief Veterinary, Public Health, Division of Communicable diseases, WHO, and John Hoyt, then President, World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), as well as the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), made this clear in their joint preface to the *Guidelines for Dog Population Management* released by the WHO and WSPA in May 1990. They stated, "All too often, authorities confronted by problems caused by these [stray] dogs have turned to mass destruction in the hope of finding a quick solution, only to find that the destruction had to continue, year after year, with no end in sight."

The birth control programme for stray dogs has not taken off in India because municipal and government authorities have done little to implement it.

(The writer is a senior journalist and author)

India's green energy goals: Pragmatic way forward

Of late, discussions around the greenhouse gases have become very important in the context of climate change and global warming. Several developed and developing nations have already declared or are in the process of firming up the timelines to achieve "net zero" emission with regard to the greenhouse gases.

The term "net zero" indicates a scenario where a balance between the greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere and that removed from the atmosphere by various means (including capture) is achieved. Although such a situation is highly idealistic, wholehearted efforts are needed from all the advanced countries to make meaningful progress. At the same time, it is imperative that different countries firm up different timelines in this regard, based on the current level of preparedness and more importantly the access to the necessary resources.

In the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) held between October 31 and November 12 in Glasgow last year, India promised to reduce its emissions to net zero by 2070. China announced plans to attain carbon neutrality by 2060, while the US and the EU declared their goals aiming to reach net zero by 2050.

India recently updated the first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under Paris Agreement (2021-2030) declared earlier in 2015, and communicated the revised NDCs to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in August 2022. The revised version clearly articulates India's key internal goals towards achieving "net zero". The country aims "to adopt a climate friendly and a cleaner path than the one followed hitherto by others at corresponding



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel at the launch of Mission Life, where "life" is an acronym for "lifestyle for environment," in Kevadia, Gujarat, on October 20, 2022

level of economic development". India also has committed "to reduce Emissions Intensity of its GDP by 45 per cent by 2030, from 2005 level". Further, the country aspires to achieve "about 50 per cent cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030", which will involve transfer of technology from the advanced nations and assistance of low-cost international finance, including Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Since attaining the goal of a global transition such as the net zero is going to be gigantic and will have large-scale impact on the global economy, the sustainable pathways towards achieving the overarching targets needs to be

charted out.

Such a transition has many dimensions involving technological, environmental as well as socio-economic nuances which pan out differently in a country-specific manner. Therefore, any country should be cautious and pragmatic before envisaging a disruptive change in the incumbent infrastructure, and a system view approach needs to be adopted to understand the impact of the changes in an integrated manner.

From the latest NDC, it is quite evident that India's approach towards addressing "net zero" is heavily reliant on the "Green Energy", aimed primarily at reducing the CO2 emissions. It is noteworthy that in 2021 the power sector

alone accounted for 49 per cent of the total CO2 emissions in India.

On the other hand, India's transport sector contributes to 13.2 per cent of the country's total CO2 emissions, of which more 90 per cent emissions can be attributed to the road transport sector alone (comprising both passenger and freight transport).

Thus, the country is looking for measures to reduce CO2 emissions from these two sectors. While the renewable energy sources such as solar photovoltaic (PV) and wind energy are being high priority among the various non-fossil energy sources, the electric vehicles (EVs) have been enjoying strong push through several government support schemes

and e-mobility is often touted as the mainstay towards achieving a green and sustainable transport sector.

The key issue that is often overlooked while creating the aspiration-driven larger pictures is the availability of resources. To be more context-specific, the availability of the critical raw materials that go into the manufacture of the key "green energy" systems and "green mobility" products needs to be identified as the priorities. The intermittencies in variable renewable energy (VRE) sources necessitate the use of grid-scale storages (batteries).

Batteries are also needed for the EVs. Critical materials that are used in the batteries are

lithium, cobalt and nickel. The price of cobalt increased from approximately \$32,000 per ton to \$70,000 per tonne during January-December in 2021, while the price of lithium increased by more than five times in 2021. The price hikes are expected to continue in the near future.

Therefore, the aspiration for the large-scale green transition needs to be revisited periodically to have relook at the priorities and to chart out the most viable trajectory for the transition to a cleaner future.

Further, the new norms brought forth by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) have enforced the heavy consumer durables to become energy-efficient. Two "white goods"

that have great market potential in India are the room air conditioners (RACs) and the laundry washing machines (LWMs), since both of them have a much lower level of market penetration as compared to the refrigerators.

