

India ‘stalled’ during UPAera, says Narayana Murthy

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

N R Narayana Murthy, co-founder of IT giant Infosys, has lamented that economic activities in India were “stalled” and decisions were not taken by the Manmohan Singh government in time in the Congress-led UPA-era.

During his interaction with young entrepreneurs and students at the Indian Institute of Management - Ahmedabad (IIMA) on Friday, Murthy expressed confidence that young minds can make India a worthy competitor of China, the world’s second largest economy.

“I used to be on the board of HSBC in London (between 2008 and 2012). In the first few years, when China was mentioned two to three times in



the boardroom (during meetings), India’s name would be mentioned once,” said the well-known businessman in response to a question on where he sees India in the future.

“But unfortunately, I don’t know what happened (to India) afterwards. (Former PM) Manmohan Singh was an extraordinary individual and I have tremendous respect for him. But, somehow, India stalled (during UPA-era). Decisions were not taken and everything was delayed,” said Murthy. The IT czar said when he left HSBC (in 2012), India’s name hardly found a mention during meetings, while China’s name was taken nearly 30 times.

U’KHAND RESORT MURDER

Body of young woman found; BJP leader, son expelled as outrage grows

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The body of Ankita Bhandari who worked in an Uttarakhand resort was recovered from a canal on Saturday, police said as the ruling BJP swung into action to expel its leader whose son, the main accused, owned the property and the administration began demolishing the structure.

Outrage over the killing of the 19-year-old, who worked as a receptionist in the Vanantara resort in Pauri district’s Yamkeshwar block owned by Haridwar BJP leader Vinod Arya’s son Pulkit Arya, escalated as details emerged of

her trauma in the days preceding her death.

Violent protests erupted in areas surrounding the resort with locals breaking glass panes and some trying to torch a pickle factory in its premises. However, the fire did not spread much as the weather was cloudy. BJP’s Yamkeshwar MLA Renu Bisht’s car was also attacked near the Cheela canal close to Rishikesh from where the young woman’s body was recovered, six days after her parents found her missing from her room. However, the crowds, seething with anger, succeeded only in breaking the rear windshield

TPCC alleges irregularities in selection of PCC members

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

The TPCC members selected by Pradesh Returning Officer (PRO) Rajmohan Unnithan and Assistant Pradesh Returning Officer (APRO) Raja Bhagel have created chaos in the Telangana unit of the Congress.

Instead of selecting 274 (238 PCC members plus 15 per cent co-option PCC members), the PRO and APRO selected around 350 members.

TPCC leaders have been saying that the PRO and APRO have selected a jumbo committee. However, these members have the right to vote in the AICC elections.

A TPCC leader told ‘The Pioneer’ on condition of anonymity that the returning

officers gave PCC member posts after accepting money.

Expressing unhappiness over the selection of more than 350 PCC members, TPCC working president B. Mahesh Kumar Goud sent a letter to AICC Central Election Authority chairman Madhusudhan Mistri on Saturday alleging that irregularities took place in the selection of PCC members.

The TPCC said that the PRO and APRO appointed more than the number mentioned in party guidelines. As per party guidelines, the PRO and APRO have to select as PCC members two each from every Assembly constituency and 15 per cent co-option members.

As per the calculations, the PRO and APRO have to

TPCC leaders have been saying that the PRO and APRO have selected a jumbo committee. However, these members have the right to vote in the AICC elections.

appoint 238 members from 119 constituencies (119 X 2 = 238) and 15 per cent co-option members (36 or 37 members).

However, the PRO and APRO have given a chance to around 350 members, Mahesh Kumar Goud said in his letter to Mistri, it is learnt.

Mahesh appealed to Mistri to remove the excess members from the list or else the difference between leaders would increase.

On the other hand, senior leader Bakka Judson has surrendered his PCC co-option

membership. Judson addressed letters to TPCC president Revanth Reddy, Telangana Congress affairs in-charge Manickam Tagore, AICC in-charge secretary Rohit Choudhary, PRO Rajmohan Unnithan and former Union Minister Renuka Choudhary regarding this.

In his letter, Judson said that surrendering co-option of PCC members is not a big thing as Rahul Gandhi resigned his AICC president post.

He said in the letter that

Warangal DCC president Naini Rajender Reddy had sent his name from Warangal West constituency for the PCC member post. But the party gave him a co-option member post.

“When I am not eligible for PCC membership then how can I be eligible for co-option membership? Hence I am humbly requesting to accept my request surrendering my PCC co-option membership. My Serial number is 254,” Judson said.

Speaking to ‘The Pioneer,’ Judson said the PRO and APRO selected PCC members after taking money and hence the number exceeded the number as per guidelines.

Judson said that everything happened with the knowledge of the TPCC leadership.

Criticise only KCR’s family, says Ramya

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao’s brother’s daughter Regulapati Ramya Rao said that the situation in the state would have been different if the TRS had been merged with the Congress immediately after the formation of Telangana state. Ramya said that people were criticising the Kalvakuntla clan due to KCR’s rule, but Kalvakuntla clan doesn’t mean only KCR’s family. There are many other families in the Kalvakuntla clan, she said. She urged people not to criticise the Kalvakuntla clan if they want to criticise KCR. She said that no one is happy with KCR’s family rule. Participating in the Telangana Activists Athmeeya Sammelan held at Hanmakonda on Saturday, Ramya said that it is not a Athmeeya Sammelan but a grievances meeting.

CONG PREZ POLL

Tharoor likely to file papers on Sept 30

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced his candidature for the Congress president’s post, nomination forms for party leader Shashi Tharoor were on Saturday collected from the party headquarters here with sources saying he is likely to file his papers on September 30.

Tharoor’s close aide Aalim Javeri took the forms on his behalf from the office of the party’s central election authority chairman Madhusudan Mistri on the first day of the start of the nomination process, all but confirming an electoral face-off for the top party post with

Gehlot.

The nomination form is likely to be filed by Tharoor on the last day of the nomination process on September 30 as the idea is to collect nomination-endorsing signatures from across the country, sources told PTI.

At least 10 Pradesh Congress Committee delegates are needed to endorse a candidate.

After over two decades, the Congress is set to see a contest for the post of party chief with Gehlot, who has announced his candidature, expected to take on Tharoor.

Tharoor on Monday had met Sonia Gandhi and expressed his intention to contest the poll. The Congress president conveyed she would

stay “neutral” in the elections, according to sources.

Sonia Gandhi had welcomed the idea of more people contesting the poll and dispelled the notion that there would be an “official candidate”.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Gehlot became the first person to announce his candidature for the AICC presidential poll on Friday and said Rahul Gandhi has told him that no one from the Gandhi family should become the next party chief.

According to a notification issued by the party on Thursday, the process for filing nominations for the election will be held from September 24 to 30.

Ticket sales...

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Vivek demanded an enquiry into the actions of the HCA and added that the HCA must release a white paper on the sale of tickets for the India-Australia cricket match.

He said that the Kalvakuntla family which has entered all fields has been trying to enter sports too and that HCA president Mohd. Azharuddin is unfit to run the HCA. Vivek said this kind of confusion had never been seen in the HCA.

TPCC working president B. Mahesh Kumar Goud said the TRS government and the HCA had joined hands. The Ministers and the HCA have joined hands and are destroying the interests of sports persons, he said.

“There is a need to keep 32,000 tickets in the market for sale as the capacity of the stadium is around 50,000. There is a need for the HCA to give clarity on ticket sales. How

many passes were sent to Ministers KTR, Srinivas Goud, MPs and MLAs? The HCA and the government have been playing games with cricket lovers. The statements of Azharuddin and the Sports Minister are not matching. There is a need for a comprehensive enquiry into the issue. The culprits must be punished. There is a need for the HCA to explain about the 32,000 tickets and why the police lathi-charged the public. Everything happened with the knowledge of the government and the HCA. The culprits must be punished regardless of their political affiliations. I don’t think that the match can be held peacefully. The pregnant woman’s condition is serious. The government, the HCA and the police failed totally. This happened just because of the interference of Pragathi Bhavan and the Sports Minister in the sale of tickets,” Mahesh Kumar Goud said.

‘KCR wants...

Continued from page 1

But KCR is now trying to make his daughter Kavitha the HCA president,” Vivek said.

He said that the chaos in the HCA is due to the KCR family. Vivek said that Kavitha tried seriously to become the HCA president and had exerted pressure on him too.

KCR failed to make Kavitha the HCA president. “IT Minister KT Ramarao tried to defeat my panel earlier,” Vivek said.

“The HCA said that it sold tickets as per SC directions. The HCA has to give a comprehensive report on it. There is a need for clarity on how many tickets were put on sale. How many boxes were allotted to how many people? Are the boxes reserved for those who have paid or not? All these things happened because of the KCR family.

BJP to take its ‘Lotus’...

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He said that Sanjay had given a call to ensure the victory of BJP candidate Komatireddy Raghupall Reddy with a huge majority. The meeting also decided to release a charge-sheet on anti-incumbency and the party’s manifesto. The mandal in-charges are Kuna Srisailam Goud (in-charge), Jitta Balakrishna Reddy and K. Ramulu (co-in-charges)

Youth is the...

Continued from page 1

Speaking about his journey as the CJI, he said, “The role of the Chief Justice of India calls for leadership and long-term vision. I assumed charge when the country was going through the lethal second wave of Covid-19. During my tenure of 16 months, despite my best efforts, the Supreme Court could sit only for 50 days.

(Choutuoppal), Revuri Prakash Reddy (in-charge), Subash Chanderji and Karnati Danunjaya (co-in-charges) (Choutuppal Municipality), M. Raghunandan Rao (in-charge), Ramesh Rathode and Kasam Venkateswarlu (co-in-charges) (Narayanapur), Chada Suresh Reddy (in-charge), Bodige Shobha and Ravi Kumar Yadav (co-in-charges) (Munugode), T. Nandishwar Goud (in-charge), Vannala Sreeramulu

and Ande Babaiah (co-in-charges) (Chanduru), M. Dharma Rao (in-charge), M. Vijaypal Reddy and Nagurao Namaji (co-in-charges) (Chanduru Municipality), Enugu Ravinder Reddy (in-charge), Ande Sriamulu Yadav and Ritesh Rathod (co-in-charges) (Nampalli), Konda Vishweshwar Reddy (in-charge), Yerrabelli Pradeep Rao and Tula Uma (co-in-charges) (Marrigudem).