The energy-efficient RACs and LWMs necessitate the use of Rare Earth (RE) permanent magnets in their motor architecture because of their superior performance as compared to the ferrite counterparts. Currently, all the motors and magnets used in the air conditioners, washing machines, and EVs are imported.

The industrial capabilities related to manufacture of RE permanent magnets and customised motors for the "white goods" and EVs are currently absent in India. Creation and sustenance of an industrial ecosystem would require right incentives, uninterrupted availability of the critical RE materials used in the magnets, and demand for the indigenous products.

Availability of critical materials, smooth technology transfer, creation of industry are intricately linked facets of the green energy aspiration of the country. Integration of all these elements will need active intervention from the government and suitable financial arrangements need to be arrived at through close interactions with the industry.

Once the priorities are decided, it would be pragmatic to adopt a business-oriented hybrid model that combines both top-down and bottom-up approaches involving company-level information from relevant segments. Only then the true spirit of "AtmaNirbhar Bharat" and "Make in India" can be realised in a synergistic manner.

(The writer is Assistant Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru)

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RUDRODIP MAJUMDAR

OUTLOOK

Alps in peril! Water woes loom amid climate change

With global warming causing a worrying shrinkage in Alpine glaciers this year, the issue of water frozen up in the mountains, or showered and snowed on them, is growing in importance. Environmental advocates say jockeying for water isn't being addressed with enough urgency; they want the Alpine countries to do more to secure the future of the resource that's been bountiful for centuries

A battle is brewing around Europe's rooftop over the planet's most precious resource.

The crystal-clear waters issuing from the Alps could become increasingly contested as the effects of climate change and glacier melt become more apparent. Italy wants them for crop irrigation in the spring and summer. Swiss authorities want to hold up flows to help hydroelectric plants rev up, when needed.

For the first time in four years, government envoys from eight Alpine countries — big, small and tiny — were meeting under a grouping known as the Alpine Convention, which was set up 30 years ago to help coordinate life, leisure and the limited resources from Europe's most celebrated peaks.

The envoys in Brig, Switzerland, representing pint-sized principality Monaco and small Slovenia as well as powerhouses like France, Germany and Italy, focused attention on October 27 on what's known as the Simplon Alliance. Named after an Alpine pass between Italy and Switzerland, it aims to make transportation in the mountains more eco-friendly, such as by favouring rail over roads, electric vehicles and public transportation over private cars.

But with global warming causing a worrying shrinkage in Alpine glaciers this year, the issue of water frozen up in the mountains, or showered and snowed on them, is growing in importance. Environmental advocates say jockeying for water isn't being addressed with enough urgency; they want the Alpine countries to do more to secure the future of the resource that's been bountiful for centuries.

While many parts of the world have grappled with water woes, well-irrigated and relatively rich Europe has been largely spared so far. Droughts



A man stands in a glacier cave at the Sardona glacier on July 27, 2022, in Vaettis, Switzerland

and wildfires raise seasonal worries, but there typically is enough water for agriculture, hydropower, ski resorts, and human consumption. Swiss children were once taught their country was home to the continent's "water tower," according to Maria Lezzi, head of Switzerland's territorial development office.

However, factors like global warming, the fallout from Russia's war in Ukraine on energy supplies and economic demands have made the issue more pressing.

Last month, Swiss author-

ities authorised a seven-month increase in the amount of water available for electricity generation from 45 of Switzerland's 1,500 hydraulic plants — hoping to churn out up to 150 gigawatts more power. Alluding to the possible knock-on effect, the Swiss said the move could temporarily affect fish migration, "which could make replenishing fish populations more difficult in 2023."

Meanwhile, sparse summer rainfall and a punishing heat wave in northern Italy — which melted snowfields and glaciers in the area — dried up

the Po River, jeopardised drinking water and threatened irrigation in what's known as the Italian food valley.

The "9th report on the State of the Alps" — drafted by the Swiss hosts — notes that water supply is a "particularly pressing issue" because the Alps are a huge reservoir of water, which ultimately flows to the benefit of some 170 million people along some of Europe's most famous rivers, including the Danube, Po, Rhine and Rhone.

A draft of the report, obtained by *The Associated*

Press, noted the need for "consistent availability of Alpine water" for industry, agriculture, hydropower and other uses, adding, "Climate change puts these functions under pressure, as glaciers are receding and precipitation regimes are constantly changing."

"Reduced quantities of water and limited reliability of water supply will be a major issue in the coming decades," it added.

Kaspar Schuler, director of CIPRA International, a commission devoted to protecting the Alps based in tiny

Liechtenstein, said governments have done well to put water on the agenda but stopped short of steps to tackle the issue — by setting up working groups, expanding research, or coming up with ways that water can be better shared in the future.

"The description of the difficulties is well done by the Swiss, but they have still no courage to really address the elephant in the room," said Schuler added.

While Alpine resorts and villages rely on water, the major upstream users are

Switzerland's hydropower plants, which want to hold onto the water until it's most needed to power turbines that provide some 60 per cent of the country's electricity.

But the biggest consumers of the water are downstream — industrial areas like Grenoble and Annecy in France, Austria's capital Vienna, and areas around Bolzano in Italy's South Tyrol are likely to feel an impact. The southern Alpine towns, especially in France and Italy with their drier climates, are more likely to undergo water shortage than the northern towns, the report said. "This is particularly true of inner-Alpine dry valleys such as the Aosta Valley in northwestern Italy, already affected by significant water stress."

CIPRA's Schuler suggested that many have become too complacent about the Alps' bountiful waters — and those days may be over soon.

"Until now, all the non-Alpine countries — the lowlands — were happy that the Alps have been providing so much: landscape for leisure and sports, ski resorts, and the water as much as everybody needs," he said. "So far, everybody was happy and the Alps delivered."

"In future it will be a battle... about these resources because especially the lack of water can really harm a lot of people," he said.

Environment Minister Uros Brezan of Slovenia, which is set to take over the Alpine Convention's presidency, said regional authorities were not taking the issue lightly. "I think the member states of the EU and also members of the Alpine Convention are well aware that water scarcity problem cannot be solved only within the national borders, but has to be addressed internationally," he said. AP

Scientists identify in humans pan-variant antibody

● Its neutralising potency unaffected by any of Omicron variants

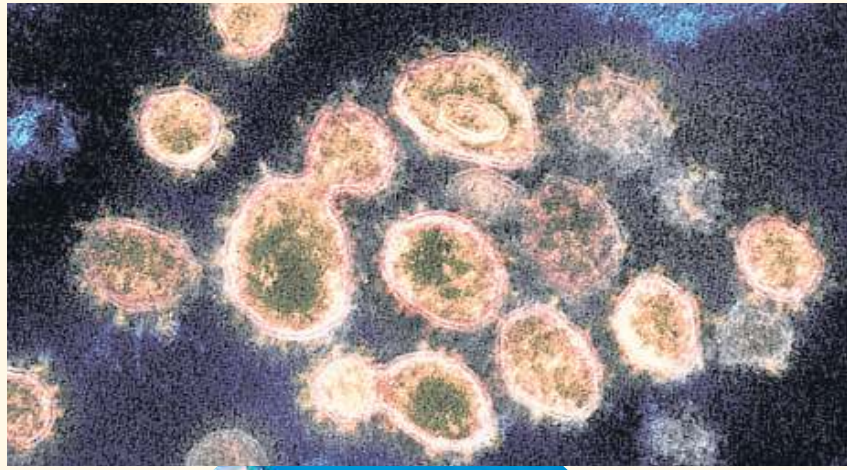
Researchers have identified in humans a pan-variant neutralising antibody, named S2X324, whose neutralizing potency was largely unaffected by any of the Omicron strains of the coronavirus, according to a study.

The scientists show that this monoclonal antibody prevents binding to the receptor on host cells that the pandemic coronavirus usually commandeers. They also suggested that combining this antibody with others in a cocktail might reduce the chances of the virus becoming antibody treatment resistant.

The international team from University of Washington and Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and Humabs BioMed SA of Vir Biotechnology in Switzerland looked at several aspects of the effects of exposure to earlier forms of the SARS-CoV-2 spike antigen or immune-provoking protein -- on the immune system's reaction to the Omicron variants.

Their findings have been published in the journal Science.

Omicron variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus appeared at the end of 2021 and have marked genetic differences from the ancestral SARS-CoV-2. The many, distinct mutations in their infection machinery have enabled them to escape from antibodies elicited from the original series of vaccines, from a history of infection, or



from both of those two immunisation training events.

Past studies from the same team, according to the study, have noted that the BA.1 Omicron variant emerged as a "major antigenic shift due to the unprecedented magnitude of immune evasion associated with this variant of concern".