Re has held back...

Continued from page 1

The rupee slumped 30 paise to close at a fresh lifetime low of 81.09 against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by the strong American currency overseas and risk-off sentiment among investors. On Thursday, the rupee plunged by 83 paise -- its biggest single-day loss in near-

ly seven months -- to close at 80.79, its previous record low. The RBI has been deploying the dollar reserves to defend the currency and has exhausted billions of dollars of currency assets in the fight. There have also been policy moves to attract more deposits from the diaspora through further incentives and other such attempts to stem the fall.

Hyd to be hub of KCR’s...

Continued from page 1

It may be mentioned here that Dr BR Ambedkar in his book, ‘Thoughts on Linguistic States,’ published in 1955 stressed the need to make Hyderabad the second capital of the country in chapter 11, to bridge the North-South divide. Meanwhile, sources drew parallels between KCR and Modi and said, “When Modi did it from Gujarat KCR will do it from Hyderabad.

Hyderabad is part of the Telangana model of development. We have done so many things to showcase the city. Some of them were copied in the advertisements of others.”

Even though Hyderabad is the centre, sources indicate that it is largely derived from the Siddipet Model.

“Whatever KCR has done in Telangana was done in Siddipet even before the formation of the state. Be it Mission Bhagiratha or Shaadi

Mubarak. So with the Siddipet model if Telangana could be achieved why not a national foray,” sources said.

However, for the all buzz around the announcement of a national party by Dussahra, there is now silence.

It may be mentioned here that HD Kumaraswamy said that KCR will take the plunge into national politics around the 2023 Karnataka Assembly elections before Vijaydashami.

Uncertainty looms...

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Some of these raids went on for days. So far neither the ED nor the IT Department has officially released a press statement. Sources pointed out that this will impact businesses and money market operations. For instance, when the investigative agencies went ballistic against Chinese oper-

ators, China’s embassy in India criticized Indian authorities for the “frequent investigations” into local units of Chinese firms and warned that such moves “impede the business environment” in India and “chills the confidence” of other foreign businesses to invest in the South Asian market after the raids on Vivo earlier this week.

Ahead of match, IMD...

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The maximum temperatures are expected to range from 29 C to 31 C, while the minimum temperatures will range from 21 C to 22 C. On Saturday, the highest rainfall recorded in the GHMC area was 1.5 mm in Rajendranagar in the Rangareddy district.

Meanwhile, isolated light to moderate rain has been pre-

dicted in the State in the next three days. Weather buff T. Balaji, popularly known as Telangana Weatherman, said on Twitter, “Rains will decline from Sunday in Telangana. Temperatures will gradually increase from Sunday and there will be isolated rains. The chances of rain are less in #Hyderabad on #INDvsAUS match day. So nothing much to worry about rains.”

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The government also relieved Dr Jhansi Lakshmi from the post of District Coordinator of Hospital Services, Ranga Reddy, with a direction to report to her original post of civil surgeon specialist at CHC Shadnagar immediately.

Dr Varadha Chary, the Superintendent of the Area Hospital of Kondapur, will be replacing her.

Dr Swaraj Lakshmi, the District Medical and Health officer of Ranga Reddy district, has been transferred and posted as Joint Director, in the office of the Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare, Hyderabad.

The Commissioner of Telangana Vaidya Vidhana Parishad (TVVP) has been requested to take immediate action to furnish draft articles of charge along with relevant material for initiating disciplinary action under Rule 20 of the Telangana Civil Services (Classification, Control and

Appeal) Rules 1991 against Dr Jhansi Lakshmi and to initiate disciplinary action against Dr Sridhar, the Superintendent (under suspension) of CHC Ibrahimpatnam.

Meanwhile, the Director of Public Health and Family Welfare, Hyderabad, has submitted his report to the government with the following recommendations.

Permanent family planning services like tubectomy/DPL shall be made an integral part of the hospital service delivery system. DPL surgeries should be conducted as fixed day services along with other services given by the hospital.

The DPL acceptor should be kept at least for 24 hours in the facility for post-operative care mandatorily. As per a pre-scheduled calendar, the beneficiary should be guided to access services at hospitals of their choice.

The concerned supervisor should make one visit to the house of the beneficiary with-

in 24 hours from discharge and ensure at least two more visits within a week on subsequent postoperative days. They should ensure prompt follow-up and appropriate referral as per need.

The primary health care centre medical officer shall visit all postoperative cases at least once within the first two days. The medical officer shall ensure the supervisor duly visits the post-operative acceptor as per schedule.

The superintendent, surgeon and deputy DMHO (Cam Officer) of the area shall verify the processes as per SOPs for pre-operative, intra-operative, and post-operative care. Refresher training shall be conducted for all supervisory staff on the identification of any possible signs of complication of the procedure.

The Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare shall put in place a mechanism to assess the DPL surgeon’s skills and knowledge once a year by the competent authority.

Formula E Gen 2 car to be unveiled today for public viewing at Tank Bund

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

Ahead of the Formula E race in Hyderabad, Gen 2 display car is being unveiled for public viewing on Sunday September 25 on Tank Bund to delight motor sports fans and to create awareness amongst others. In Hyderabad early next year, the Formula E car is for public viewing.

The car will be showcased for the next few weeks and then taken around and displayed in numerous other locations across the city in the coming months. Plans are on to then take the car to other metro cities in India to help create awareness around the country.

At 0 to 62 kmph in under three seconds, potential top speeds of 280 kmph, and hair-raising cornering, the Formula



For representation purpose only

E Gen 2 cars are similar to the Formula 1 cars but run on EV technology. With the automotive sector rapidly shifting gears and its vision towards electronic formats, the future of mobility is being seen here.

Hyderabad will be among the 12 cities of the globe and the only Indian city specially chosen to host the Formula E Prix in 2023. With 100 races

complete since the inception of the races in 2014, the Formula e Prix is among the fastest growing sporting events in the world today.

Season 9, in which Hyderabad will feature, will see the Gen 3 cars being introduced for the first time. Lighter, faster, with speeds upto 300 kmph, 0-100 in 2.8 secs, and more energy efficient,

The car will be showcased for the next few weeks and then taken around and displayed in numerous other locations across the city in the coming months.

these cars will host the latest in battery and rapid charging technologies that will eventually get translated to regular cars. The main difference between Formula 1 and Formula e races is that these races are held on regular roads and not special tracks. This is also testimony to the roads of Hyderabad, which with slight modifications to suit FE specified racing conditions, was found suitable to hold the race - one of the criteria for its selection.

Car racing, among the most

exciting and most watched sporting events globally, has so far found limited traction in India.

Though F3 races have been in circuits since the 90s, F1 was held just once in India, way back in 2011.

With Formula E debuting in India in Hyderabad, the sport is set to rev up interest in the country and motor heads (as the fans are called) can enjoy the thrill right here on home grounds. Hyderabad is contracted to host the event the next 4 years.

KTR inspects works at Kokapet Neopolis

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Neopolis, the greenfield workspace township coming up in Kokapet, will have about a million people working there in the next five years.

Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) Minister KT Rama Rao inspected the works at the Neopolis Layout in Kokapet on Saturday.

The futuristic city is being developed by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA).

KTR stopped by the side of the wide roads in the layout to check the works and asked engineers about the details of the plans. As it is a greenfield project (started from scratch), KTR told the engineers that there is a potential to build world-class facilities there.

He suggested a few modifications in the plan for roads, recreation facilities and cycle



Minister for Municipal Administration K T Rama Rao inspecting the progress of works at Neopolis, the greenfield workspace township, at Kokapet in Hyderabad on Saturday

tracks. The extent of the layout, including the vertical extent, would be as big as Warangal. Future needs, environment protection, safety, and comfort of the people were considered while suggesting modifications. A common thread in all his suggestions was his insistence on maintaining international standards.

Talking to the teams there, he said a park should be developed there along the lines of the Central Park in New York. It would serve as a recreational space for children and others. A cycle track connecting Gandipet lake should be built in such a way that international events too can be conducted, KTR said.

FIXING OF METERS TO TAPS

Cantonment area residents seek extension by two months

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The HMWSSB's 20,000-liter-a-month free drinking water scheme will expire by October 1. By the deadline, everyone in the city should get meters fixed to their tap connections. Failing which, they would have to clear the water bill along with the arrears. But, residents of the Cantonment area in Secunderabad allege that the contractor has been delaying fixing meters to the tap connection and hence sought extension of the deadline by two more months.

The free water scheme was introduced in the city two years ago, but it so far was not implemented in Cantonment area. In the

region, out of 32,364 tap connections, the number of unauthorized tap connections in various slums is put at 16,000.

Those who reside in colonies pay Rs 450 a month towards water bill, while the BPL families pay Rs 214 towards water bill. The locals demanded free water protesting against the delay in extending the scheme to cantonment area. They submitted memoranda to the officials on a number of occasions. The state government brought about a GO on May 2 this year extending it to the area. Those who get a monthly bill of Rs 250 and less are not required to get meter fixed to the tap connection. Those who pay Rs 450 a month and more a

month towards water bill should get meters fixed to the tap. If Rs 1,500 is paid to the HMWSSB, the contractor fixes meter. The HMWSSB officials served notice to people thrice to disconnect the tap if they fail to fix meters to the tap.

If the people fail to get the meter fixed by October 2, the people would have to pay arrears of water bill from February this year along with this month's bill. Then only, the people will be allowed to fix meters.

The HMWSSB officials entrusted fixing meters to tap connections of over 16,000-odd above BPL families to a single contractor. The contractor has no adequate staff to carry out the task.

Cyberabad Police, SCSC begin training for 65 traffic volunteers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyberabad Police Commissionerate and the Society for Cyberabad Security Council (SCSC) launched the training programme for a new batch of traffic volunteers on Saturday. The Cyberabad Police had invited applications for traffic volunteers and about 65 people showed interest in volunteering. The volunteers will be trained on road safety, traffic laws and the DOs and Don'ts of traffic volunteering.