They explained that mutations in two of the main antibody targets in the virus explain why there is a markedly reduced antibody neutralizing ability against these variants, especially in people who have not received



booster doses. "As a result, an increasing number of reinfections are occurring," the scientists wrote in their paper, "even though these cases tend to be milder than in infections of immunologically naive individuals".

The evasive ability conferred by the mutations, they noted, also helps explain why most monoclonal antibody therapies given to patients in the clinic are less effective against these variants.

Knowing how well vaccination against one SARS-CoV-2 strain (with or without previous infection) counteracts infection with a different strain is a critical research question. The answers could guide strategies to continue to subdue the COVID-19 pandemic, even as the coronavirus regains ground.

Through their experiments, the scientists learned that vaccine boosters and hybrid immunity, or immunity acquired through a history of an infection and vaccination, both induce neutralizing antibodies in the bloodstream against

Omicron BA.1, BA.2, BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/5.

People who had a breakthrough infection after vaccination also produced neutralizing antibodies against these variants in the mucus lining the inside of their noses. However, people who only received the vaccine did not generate antibodies in their nasal mucosa. This finding lends support to efforts to develop and evaluate next-generation COVID vaccines that could be delivered intranasally as the nose is generally the site where the virus first enters the body.

The scientists also determined that antibody responses to the pandemic coronavirus follows a pattern similar to the way the immune system responds to variations of the influenza virus. This phenomenon is called immune imprinting.

Immune imprinting means that the immune response shows a preference for recalling existing memory B cells specific against parts of the virus present in a strain to which an individual was previously exposed, rather than priming new memory B cells targeting differences present in markedly different strains upon infection.

While this can be helpful in stimulating a cross-variant attack, the scientists explain, having previous exposure to earlier versions of a virus can sometimes hinder a more specific response against a virus that has mutated significantly.

Looming elections in US, Brazil pose test for Musk's Twitter

Pivotal elections in Brazil and the United States will present an early test to Twitter's new owner Elon Musk and his promise to ease up on the platform's policies on misinformation.

Voters in both nations have already faced a torrent of misleading claims about candidates, issues and voting. That torrent could become a deluge if Musk makes good on his vows to roll back Twitter's rules just as millions of voters prepare to cast a ballot.

This is the most critical time for this work, right before an election," said Alejandra Caraballo, an instructor at Harvard Law School's Cyberlaw Clinic who has been monitoring the online response to Musk's purchase. "We're going to see a test run with the election in Brazil this Sunday, when we'll see how bad things get."

Even if Musk waits until after the elections to make changes, his decision to fire the executive in charge of content moderation raises questions about the company's ability to combat misinformation and extremist content linked to deepening distrust in democracy.

Musk, the world's richest man, hasn't detailed his plans for Twitter, which he purchased this week for 44 billion. But he has called himself a free speech absolutist and has said the platform should tolerate any content that is legally permissible.

That's a threshold that varies widely among countries. In the US, it would cover misleading content about vaccines or elections as well as Holocaust denialism and hate speech.

He's also said he disagreed with Twitter's decision to banish Donald Trump after the president's lies about the 2020

election helped spur the deadly Jan 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol.

Yet Musk has also signalled that he'd consider some level of moderation, as he did this week when he said he didn't want Twitter to become a free-for-all hellscape.

On Friday, Musk announced the creation of a committee to review Twitter's policies on content moderation and the reinstatement of suspended accounts. No major content decisions or account reinstatements will happen before

designed to stop the spread of election-related misinformation while also making it easier for users to find trustworthy sources.

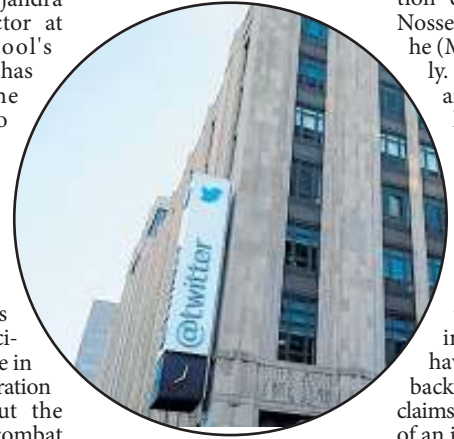
Despite sometimes inconsistent enforcement, Twitter at least has rules in place prohibiting hate speech and the most harmful kinds of misinformation. Those guardrails have been shown to be necessary, according to Suzanne Nossel, CEO of PEN America, a New York-based literary and human rights group.

Our politicians have learned that trafficking in disinformation can pay off big time, Nossel told the AP. Hopefully he (Musk) takes this seriously. Hopefully he's listening and asking questions. If he makes good on some of his more outlandish promises we could be in trouble.

Misinformation can have an even greater impact when delivered right before an election, when officials and independent journalists have little time to push back. Sometimes misleading claims about voting can be part of an intentional campaign to confuse or frighten people into staying home. Other times, it can mislead voters about results.

Brazilians have been bombarded by false political claims ahead of this weekend's presidential election between Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and incumbent Jair Bolsonaro. Similarly, there's been a significant increase in misleading and deceptive content about the election in the US next month, which will decide control of Congress.

Long-time critics of social media moderation cheered Musk's purchase of Twitter and said it heralded a new day for unfettered online communication.



Twitter council convenes, Musk tweeted.

One of Musk's first moves as Twitter's owner was to fire top leaders at the platform, including chief legal counsel Vijaya Gadde, who had overseen Twitter's content moderation and safety efforts.

Gadde's departure is not only a blow to Twitter's current election efforts, but a sign of where Musk may take Twitter, Caraballo said. Musk is also reportedly considering deep layoffs at the company.

Twitter began preparing for the elections in Brazil and the United States months ago. Over the summer, the platform rolled out a series of policies

Declining bat populations are a cause for human concern

Fewer bats will be flapping through the evening skies in the coming months. It's the time of year where some species go into hibernation, cozying up in narrow rock crevices or caves to overwinter.

Fortunately, this disappearance is only seasonal. Bats are critical for the functioning of healthy ecosystems. They help cycle nutrients in the environment and pollinate plants. They also eat agricultural pests, which reduces the need for pesticides.

Bats provide enormous value to our ecosystems, but because they do their work under the cover of darkness, we aren't always aware of the help they give.

Threatened habitats More worrisome than this seasonal disappearance is the fact that bat populations have been declining in North America for decades. Loss of habitat due to forestry, urbanization and conversion of land to agriculture reduces suitable habitats for bats, while pesticide application kills the insects that they feed on.

These impacts are exacerbated by the fungus, Pseudogymnoascus destructans, which causes white-nose syndrome. This fatal fungus is responsible for the deaths of

over six million bats in North America. White-nose syndrome has been particularly devastating in Eastern Canada where it's caused an over 90 per cent decline in populations of little brown myotis (Myotis lucifugus) and northern myotis (Myotis septentrionalis).

The fungus is making it difficult for bats to survive the winter.



way further west, with the first recorded case in Saskatchewan in July. White-nose syndrome hasn't been detected yet in British Columbia, but the deadly threat is looming.

Our research team at the B.C. node of the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative

has been working to support wildlife health for over a decade. To understand the threats currently facing the 15 species of bats living in British Columbia, we studied 275 bats that had died between 2015 and 2020. We found that the most common causes of death were linked to human activity.

This information can help us track bat populations over time and in response to urbanisation and climate change. In order to help bats live, we need to know why they die.

Killer cats A quarter of the bats in our study were killed by cats. This wasn't surprising as domestic cats are well-known predators of wildlife. In Australia, free-roaming pet cats are estimated to kill 390 million animals a year.

Free-roaming cats pose not only a risk to bats, but also to biodiversity. Some cities in Iceland have implemented a cat curfew to save their declining bird populations. One of our more surprising findings was that most of the bats we found that were killed by cats were female and in relatively good body condition. This greater proportion of dead female bats might be due to cats entering maternity roosts where female bats give birth to and raise their young.

Halloween stampede in South Korea kills 9

● Dozens go into cardiac arrest



At least nine people died as 50 went into cardiac arrest after a stampede at a prominent market in South Korea's capital Seoul, where a massive crowd had gathered for Halloween festivities, according to news agencies and videos viral on social media.

Police and firemen were seen trying to revive people in chaotic scenes.

The crowd, estimated to be around 1 lakh, had gathered on Saturday night in Itaewon, a central district of the megacity which has hundreds of shops and some particularly narrow streets, local news outlets said.

Excitement was heightened in the run-up to October 31, the first Halloween after two years of muted celebrations due to Covid restrictions.

It was just before midnight local time that dozens of people fell unconscious near

a hotel, reported The Korea Herald. Fire authorities said they received 81 reports regarding breathing difficulties as of 11.30 pm, said the report. Common people also attempted resuscitation — by pressing the chest to revive the heart — in videos that showed the scenes of panic.