The SCSC along with Cyberabad Traffic Police introduced the volunteering project in 2013 with volunteers enrolled from the IT industry to support the traffic police in managing the ever-growing traffic in the IT corridor. Gradually, people from the pharma and health sciences too joined in volunteer-



Cyberabad Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Srinivas Rao speaking at a media conference in Hyderabad on Saturday

ing.

Addressing the gathering, DCP Srinivas Rao said, "Traffic volunteers is a good concept and it is a very sad situation to see so many traffic violations in Cyberabad which can be considered as an area with the highest literacy. Cyberabad, going by population demographics, should record the lowest num-

ber of traffic accidents, violations and incidents." He said that all traffic volunteers who are undergoing training today must not only work as effective volunteers but also take up the cause of safe driving and at least educate their near and dear ones. This is the only way to improve traffic safety in Cyberabad, he added.

Telangana forging ahead in its quest for excellence: Smita

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior bureaucrat Smita Sabharwal on Friday spoke about the first decade of Telangana at the 'Leadership Summit 2022' held at the Indian School of Business (ISB) in Hyderabad.

Speaking at the event she spoke about the power sector, water resources and agriculture.

Smita started her speech by speaking about the Kaleshwaram Project. She said that the project is the lifeline of Telangana and that it is one possibility that the government tapped which changed the ecosystem of Telangana.

Smita conducted a presentation which told how the Kaleshwaram Project began and became the world's largest lift irrigation system. She showed the audience photos of the 'Bahubali Pumps' located at the Medigadda Barrage.

She also said that some of the reservoirs of the project are 50 times larger than the Hussain Sagar Lake in Hyderabad. The Hussain Sagar Lake is about 1,000 million cubic feet (TMC) while the Komaravelli Mallanna Sagar is 50 TMC, she said, to give an idea about how huge the reservoirs are. Smita also spoke



about Mission Kakatiya and Mission Bhagiratha.

Mission Kakatiya is an attempt to link all the water tanks in the state and for this, the chain tank structure was revived. About 42,000 water bodies across Telangana were linked together. Mission Bhagiratha is meant to provide drinking water to every household in the state.

On agriculture, she said, "Today from deficits and farmer suicides to all kinds of ground scenarios, we have the problem of procuring all the paddy due to excess production. On the other hand, I call it a problem of prosperity. This entire investment in water resources has changed the scenario from water scarcity to prosperity. In the coming season, Telangana will be one of the prime states which account for the country's food security."

UoH students protest against fee hike for CUET

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Students of the University of Hyderabad (UoH) on Friday protested against the fee hike for the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) examination 2022. The notification for the undergraduate admission courses was released on September 20.

Student Federation of India (SFI) Secretary Shiva Durga Rao said while speaking about the issue said that the examination fees which was earlier Rs 600 has now been hiked to Rs 4,000. The student body met with the Controller of Examination (CoE) and asked to withdraw the fee hike and bring it back to the normal price. The students later raised slogans against the CoE for not addressing their concerns. There are students coming from marginalized and even lower communities who cannot bear the burden of such high fees, he added.

After the protest, the CoE came to a decision that instead of collecting Rs 600 separately for each subject, they will not club all science and social subjects and collect Rs 600 for one group of 5 subjects, which makes it Rs 3000.

Irregular parking: Cops resume wheel-clamping

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The traffic police stations of Banjara Hills, Jubilee Hills, Punjagutta, SR Nagar have resorted to wheel-clamping for the past one week to check irregular parking on city roads.

The police department dispensed with the wheel-clamping practice as it attracted lot of criticism from the public. If vehicles are found parked at places, ignoring 'No Parking' sign, they will be wheel-clamped and a fine sticker would be pasted on it besides giving the phone number of

the traffic constable of the area. Only after paying the fine, the vehicle will be released.

Traffic problems are on the rise with irregular parking of vehicles near cinema halls, shops, hospitals, parks and residential areas. Moreover, there is a lot of criticism against the police charging them with targeting only two-wheeler riders. The police are understood to have resorted to wheel-clamping to collect pending fines from four-wheelers. Special drives are being conducted by the police in the city to check irregular



parking in the city. There are many hospitals in Banjara Hills, Jubilee Hills and Somajiguda areas of the city which receive patients from villages in Telanana. The vehicles that bring patients to the

wheel-clamping since the hospitals have no adequate parking amenities.

ACP of Panjagutta police station, Gyanender, admitting wheel-clamping of irregularly parked vehicles, said that if the vehicle owner calls up the police on the number given on the sticker pasted to the vehicle, the SI will go there and impose fine of Rs 600 and also collect pending fines on the issue before releasing the vehicle. The ACP said that at least 15 cases under the limits of each police station are being registered.

BATHUKAMMA GIFT



Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan distributing saris to Raj Bhawan parivar in Hyderabad on Saturday

Pubs, bars told to obey HC orders on playing music

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Pubs and bars should comply with HC directions and stop playing music after 10 pm, said Cyberabad Police Commissioner Stephen Raveendra on Saturday while conducting a meeting with pub and bar owners in Cyberabad Commissionerate limits. Stephen Raveendra urged

all pubs to obtain their license as per amusement rules. If anybody is found violating the HC order, action will be taken against them as per law, he added. The meeting was also attended by Joint CP Avinash Mohanty, DCP Traffic Srinivas Rao, DCP Madhapur Shilpavalli and other senior officers of Cyberabad Police.



Cyberabad Police Commissioner Stephen Raveendra and other senior officers in a meeting with pub owners in Hyderabad on Saturday

Steps to prevent private buses from charging excess fare

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The transport department is going to crack the whip on private bus operators who ply special bus services to various destinations charging exorbitant fare from the festive travellers.

They will check all private travel buses, cars and maxi cabs till October 4. On Saturday the inspection was carried out at LB Nagar, Aramghar, IS Sadan, Jubilee Bus station and KPHB areas of the city.

The transport department higher authorities took the decision following a request from TSRTC Managing direc-

tor VC Sajjanar.

Inspectors of the transport department will undertake checking at Kodada, Siddipet and Shad Nagar check posts.

The authorities predict that at least 18 lakh people are likely to travel to various places in AP on account of the festival and targeted inspection of bus playing on Kurnool and Vijayawada routes. On normal days, the ticket fare to travel to Vijayawada from Hyderabad would be Rs 600-700 per head. However, the fare will be doubled as and when the Dasara vacation is announced. Just two or three days prior to the festival, the bus fare would go



up to Rs 2000 and Rs 2500 per head depending on the urgency. To prevent this to happen, the transport author-

ities will conduct inspection of buses at various routes. If the crime is proved, the vehicles will be seized and the com-

muters will be sent to their destinations by RTC bus.

To encourage people to patronize RTC buses more, the

TSRTC management pressed into more and more buses to various destinations in Telugu states to cope up with the festival rush. However, it did not increase the bus fare. Earlier, the TSRTC used to collect 30-50 per cent higher fare on festival occasions. As the private bus operators are also increasing the fare to that extent, people used to prefer private buses to RTC.

The transport department authorities have declared that the TSRTC is not going to collect additional fare from people intending to travel to native places for the festival period.

Bathukamma festival goes global, says Kavitha

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao extended greeting to the people of the State on the occasion of commencement of the Telangana festival 'Bathukamma'. KCR said that the Bathukamma festivities, which are held in the midst of joyous celebrations by women at their birthplaces by decorating Bathukamma with flowers, dance and singing, reflects the uniqueness of the villages. He said that the cultural extravaganza with praying the nature will be on display across the state during the nine-day long festival celebration.

The Chief Minister said that the Telangana government recognised Bathukamma as State festival and accorded a big importance to the Telangana



TRS MLC K Kavitha, along with members of Telangana Jagruthi, unveiling Jagruthi global celebration poster in Hyderabad on Saturday

culture and the self-respect of the women folk. He said the State government is distributing saris to one crore women at a cost of Rs 350 crore.

The government is honouring women by distributing specially made one crore sarees as Bathukamma gift. KCR said that 'Bathukamma,' which has become a part of people's life,

spread to the continents and the Telangana culture proliferated across the world.

The State Government made all arrangements to celebrate the Bathukamma festival. He prayed to the goddess of Nature Bathukamma to bless the people of the State with full of happiness and good health.

On the eve of Bathukamma

celebrations, Telangana Jagruthi announced eight countries to celebrate Bathukamma.

MLC Kavitha launched Telangana Jagruthi's global Bathukamma celebrations poster on Saturday. This year Bathukamma will be celebrated in eight countries globally, Telangana Jagruthi will host the respective events.

New pension cards, Bathukamma saris distributed to beneficiaries

PNS ■ BHUPALAPALLY

Bhupalapally MLA Gandra Venkata Ramana Reddy on Saturday assured the people that the TRS government under the leadership of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao was committed to the welfare of the people. The State witnessed rapid progress under the leadership of the Chief Minister, he said.

He was distributing new Aasara Pension cards to pensioners and the Bathukamma Saris among the women.

He recalled how the TRS government gave the status of the panchayat to small tribal thanadas.

Village development programmes are focussing on development of greenery, sanitation, pleasant ambience



Bhupalapally MLA Gandra Venkata Ramana Reddy distributing new Aasara pension cards to beneficiaries in Bhupalapally on Saturday

and health, he said.

The MLA sanctioned Rs 5 lakh to Peddampalli village and Rs 10 lakh to Regonda panchayat for development of internal roads. He assured sanction of pucca buildings to house panchayats in Regonda, Peddampalli, Tirumalagiri,

Narayanapur and Kottapalli villages.

Free supply of power to agriculture sector 24x7 and continuous supply of power to people in Telangana is driving Prime Minister Narendra Modi to spend sleepless nights.

Police seize 268 kg marijuana, arrest seven

PNS ■ SURYAPETA

Suryapet police on Saturday seized 268.8 kg of marijuana worth Rs 27 lakh in a special drive conducted by the police force under various police limits in the district.

According to District Superintendent of Police Rajendra Prasad, the police seized 138 kg of marijuana under the limits of Mothey police station, 93.5 kg in Huzurnagar and 37 kg in Kodad town. The police also seized three cars and arrested seven persons on the charge of smuggling the contraband. The arrested were produced before the court on Saturday. The SP appealed to people to inform the police about any drug-related sale or smuggling.