Deaths were reported two hours later by news agency PTI, quoting officials. The number of injured could go up to 100, many of whom are reportedly women in their 20s, local media reports said. A fire department official confirmed the incident to a news agency, saying that

Russia has accused Britain of "involvement" in an attempted drone strike in Crimea.

Russia's Defence Ministry alleged the "specialists" from the UK helped with "training" and "supervision" for the failed attack by Ukraine.

"The Kyiv regime carried out a terrorist attack against the ships of the Black Sea Fleet and civilian ships that were on the outer and inner roads of the Sevastopol base. The attack involved nine unmanned aerial vehicles and seven autonomous maritime drones," Russia's Defence Ministry said in a statement.

"The preparation of this terrorist act and the training of military

personnel of 73rd Marine Special Operations Centre were carried out under supervision of British specialists," it said.

Britain has not responded to the allegations yet.

Russia also alleged that representatives of the British Navy were involved in plotting and organising the attack in the Baltic Sea on September 26 to blow up the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 gas pipelines.

Sevastopol in Moscow-annexed Crimea, which has been targeted several times in recent months, serves as the headquarters for the fleet and a logistical hub for operations in Ukraine.

The Russian army claimed to have "destroyed" nine aerial drones and seven maritime ones, in an attack

early Saturday in the port.

Moscow's military said ships targeted at their Crimean base were involved in a UN-brokered deal to allow the export of Ukrainian grain.

Russia had recently criticised the deal, saying its own grain exports have suffered due to Western sanctions.

Ukraine said Russia is making excuses to harm the grain corridor.

"We have warned of Russia's plans to ruin the Black Sea Grain Initiative. Now Moscow uses a false pretext to block the grain corridor which ensures food security for millions of people. I call on all states to demand Russia to stop its hunger games and recommit to its obligations," Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted.



more than 140 ambulances had been dispatched to the scene.

ISRO successfully carries out key test of its heaviest rocket's engine

The flight acceptance hot test of CE-20 engine has been successfully carried out in the High Altitude Test facility of ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu for a duration of 25 seconds.

The engine is earmarked for the LVM3-M3 mission identified for launching the next 36 OneWeb India-1 satellites, the Indian Space Research Organisation said.

Sources said these satellites of OneWeb, the London-based satellite communications company, are expected to be

launched by the NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the ISRO's commercial arm, aboard LVM3 during January-February next year.

Friday's flight acceptance test comes within days of the launch of the first set of 36 OneWeb satellites by the NSIL from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC- SHAR) in Sriharikota on October 23.

"The cryogenic upper stage of the LVM3 vehicle (C25 stage) is powered by a CE-20 engine working with the LOX-LH2 propellants combination. This engine develops a nominal thrust of 186.36 kN in

vacuum", an ISRO statement noted on Saturday.

"The major objectives of the flight acceptance test were to confirm the integrity of the hardware, assessment of sub-systems' performance and tune the engine for meeting the mission requirements parameters for engine tuning for flight operation", it said.

Analysis of the test data confirmed the satisfactory performance of the engine systems, the ISRO said, adding that this engine will be assembled to the C25 flight stage being integrated for the LVM3 M3 vehicle.

OneWeb had said its partnership with NSIL and ISRO demonstrated its commitment to provide connectivity across the length and breadth of India by 2023.

From Ladakh to Kanyakumari and Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh, OneWeb will bring secured solutions not only to enterprises but also to towns, villages, municipalities and schools, including the hardest-to-reach areas across the country, it said.

"OneWeb's commitment to enhance connectivity in India is backed by Bharti Global, its largest investor", the company

said. NSIL Chairman-cum-Managing Director Radhakrishnan D had said: "We look forward to strengthening our partnership with OneWeb and utilising the potential that LEO connectivity has to deliver broadband services across India."

Last Sunday's launch marked the rocket's entry into the global commercial launch service market, according to the Bengaluru-headquartered national space agency.

NSIL, a central public sector enterprise under the

Department of Space, had earlier signed two launch service contracts with the Network Access Associated Limited (OneWeb) for launching a total of 72 OneWeb LEO (low earth orbit) satellites on-board ISRO's LVM3.

LVM3, ISRO's heaviest rocket, is capable of launching a four ton class of satellite to Geosynchronous Transfer orbit. LVM3 (Launch Vehicle Mark 3) is a three-stage vehicle with two solid motor strap-ons, a liquid propellant core stage and a cryogenic stage.