ACB traps Panchayat Raj Secretary

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

The Anti-Corruption Bureau on Saturday trapped a Panchayat Raj Secretary while he was allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 90,000 from an ex-serviceman here. The ACB officials said that Panjaya Raj Secretary Utkuri Sridhar, presently working in Asifnagar,



The official was willing to accept Rs 9,000. Based on the complaint by the ex-serviceman, the ACB officials laid the trap and arrested the officer.

The ACB officials said that the Panchayat Raj Secretary was arrested near RTC Workshop when he was accepting the bribe.

Niranjan distributes Aasara pension cards, Bathukamma saris

PNS ■ WANAPARTHI



Minister for Agriculture S Niranjan Reddy distributing new Aasara cards to pensioners in Wanaparthy on Saturday

Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy on Saturday distributed Aasara Pension Cards among new beneficiaries and Bathukamma Saris among women at a programme held at Srinivaspur Colony in the town and at MLA camp office.

Later, he proceeded to Veerapalli, Dodaguntapalli and Mandadi village of Peddamandali mandal to distribute Aasara Pension cards and Bathukamma saris.

He asked those who are eligible but did not get Aasara pension cards to apply for the pension next time and get the pension. In case of death of spouse recently, the widows should apply for Aasara pension, he said.

He asked the district officials to ensure that all eligible persons get Aasara pension. In connection with Dasara on October 5, the

state government is distributing Bathukamma Saris among women aged 18 and above, he said asking them to celebrate the festival with joy. He conveyed his Dasara and Bathukamma festival greetings to people.

ZP chairman Loknath Reddy, municipal chairman Gattu Yadav, vice-chairman Vakiti Sridhar, ward councilors, officials, ZPTCs, MPTCs, village sarpanches and others took part in the programme.

TS committed to providing free healthcare

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Minister for Finance and Health T Harish Rao on Saturday said the State government is committed to providing free healthcare and education to all sections of people.

The Minister was inaugurating several developmental projects in Zaheerabad constituency in the district. He declared open a Urdu medium minority junior college, constructed at a cost of Rs 2.17 crore, rythu vedika building at Mogdampalle mandal, cement concrete road from PWD road to Ambedkar statue, SC community hall and others. He also inaugurated a girls' tribal welfare residential school, Basti Dawkhana. He said that Girijana Girls' Residential School, constructed at a cost of Rs 4.5 crore, was meant for promoting education.

Speaking on the occasion,



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao having lunch with schoolchildren in Zaheerabad in Sangareddy district on Saturday

the TRS government under the leadership of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had established a number of Gurukul schools. There were just 91 schools before the formation of the State, he said. The schools were upgraded to facilitate that children can continue their education up to Intermediate. Apart from Gurukul School, the government has also established 20 Girijan Residential Schools in the State. There are now 980

Gurukul Schools in the State, he said. The number of children studying in Gurukul schools has gone up to 4.50 lakh from 1.12 lakh after the formation of Telangana State.

He recalled that there used to be drinking water scarcity in Mogdampalle and now, after TRS came to power, safe drinking water is being provided for every household. The government had provided assistance of Rs 109 crore to 11,480 women under the Kalayanalakshmi

scheme. He assured the people that a 50-bed hospital would be established in Kohir soon. The Minister also handed over a cheque worth Rs 13.20 crore to self-help groups under the bank linkage scheme. He also distributed new Aasara pension cards. Harish Rao held a quiz competition to test the knowledge of the students. He presented a cash prize of Rs 1,000 to a Class 9 girl, Radhad, for answering all the questions.

Lok Sabha member B B Patil said the State had witnessed unprecedented progress during the last eight years. Never before, the State had made such rapid strides toward progress, he said.

Zilla Parishad Chairperson Manjuri Jaipal Reddy, District Collector A Sharat, Zaheerabad MLA Manik Rao, Telangana Handloom Corporation chairman Chinta Prabhakar Rao and others were present.

Bathukamma fest: Harish extends good wishes to womenfolk

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Minister for Finance T Harish Rao on Saturday extended good wishes to people on the occasion of Bathukamma festival. He prayed the Almighty to bestow peace, happiness and prosperity on the people.

Bathukamma festival is a colourful floral festival of Telangana and is celebrated by womenfolk with exotic flowers of the region. The festival is a symbol of Telangana culture and identity. Bathukamma, or the flower festival of Telangana, is celebrated by the womenfolk of Telangana. Every year, the ritual is practised as per the Telugu version of the Hindu calendar and during the months of September/October.

The Minister said the TRS government has been organising the festival officially since the formation of a separate State.

Bathukamma was recognised as the State festival. The government has been distributing saris, too, during the festival. He promised to ensure that all help would be extended for celebrating the festival on a grand scale.

Two errant private hospitals, a diagnostic centre sealed

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

Two private hospitals, which have been found violating the rules and regulations under the Clinical Establishment Act, were sealed by the Medical and Health Department authorities in Nagarkurnool town on Saturday. A diagnostic centre, too, was sealed.

The authorities of the Medical and Health, Revenue and Municipality, backed by the police, conducted inspections at private hospitals to verify whether they are adhering to the rules and regulations under the Clinical Establishment Act. Three hospitals, which could not produce proper documents, were sealed, according to authorities. The hospitals, which were sealed, are Sushmita Clinic, Mamata clinic and Sai Krishna Diagnostic Centre.

Assistant District Medical and Health Officer Venkat Das, Programme Officer Bharat Kumar Reddy, and officers Ravi Kumar, Dasarath, Narayanaswamy and other



Nagarkurnool District Collector P Uday Kumar holding a review meeting with officials on action taken against illegal private hospitals in Nagarkurnool on Saturday

officials conducted inspections at the hospitals. Sub-Inspector Veena Redy was also present.

Meanwhile, District Collector P Uday Kumar on Saturday announced the constitution of a committee comprising officials to inspect the private hospitals and take action against the hospital which was set up without valid permission from the government. The Collector was holding a review meeting with District Superintendent of Police K Manohar, District Medical and Health Officer Sudhakarlarl, Revenue

Divisional Officers, Deputy Superintendents of Police and Municipal Commissioners of Police.

Speaking on the occasion, Uday Kumar said the State government issued orders in regard to action to be taken against illegal hospitals in the State. A gazette notification was issued in this regard, he said. A committee with the District Collector as chairman was formed. The committee comprises the District Superintendent of Police, District Medical and Health Officer.

Navin Mittal given charge of TSBIE

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The State government has issued orders assigning additional responsibilities to Navin Mittal as Telangana Intermediate Board Secretary.

Naveen Mittal will continue as Inter Board Secretary until further orders. Omar Jaleel, who is currently continuing as Inter Board Secretary, will retire on September 30. Navin Mittal currently continues as the Commissioner of College Education and Technical Education.



NITI Aayog for all-round growth of Bhupalapally, Mulugu districts

PNS ■ BHUPALAPALLY



NITI Ayog Joint Secretary Sanjay Kumar holding a review with meeting with officials of Jayashankar Bhupalapally and Mulugu district officials, in Bhupalapally on Saturday

from time to time. The rank of Bhupalapally district slipped to 29 due to delay in uploading the works.

He enquired from the officials about the activities taken up with Rs 10 crore sanctioned to Anganwadi Centers. Play equipment is provided in all Anganwadi Centers, he said asking the officials to provide better amenities for expectant mothers and kids by making good use of the sanctioned funds.

He wanted them to pay special attention to nutritional status improvement among children.

The Power Finance Corporation sanctioned Rs 10.51 crore for improving educational standards in the district and Rs 8.74 crore for development of health facilities. He enquired from officials works taken up with the funds.

He sought report on the availability of toilets in each school. He asked the officials to ensure new teaching methods are employed in schools.

Officials told the Niti Ayog official that the state government is implementing Tolimettu to improve educational standards of the students.

Make 'Brahmotsavams' a grand success: TTD EO officials

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

With only a couple of days left for the annual 'Srivari Brahmotsavams', TTD EO AV Dharma Reddy reviewed the department-wise arrangements for the big festival. The review meeting was held at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, the EO said that every employee has to feel the responsibility of conducting the big event successfully since the festival is taking place amidst the pilgrim public

after two years. "As more pilgrims are being anticipated, every employee should discharge his or her responsibility with more dedication, especially on the most challenging day of 'Garuda Seva' on October 1," he maintained. JEOS Sada Bhargavi, Veerabrahmam, and CVSO Narasimha Kishore were also present. CEO of SVBC Shanmukh Kumar, CE Nageswara Rao, SE 2 Jagadeeshwar Reddy and Deputy EOs, heads of other departments, and other senior officials of TTD were also present.



Jagan's political tours from Jan

SAMBASIVA RAO M
■ AMARAVATI

After the conclusion of the ongoing 'Gadapa Gadapaku' programme, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is planning to intensify his political visits across the State, most probably in the New Year.

At present, the YSRCP is focusing on 'Gadapa Gadapaku', which is a blend of both administrative and political programmes. Local MLAs and party in charges have been visiting houses in their respective Assembly constituencies to create awareness on welfare programmes being implemented by the government.

Revealing the strategy of the YSRCP for the ensuing general elections, which are one and a half years ahead, a minister said, "At present, we



have instructions to work hard at the Assembly constituency level to create awareness among the public on welfare schemes of the government besides explaining how much money that individual families have been benefiting through 'Navaratnalu'."

Another leader of the ruling party said, "As the 'Gadapaka Gadapaku' programme is in progress, the Chief Minister has been waiting to take an active part in the public programmes. Most probably, this programme will

conclude by the end of December. After that, he would start his political tours. By then, we will be in almost an election mood in the State. Meanwhile, the Chief Minister has been focussing on strengthening the ground-level cadre."

It may be worth mentioning that the Chief Minister has been getting reports from various sources on the performance of the leaders at the ground level.

Firstly, performance is reported by the I-PAC, secondly by the party offices and thirdly it is gauged from official data on government programmes – Village and Ward Secretariat reports on 'Gadapa Gadapaku'. Fourthly, YSRCP president Jagan Mohan Reddy has been also getting a random survey report, from an external agency on the performance of the leaders.

Chit fund company chairman arrested for cheating subscriber

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Hanamkonda police on Saturday arrested a chit fund company chairman for allegedly failing to pay even after completion of the subscription period. The police registered a case based on a complaint filed by a retired employee, Porika Jawaharlal. According to Hanamkonda Circle Inspector Ch Srinivas, Jawaharlal had subscribed to a chit in a chit fund

company. The retired employee had deposited Rs 19,75,500 in the company. The company had to pay Rs 76,11,900 to Jawaharlal. But, the chit fund company, identified as Sudahatri Chit Fund Company, had defaulted on payment to the subscriber. The company management subjected the subscriber to difficulties without paying even a single rupee due to the retired employee, the police officer said.

hmda
HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
7th floor, Seema Jagathi Commercial Complex, Ameerpet, Hyderabad
Public Notification U/s. 15 (3) of HMDA Act. 2008
(Govt. memo No: 3426/Pg. 1 (1)12021, dt: 26.08.2022)
The following draft variation to the land use envisaged in the Notified Master Plan MDP- 2031, vide G.O.Ms.No.33, MA & LD., Dept., dt: 24.01.2013 which is proposed in exercise of powers conferred by Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority Act 2006 (Act No.6 of 2006). The site in Sy.No. 48, 50, 425P, 423P, 424P & 425P in Prasannaiah (M), Rangaswamy (M), Rangaswamy (M) District to an extent of 169322.21 Sq.mtrs. (Ac:41.84) which is presently earmarked for Public and Semi public use zone and Buffer use in the notified Master plan for MDP-2031 approved vide G.O.Ms.No.33 MA dt:24.01.2013 is now proposed designated as Residential use zone and subject to compliance of G.O.Ms.No.106 MA dt:06.07.2020. The details of the above are available in Web sites http://gazette.telangana.gov.in/ and http://hmda.gov.in/.
SD/-
DPR No. : 726-PP/CL-AGENCY/MDT/1/2022-23 Director, Planning-1, HMDA

Poll reforms: Naqvi bats for 'one nation, one voter list'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Saturday batted for the 'one nation, one voter list', saying that there is a need for paramount and path-breaking reforms in the electoral process of the country.

The former minority affairs minister was addressing a conference at an event organised here to celebrate the birth anniversary of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) ideologue Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay.

"Different voter lists for elections to Panchayat, Municipal Corporation, Municipality, Vidhan Sabha, Lok Sabha and other elections not only create confusion but also raise questions on the credibility of the voter lists. 'one nation, one voter list' and 'one nation, one voter card' can help to solve this problem," he said.

Naqvi said many significant electoral reforms took place in



the year 2000 during the tenure of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee including the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), ban on contesting from more than two places, limit on election expenditure and putting curb on criminalisation in the politics.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also initiated various crucial reforms in the electoral process. The Modi

Government has brought 'electoral bonds' to curb the use of black money by political parties, candidates in elections and to ensure financial transparency in the electoral process," he said.

"The other electoral reforms introduced by Modi also include easy and accessible procedures for voters, expansion of voter ID cards, legal restrictions on money and muscle power, formulating

guidelines for non-serious candidates and political parties and the appeal for 'one nation, one election'," the BJP leader added.

He called Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay an "institution of political purity and probity", terming his principle and ideology an essential and effective lesson for electoral reforms.

Cautioning the people about money and muscle power in electoral politics, the leader said Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Ji had said "vote for a person, not for his purse; vote for a party, not for a person; vote for ideology, not for a party".

Deendayal Ji had also cautioned against opportunism which has nowadays become a 'prevailing political practice', he said.

Naqvi said elections are a festival of democracy, adding that people's faith and enthusiasm towards elections strengthen democratic values in India, the largest democracy of the world.

Both kidneys of Bihar woman 'removed' by nursing home

PNS ■ PATNA/MUZAFFARPUR

The Bihar Police has formed three special teams to nab the owner of a private nursing home and a doctor for allegedly removing both the kidneys of a woman in Muzaffarpur district, an official said on Saturday.

The victim, Sunita Devi - a mother of three children, has been on dialysis at the ICU of Patna's Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences (IGIMS) since September 15.

Police said both of her kidneys were allegedly removed at Shubhkant Clinic, an unauthorised nursing home in Bariarpur area of Muzaffarpur, where she underwent a uterus-removal surgery on September 3. However, doctors at state-run IGIMS said that more tests are needed to confirm whether both of her kidneys are missing. "Following the uterus-removal surgery, she continued to suffer from stomach pain. She finally went to the Sri Krishna Medical College and Hospital (SKMCH) on September 7.

Three leaders of criminal syndicates arrested

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) said on Saturday that three leaders of criminal syndicates were arrested for hatching conspiracies to commit terrorist acts in Delhi and other parts of the country.

Neeraj Sehrawat alias 'Neeraj Bawana' of Delhi, Kaushal alias 'Nareesh Choudhary' of Gurugram, Haryana, and Bhupinder Singh alias 'Bhupi Rana' of Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar in Punjab were arrested on Friday, a spokesperson of the NIA said.

The official said the case relates to involvement of criminal gangs in different kinds of criminal activities, including killings, to terrorise the people to extort money for running and promoting their criminal syndicates and activities.

"These gangs were also raising funds to carry out such criminal activities through smuggling of drugs and weapons, the spokesperson said.



"These gangs were also raising funds to carry out such criminal activities through smuggling of drugs and weapons," the spokesperson said.

The NIA said the case was initially registered by the Delhi Police Special Cell on August 7 against eight accused and other unidentified persons following inputs that members

of a criminal syndicate or gangs based in India and abroad had hatched a conspiracy to carry out terrorist acts in Delhi and other parts of the country.

Shah: Centre giving top priority to strengthen border infrastructure

PNS ■ KISHANGANJ (BIHAR)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday asserted that the Narendra Modi government gives top priority to strengthen the country's borders, a reason why expenditure on infrastructure development in these areas has gone up considerably under the current regime.

Addressing personnel of the Sasrastra Seema Bal at the Fatehpur outpost, falling in Bihar's Kishanganj district along the border with Nepal, Shah also underscored the Centre's sensitivity towards welfare needs of those manning the country's international boundaries.

"Between 2008 and 2014, annually around Rs 4,000 crore were spent on border infrastructure projects. This subsequently climbed to nearly Rs 6,000 crore per year, he said



after inaugurating buildings of Fatehpur, Raniganj, Aamgachhi, Pekatola and Beria outposts.

The total money spent on border infrastructure projects under the NDA rule at the Centre has been Rs 44,600 crore, he said.

This has led to a 3.5 times increase in the total length of border roads, Shah told the gathering.

"Our personnel on the borders also chip in with their expertise in times of national calamities and law and order

situations. The government realises this and has been working to provide them and their families with better facilities, Shah said.

To a casual observer it may appear that the SSB has an easy job, having to guard borders with friendly countries like Nepal and Bhutan, he said.

But we know challenges faced by you are no less daunting since patrolling an unfenced area is tricky. Your rapport and goodwill among the local population plays a very important role," observed the home minister.

He mentioned that SSB jawans took part in Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan with enthusiasm, and distributed 10 lakh tricolours among citizens.

Every household you visited with the national flag, ended up developing a rishta (bond) with the security forces, Shah added.

Indian-origin home Secy Suella Braverman wins first Queen award

PNS ■ LONDON

Britain's Indian-origin Home Secretary Suella Braverman has been named winner of the first-ever Queen Elizabeth II Woman of the Year award at a ceremony in London.

The 42-year-old barrister, who was appointed to the Cabinet earlier this month by British Prime Minister Liz Truss, said it was the honour of her life to take on the new role at the Asian Achievers Awards (AAA) 2022 ceremony, dedicated to the memory of the late monarch who passed away recently.

Braverman, the London-born daughter of Tamil mother Uma and Goan-origin father Christie Fernandes, sent a recorded message to the ceremony where her parents collected the award on her behalf.

The awards, now in their 20th year, recognise the



achievements of individuals from across Britain's South Asian community via public nominations.

Other Indian-origin winners across the different categories included broadcaster Naga Munchetty in the media category, chairman and CEO of celebrated visual effects firm DNEG Namit Malhotra in the Arts and Culture category, and Captain Harpreet Chandi in the Uniformed and

Civil Service category for her solo expedition across the Antarctic to the South Pole earlier this year.

Professor Sir Shankar Balasubramanian was named Professional of Year for his pioneering DNA sequencing discovery and Karenjeet Kaur Bains won Sports Personality of the Year as the first female Sikh powerlifter to represent Britain on the global stage.

The judging panel was made up of a diverse range of professionals, including Former Deputy Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Bas Javid, former president of the Royal College of General Practitioners Mayur Lakhani, Monzo Bank COO Sujata Bhagia, music producer Bally Sagoo, Welsh Assembly Member Natasha Asghar, and Artistic Director of Darbar Festival, Sandeep Virdee.

'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas' inspired by Gandhian thought

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Narendra Modi government's philosophy of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Prayas' is a Gandhian thought and it rises above "all politics", Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar said on Saturday.

He also described as "a very dangerous trend" the belief among a section of the people that only the philosophy they believed in was right, adding Mahatma Gandhi listened to every point of view.

He was speaking at an event to mark the 90th foundation day of Harijan Sevak Sangh here.

Asserting that all are equal before the law, he said every person, irrespective of his power or history, is bound by the law of the land.

Keeping in mind Gandhi's



principles, 90 crore people were provided with free food grain during two years of Covid. This was beyond any country's imagination, Dhankhar said.

"The Mahatma's soul will be satisfied" as the government ensured two doses of coronavirus vaccine to crores of people during the pandemic, he added.

Dhankhar said it was Gandhi's ideology that 18 crore families were given free cooking gas connections to help them get rid of conventional fuels to prepare food.

Further, he said people who were once scared of entering banks were connected to banking at their doorsteps.

Emphasising that Gandhian ideals permeate into the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of the Constitution, he said that Babu's teachings will remain eternally relevant for humanity.

Army capable of giving befitting reply to any power: Rajnath

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday asserted that the Indian Army has the capability to give a befitting reply to any power looking at the country with evil intentions and when it engages with China now, it does so on an equal footing.

Singh made these remarks at an event to release a five-volume book on Deendayal Upadhyay in the presence of Vice President Jagdeep



Dhankhar.

When China conducted the first nuclear test in 1964, Deendayal Upadhyay was the first one who spoke in favour

of India conducting its nuclear test, Singh said.

When India carried out its first nuclear tests in 1998 in Rajasthan under the leadership of then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the idea was not to use the weapon against any country but to maintain a deterrent, he said.

"Because of that deterrence, the Indian Army today has full confidence of self-defence. Today in 2022, when India's army engages with China, it does so on an equal footing.

SPURT IN DENGUE CASES

Will take several steps soon, school students to be involved

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a spurt in dengue cases in the national capital, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday said a plan has been devised to combat the vector-borne disease.

In coming days, several steps will be taken and school students will be involved in a big way in the efforts made to check the spread of dengue, he



said. The chief minister said this

after holding a meeting with senior officials of the health department, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and other departments.

Delhi has registered a huge spurt in dengue cases in the last couple of weeks, raising the tally of the vector-borne disease to nearly 400 till September 17 this year.

Ukraine conflict aggravates food and energy inflation: EAM

PNS ■ NEW YORK

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday that the conflict in Ukraine has aggravated food and energy inflation to make it one of the biggest challenges of our times.

In his address here on a special India@75' Showcase India-UN Partnership in Action' event, Jaishankar said India today envisions itself as a developed country by 2047, the 100th year of its independence.

The conflict in Ukraine has aggravated food and energy inflation to make it one of the biggest challenges of our times.

India has responded by supplying food grains including as grant assistance in recent years to Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Yemen and several other countries, he said.

We dream of digitizing our most remote villages and landing on the moon. Perhaps even digitizing it.

Video nails 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogan being raised at PFI protest

PNS ■ PUNE

A video has surfaced on social media, which shows that a "Pakistan Zindabad" slogan was allegedly raised during a protest organised by the Popular Front of India (PFI) in Pune, drawing a sharp reaction from the Maharashtra government, which said action would be taken against the slogan shouters.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said such slogans will not be tolerated in the state, while Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who is

also the Home Minister, said those who indulged in this sloganeering will not be spared.

The video shows that the slogan was raised a couple of times when the PFI activists were being bundled into a police vehicle as part of their detention during the protest held on Friday.

The PFI had organised the protest outside the district collector office to denounce the recent nationwide raids on the outfit and the arrest of its activists. During the protest, the police detained around 40 protesters.

The Pune police said they were investigating the matter.

"We have already registered a case against the PFI members for unlawful assembly and we are looking into the slogans matter," said Sagar Patil, Deputy Commissioner of Police.

An offence against more than 60 protesters has been registered at the Bundgarden police station for organising the agitation without permission, for unlawful assembly and for blocking the road, another official said.

In a tweet, CM Shinde condemned the pro-Pakistan slogan raised by "anti-social elements".

"The police machinery will take appropriate action against them. Such slogans will not be tolerated in the land of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj," he said.

Speaking in Nagpur, Fadnavis said, "If anyone raises a 'Pakistan Zindabad' slogan in Maharashtra or in India, then that person will not be spared and action will be taken against them. We will find them out wherever they may be and will take action against them."



Pay enhanced DA to retired staff of Transport dept: HC



The Madras High Court has directed the Tamil Nadu government and the Administrator of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Employees Pension Fund Trust to pay the enhanced dearness allowance to 86,000 retired employees of the State Transport Corporations prospectively

with effect from November this year onwards. When thousands of buses are being operated by the Transport Corporations throughout the State and time and again the government comes forward to give financial assistance of several crore of rupees to bail out their financial condition, yet their pathetic situation has not improved. "This past history and the present situation would clearly disclose that all is not well in the very administration and the functioning of the transport corporations", Justice J Sathya Narayana Prasad observed. The judge gave the direction while disposing of a sub-application arising out of a contempt petition from the State Transport and Transport Corporations Retired Employees Welfare Association, recently.

Woman's name excluded from NRC; SC issues notice



The Supreme Court has sought responses from the Centre and the Assam government on a plea filed by a woman, who was declared a foreigner and her name was excluded from the final National Register of Citizens (NRC), and directed that no

steps be taken for her deportation. A bench of justices D Y Chandrachud and Hima Kohli agreed to hear the plea filed by the woman who has challenged the June 2019 verdict of the Gauhati High Court. The high court had dismissed her petition, thereby affirming the June 2017 order of the Foreigners Tribunal, Bongaigaon, declaring her to be a foreigner who had illegally entered India from Bangladesh after March 25, 1971. Advocate Pijush Kanti Roy, appearing for the woman, told the apex court that all the other members of the petitioner's family were, however, included in the NRC.

‘India is on track to attract US\$ 100 bn FDI this fiscal’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is on track to attract USD 100 billion foreign direct investment (FDI) in the current fiscal on account of economic reforms and ease of doing business, the government said on Saturday.

In 2021-22, the country received the "highest ever" foreign inflows of USD 83.6 billion.

"This FDI has come from 101 countries, and invested across 31 union territories and states and 57 sectors in the country. On the back of economic reforms and Ease of Doing Business in recent years, India is on track to attract USD 100 billion FDI in the current FY (financial year)," the commerce and industry ministry said in a statement. It said that to attract foreign investments, the government has put in place a liberal and transparent policy



The reform measures include liberalization of guidelines and regulations, in order to reduce unnecessary compliance burden, bring down cost and enhance the ease of doing business in India, it added

wherein most sectors are open to FDI under the automatic route. The reform measures include liberalization of guidelines and regulations, in order to reduce unnecessary compliance burden, bring down cost and enhance the ease of doing business in

India, it added.

FDI equity inflows in India dipped by 6 per cent to USD 16.6 billion during April-June period of the current fiscal.

It also said that to address the import of low-quality and hazardous toys and to enhance domestic manufac-

turing of toys, several strategic interventions have been taken by the government.

The import of toys in 2021-22 have reduced by 70 per cent to USD 110 million (Rs 877.8 crore). On the other hand, exports rose by 61 per cent to USD 326 million.

Bank fraud: ED attaches assets of Rajkot company

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday said it has attached the factory plant, machinery, land and plots of a Rajkot-based company as part of a money laundering investigation against it for alleged bank loan fraud to the tune of Rs 44 crore.

The provisionally attached assets of the company called Mandeep Industries are worth Rs 16 crore, the agency said in a statement.

The attachment order has been issued under sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The money laundering case stems from a CBI FIR against the company and the complaint alleged it 'defaulted in repaying loans to the Union Bank of India causing an undue loss to the tune of Rs 44.64 crore to the bank.' The company was availing loan facilities from Union Bank of India and 'diverted' the funds to various fictitious entities, and also to the personal accounts of the partners of the firm, it said.

Solution to multilateralism is reformed multilateralism

PNS ■ NEW YORK

The solution to globalisation is decentralisation and the solution to multilateralism is reformed multilateralism, not a 1945-version of multilateralism, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

Speaking at an event titled 'The G20 Imperative: Green Growth and Development for All' organised by the Observer Research Foundation here on Friday, Jaishankar said the two worlds under attack currently are globalisation and multilateralism.

I don't think there's anything wrong with either of them. What is challengeable is how they have been implemented. Has multilateralism failed us? I will say this form of multilateralism in the hands of these people perhaps has not delivered," he said.

Jaishankar was in conversation with UK's Minister of State for Development, Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO),



people still believe in the UN, coming here, sitting together, working it out, finding a system, he said.

What is wrong is the narrowness in the thinking of the custodians of the system. And I would argue the same applies to globalisation. The real problem with globalisation is it was so centralised," he said.

"The solution to globalisation is decentralisation. Decentralised globalisation. I would argue the solution to multilateralism is reformed multilateralism, not a 1945 version of multilateralism which is 75-80 years old, he said in a reference to the UN established over seven decades ago.

I think between the conflicts, to COVID, climate change, my sense is we are reaching a kind of a crisis period where the world will have to take some very radical decisions. Whether they get taken in the G20 or outside the G20, in bits and pieces next year, all that we don't know.

BPCL signs pact with Brazil's Petrobras to diversify crude oil sourcing

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) on Saturday said it has signed an agreement with Brazilian national oil company Petrobras for sourcing crude oil from the Latin American nation as part of plans to diversify its sourcing needs.

BPCL imports a large volume of crude oil which is turned into fuel such as petrol and diesel at its three oil refineries at Mumbai, Bina in Madhya Pradesh and Kochi in Kerala.

The firm, which gets majority of its supplies from west Asian nations such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia, is looking to diversify its sources of supply in an attempt to cut down reliance on any particular region. Company chairman and managing director Arun Kumar Singh and Petrobras CEO Caio Paes de Andrade signed a memorandum of



understanding (MoU) in Brazil, BPCL said in a statement.

"The signing of the MoU will strengthen future crude oil trade relations between the two companies and explore potential crude import opportunities by BPCL, on a long term basis, especially considering the current geopolitical situations," it said. Speaking on the development, Singh said the association with Petrobras will help in achieving the goal of energy security for the country.

The recent approval by the Union Cabinet to invest in Brazil will help diversify India's crude oil supply.

"Strengthening India's foothold in Brazil will further open business avenues in neighbouring Latin American countries," he said.

Bharat PetroResources Limited (BPRL), the upstream oil and gas exploration and production subsidiary of BPCL, plans to invest USD 1.6 billion to develop an oil block in Brazil.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goel meets Singapore's senior minister

PNS ■ SINGAPORE

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday met Singapore's Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam and discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation across several areas of mutual interest.

Goel also had an interaction with CEOs & Investors at the Business Roundtable in Singapore and invited them to participate in India's growth story and benefit from the multitude of opportunities.

"Met @Tharman_S, Singapore Senior Minister & Coordinating Minister for Social Policies. Discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation across several areas of mutual interest," Goel tweeted.

"Held an engaging interaction with CEOs & Investors at the Business Roundtable in

Singapore. (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi Govt. has brought about a sea change in India's investment ecosystem. Invited them to participate in India's growth story and benefit from the multitude of opportunities.

Goel also met and addressed the Indian community in Singapore. He thanked them for holding India's flag high.

"Even if India was to grow at a normal pace... on its very own, India will grow to be 30 trillion dollar economy by 2047 when we celebrate 100 years of Independence," he told the Indian community.

He also said, "all of this is possible only because you and I want this to happen."

Nearly 120 Indian business leaders and diaspora attended the community event hosted for Goel by the Indian High Commission in Singapore on Saturday.

Apeejay group partners with Bengal govt agency to operate hotel

PNS ■ DIGHA

Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Ltd has entered into an agreement with a West Bengal government agency to operate a hotel in the International Convention Centre in the state's popular sea resort Digha, officials said.

The agreement was signed between the hospitality major and the Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA) in the presence of Digha Sankarpur Development Authority (DSDA) officials, they said.

A KMDA official told reporters here that the agreement was "signed a week back in Kolkata" in the presence of West Bengal Municipal Affairs Minister Firhad Hakim and senior officials of the development agencies.

MONEY MATTERS

Meesho records 80 % jump in sale with 88 lakh orders



Softbank-backed e-commerce firm Meesho on Saturday said it registered around 80 per cent jump in the business with close to 87.6 lakh orders on Friday, the first day of its five-day festive

season sale. Tier 2, 3 and 4 cities accounted for around 85 per cent of orders on day one, the company said in a statement. "Meesho clocked a record around 87.6 lakh orders on the first day of its flagship festive sale event the Meesho Mega Blockbuster Sale. This is the highest number of orders recorded by the company in a single day up about 80 per cent from day one of previous year's sale," the statement said. The company said that it has received orders from deep corners of the country such as Jamnagar, Alappuzha, Chhindwara, Davenegere, Hassan, Gopalganj, Guwahati, Siwan, Thanjavur and Ambikapur. "With a wide assortment of around 6.5 crore active product listings at lowest prices, the sale exemplifies Meesho's mission towards democratising e-commerce for everyone," it said. Fashion, beauty & personal care, home & kitchen, and electronic accessories were the top-selling categories on day one, while consumers bought everything from sarees to analog watches, jewellery sets, mobile cases and covers, bluetooth headphones, choppers and peelers in record volumes to fulfil their festive shopping aspirations, the company said.

Logiy Spaces, AA Holdings to invest US\$ 37 million in Karnataka



Industrial and logistic park developer Logiy Spaces has tied up with AA Holdings to build a new project at Narasapura, Karnataka with an investment of USD 37 million (around Rs 300 crore). In a statement, AA Holdings, which has

recently been formed by Abhijit Verma, said it has formed a joint venture with Logiy Spaces to invest USD 37 million for the development of 1 million square feet of industrial and logistics park. The project is scheduled for completion by September 2023. "In our endeavour to enable local landlords and aggregators to become successful micro entrepreneurs and fulfil the need for quality commercial spaces in the country, we floated AA Holdings to provide them the right guidance and mentorship," said Verma, the MD and CEO of AA Holdings. "We will be developing 1 million square feet of industrial and logistics park in the suburbs of Karnataka at an investment outlay of USD 37 million. This project will be executed in a joint venture with Logiy Spaces," he added. Narasapura is one of the biggest industrial regions in Karnataka, under the district jurisdiction of Kolar and is well connected to notable cities and highways of Kolar, Malur, Hoskote, Bangalore, Chennai, Chittoor and NH 4 among others.

Amazon India customer base jumps 2-fold

E-commerce firm Amazon India on Saturday said it has recorded a two-fold jump in its customer base from tier 2 and 3 cities during the first 36 hours of its festive season sale. Tier 2 and 3 cities accounted for 75 per cent of the total customer base of the e-commerce major during its 'Great Indian Festival' sale, an Amazon India spokesperson told PTI. "75 per cent of the customers came from tier 2 and tier 3 cities. We saw 2 times more customers from Tier 2 and 3 cities compared to last year," the spokesperson said. The festive season sale of the company started from September 23 and will end before Diwali next month. The company gave 24 hours early access to Prime members.

REITs can raise short-term debt at lower cost: Industry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi's decision to allow Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) to issue commercial papers will help in raising short-term debt at a lower interest cost, according to real estate industry experts. REIT, a popular instrument globally, was introduced in India a few years ago to attract investment in the real estate sector by monetising rent-yielding assets. It helps unlock the massive value of real estate assets and enable retail participation. At present, there are three listed REITs -- Embassy Office Parks REIT, Mindspace Business Parks REIT and Brookfield India Real Estate Trust -- on Indian stock exchanges, but all these are of leased office assets.

On Thursday, Sebi allowed emerging investment vehicles, REIT, and Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT), to issue commercial papers, subject to certain conditions.

Byju's clears US\$ 230 million dues to Blackstone for Aakash acquisition

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Edtech firm Byju's has cleared USD 230 million payment that was due to private equity investment firm Blackstone for acquiring a majority stake in test preparatory firm Aakash Educational Services, according to sources privy to the development.

Byju's had acquired Aakash in April for around USD 950 million. "Byju's paid USD 230 million to Blackstone for acquiring a stake in Aakash," the source told PTI. While it cleared payments that were due to the founder of Aakash in July, the payment of Blackstone was deferred based on a mutual agreement.

Founders of Aakash and Blackstone continue to hold a minority stake in the firm.

Acquisition of Aakash has been positive for Byju's business. Payment to Blackstone and non-closure of USD 800 million funding round due to



non-payment of committed investment from Sumeru Ventures and Oxshott have been two main issues that raised questions on Byju's business performance.

Byju's co-founder and CEO Byju Raveendran at the time of announcing the result had said that the contractual commitment of the two investment firms is still there, but the fund has not come and these entities have not made any investment in the last six months.

Byju's booked a loss of Rs 4,588 crore for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021, 19

times more than the preceding fiscal.

The losses in the 2020-21 fiscal widened from Rs 231.69 crore in 2019-20. Revenues during FY21 dropped to Rs 2,428 crore from Rs 2,511 crore in FY20. But in the following fiscal, ending March 31, 2022, the company said revenue soared four-fold to Rs 10,000 crore but it did not reveal profit or loss numbers for that year.

Byju's said the losses widened in FY21 mainly on account of deferment of some revenue and losses incurred from WhiteHat Jr.

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

Business leaders must use qualities of heart

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Artificial intelligence may supplement the way people use their heads, but it will never take the place of essential leadership qualities of the heart such as empathy, passion, courage, values, intuition, and purpose, says a new book on leadership.

Leadership expert Bill George and tech entrepreneur Zach Clayton's book "True North: Leading Authentically in the 21st Century" (Emerging Leader Edition) explores the themes of human connection, leadership, values, and identity through an entrepreneurial lens.

The authors say the book, published by Wiley, has been designed with the purpose of

describing leadership principles they have learned during their careers.

"While artificial intelligence will supplement the way we use our heads, it will never take the place of essential leadership qualities of the heart such as empathy, passion, courage, values, intuition, and purpose. As leaders we must develop our hearts to grapple with complex challenges and dilemmas," they write.

The stories in the book come from 50 interviews with exceptional leaders and illustrate that most authentic leaders first discovered their 'True North' through their life stories and crucibles, developed self-awareness, and then found their

Leadership expert Bill George and tech entrepreneur Zach Clayton's book "True North: Leading Authentically in the 21st Century" (Emerging Leader Edition) explores the themes of human connection, leadership, values, and identity through an entrepreneurial lens.

'North Star' - the purpose of their leadership.

The authors say their book is not an analysis of the many crises in the first two decades of the 21st century or the leaders who caused them.

"Rather, this is a calling to you as emerging leaders of the next

generations - Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z - to step up and lead authentically by discovering your True North and following your North Star to make this world a better place," they write. The book features numerous stories of emerging leaders who are already making

a difference like Kabir Barday, Abby Falik, Tracy Britt Cool, and Rye Barcott, along with pioneers from the Baby Boomer generation, like Indra Nooyi, Ken Frazier, Mary Barra, Satya Nadella, Ursula Burns, John Donahoe, and Chip Bergh.

The authors say they wrote this book to enable people to realise their full potential as an authentic leader who has a positive impact on others through their life and work.

"This book will challenge you to reflect on your leadership, your humanity, your values, and your purpose in life," they say. So what are True North and North Star? "Your True North is the moral compass that guides your actions, derived from your

most deeply held beliefs, your values, and the principles you lead by. It is your internal compass, unique to you, that represents who you are at your deepest level. Just as a compass points toward a magnetic pole, your True North points toward your North Star. Your North Star is the purpose that you pursue to make this world better for everyone," the book says.

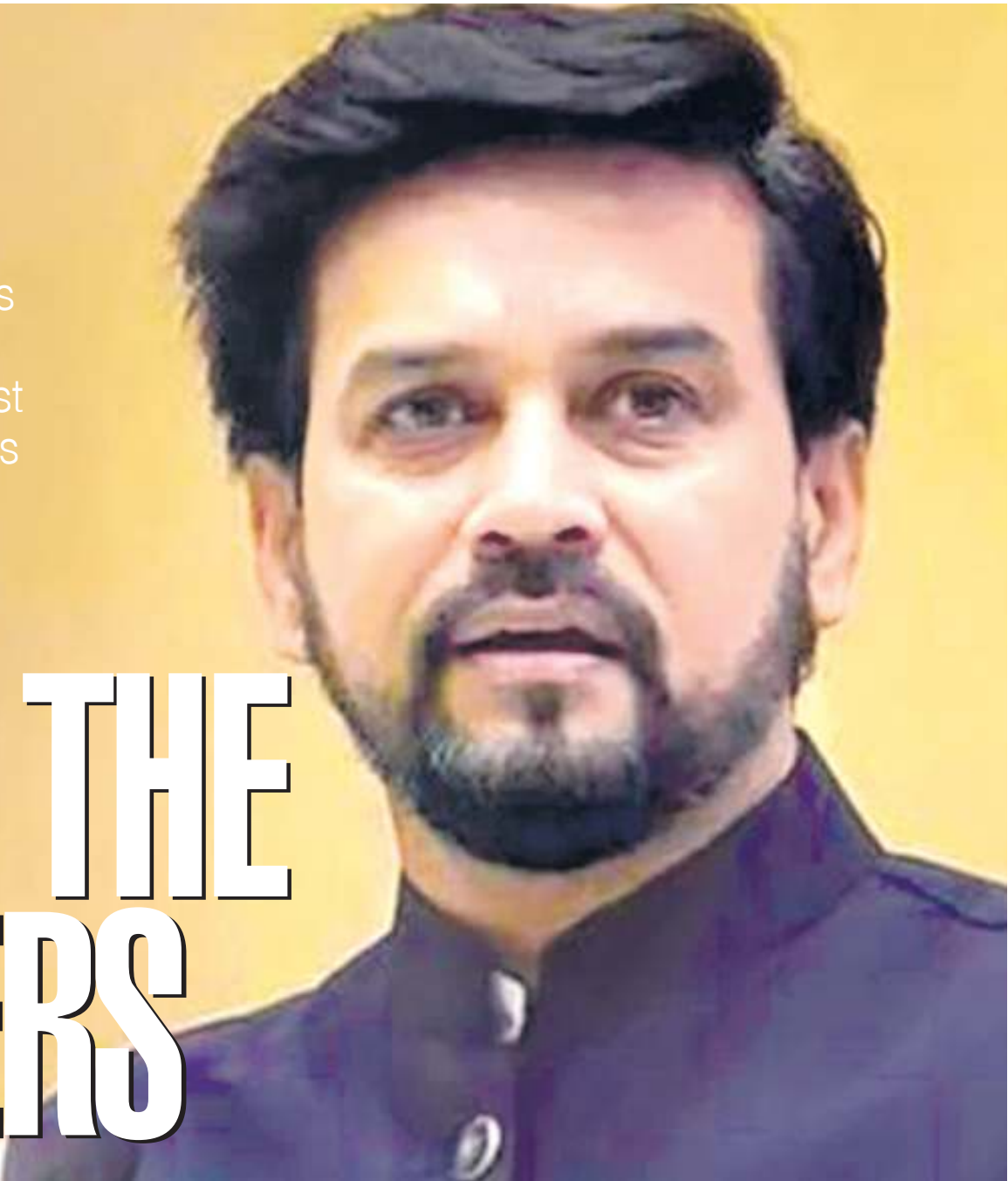
According to the authors, authentic leaders are characterised by truth-telling, transparency, and trust. "By developing these three qualities - telling the whole truth, being fully transparent, and building trust with all your stakeholders - you gain credibility as an authentic leader."

“Life is tough; and if you have the ability to laugh at it, you have the ability to enjoy it.”
—Salma Hayek



Notwithstanding, the red flag raised by Minister Anurag Thakur and judges of the Supreme Court, TV debates continue to focus on polarizing topics. In many cases, the language and expression of the guests and anchors are both inflammatory and offensive. The media has played little heed to such counsel for sobriety in the past as well. In its blind pursuit of TRP sometimes it becomes a real source of threat to peace and harmony of the country, writes NAVIN UPADHYAY

TIME TO TAME THE RABBLE ROUSERS



The cat is out of the bag. Or it was always out in the open but everyone pretended to look the other way, till its low growl turned into a high-pitched roar and its threat menacing and imminent. No offenses to the canines, though; we are referring to the big cats of the TV screens.

Two back-to-back whistleblowing—first by Union Information and Broadcasting minister Anurag Thakur, and second by the Supreme Court of India—underline the threat posed by the TV anchors, to both the mainstream media itself and the peace and harmony of the country.

Notwithstanding, the red flag raised by the Thakur and judges of the Supreme Court, the TV debates continue to focus on polarizing topics. In many cases, the language and expression of the guests and anchors are both inflammatory and offensive. The media has played little heed to such counsel for sobriety in the past as well. In its blind pursuit of TRP sometimes it becomes a real source of threat to peace and harmony of the country.

Not for nothing, speaking at the 7th Annual Gathering and 20th Meeting of Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD), Thakur focused his speech on the threat posed by such dangerous debates.

Speaking on the occasion Thakur has said that the biggest threat to mainstream media is not from new age digital platforms but from the mainstream media channel itself.

The minister said inviting guests who are polarizing, who spread false narratives and who shout at the top of their lungs damages the credibility of a channel. “Your decisions regarding the guest, the tone, and visuals - define your credibility in the eyes of the audience. The view may stop for a minute to watch your show, but will never trust your anchor, your channel or brand as a trusted and transparent source of news”, he added.

Turning to the audience, the Minister asked “Are you going to watch as the younger audience switches and sweeps through the shrill on TV news or are you going to bring back the Neutrality in NEWS and Discussion in DEBATES to stay ahead of the game?”

A day later, on September 21, the Supreme court expressed serious concern at the hate speeches in the media and hinted that it might put in some regulations/guidelines to check the menace.

Upset that the Government has done nothing to curb the propagation of hate speeches in the media, the Court asked the Government of India “why it is standing as a mute witness when all this is happening”.

A bench of Justices KM Joseph and Hrishikesh Roy was hearing a batch of writ petitions seeking the Court’s intervention to regulate hate speech.

“What are the provisions of law which relates to Hate Speech in India?”, Justice Joseph asked when the hearing started.

This is the crux of the matter. Hate speech is not defined under any law, though there are

specific provisions to check them.

In its report submitted to then I@B minister Ravishanker Prasad in March 2017, the Law Commission of India underlined the following legislation to deal with hate speech.

(i) *the Indian Penal Code, 1860* (hereinafter IPC)

- Section 124A IPC penalises seditious
- Section 153A IPC penalises ‘promotion of enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony’.
- Section 153B IPC penalises ‘imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration.
- Section 295A IPC penalises ‘deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs’.
- Section 298 IPC penalises ‘uttering, words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound the religious feelings of any person.
- Section 505(1) and (2) IPC penalises publication or circulation of any statement, rumour or report causing public mischief and enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes.

(ii) *the Representation of The People Act, 1951*

- Section 8 disqualifies a person from contesting an election if he is convicted of indulging in acts amounting to the illegitimate use of freedom of speech and expression.
- Section 123(3A) and section 125 prohibit the promotion of enmity on grounds of religion, race, caste, community, or language in connection with an election as a corrupt electoral practice and prohibits it.

(iii) *the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955*

- Section 7 penalises incitement to, and encouragement of untouchability through words, either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representations or otherwise

(iv) *the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1988*

- Section 3(g) prohibits religious institution or its manager to allow the use of any premises belonging to, or under the control of, the institution for promoting or attempting to promote disharmony, feelings of enmity, hatred, ill-will between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.

(v) *the Cable Television Network Regulation Act, 1995*

- Sections 5 and 6 of the Act prohibit transmission or re-transmission of a programme through cable network in contravention to the prescribed programme code or advertisement code. These codes have been defined in rules 6 and 7 respectively of the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994.

(vi) *the Cinematograph Act, 1952*



COMMENTING ON THE ROLE OF THE ANCHORS IN PROPAGATING HATE SPEECH, JUSTICE JOSEPH SAID - “THE ROLE OF THE ANCHOR IS VERY IMPORTANT. HATE SPEECH EITHER TAKES PLACE ON MAINSTREAM TELEVISION OR IT TAKES PLACE IN SOCIAL MEDIA. SOCIAL MEDIA IS LARGELY UNREGULATED....AS FAR AS MAINSTREAM TELEVISION CHANNEL IS CONCERNED, WE STILL HOLD SWAY, THERE THE ROLE OF THE ANCHOR IS VERY CRITICAL BECAUSE THE MOMENT YOU SEE SOMEBODY GOING INTO HATE SPEECH, IT’S THE DUTY OF THE ANCHOR TO IMMEDIATELY SEE THAT HE DOESN’T ALLOW THAT PERSON TO SAY ANYTHING FURTHER. UNFORTUNATELY, MANY TIMES SOMEBODY WANTS TO SAY SOMETHING HE IS MUTED, A PERSON IS NOT GIVEN PROPER TIME, HE IS NOT EVEN TREATED COURTEOUSLY”



- Sections 4, 5B, and 7 empower the Board of Film Certification to prohibit and regulate the screening of a film.

(vii) *the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973*

- Section 95 empowers the State Government, to forfeit publications that are punishable under sections 124A, 153A, 153B, 292, 293 or 295A IPC.
- Section 107 empowers the Executive Magistrate to prevent a person from committing a breach of the peace or disturbing the public tranquility or to do any wrongful act that may probably cause breach of the peace or disturb the public and tranquility.
- Section 144 empowers the District Magistrate, a Sub-divisional Magistrate or any other Executive Magistrate specially empowered by the State Government on this behalf to issue an order in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger. The above offences are cognizable and thus have serious repercussions on the liberties of citizens and empower a police officer to arrest without orders from a magistrate and a warrant as in section 155 CrPC.

The commission suggested amendment to the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 by adding new provisions on ‘Prohibiting incitement to hatred’ following section 153B IPC and ‘Causing fear, alarm, or provocation of violence in certain cases’ following section 505 IPC, and accordingly amending the First Schedule of the CrPC.

The commission in its report said that hate speech has always been a live debate in India and the issue has been raised time and again before the legislature, the court as well as the public. In *Pravasi Bhalai Sangathan v. Union of India*, the Supreme Court dealt with a case where the petitioners prayed that the State should take peremptory action against makers of hate speech, the Commission said, and added, the Court did not go beyond the purview of existing laws to penalise hate speech as that would amount to ‘judicial overreach’.

“The Court observed that the implementation of existing laws would solve the problem of hate speech to a great extent. The matter was referred to the Law Commission to examine if it ‘deems proper to define hate speech and make recommendations to the Parliament to strengthen the Election Commission to curb the menace of “hate speeches” irrespective of, whenever made’, the commission said.

Justice Joseph suggested that the government should come forward to put in place an institution to check hate speech. The court also asked the Government to clarify whether it proposes to act on recommendations of the Law Commission of India regarding amendments to deal with hate crimes.

The Centre told the court that only 14 states have given their response to the Law commission’s recommendation. The Sc

directed the remaining states to immediately file their replies and asked Senior Advocate Sanjay Hegde to collate the responses of the States.

Commenting on the role of the anchors in propagating hate speech, Justice Joseph said - “The role of the anchor is very important. Hate speech either takes place on mainstream television or it takes place in social media. Social Media is largely unregulated....As far as mainstream television channel is concerned, we still hold sway, there the role of the anchor is very critical because the moment you see somebody going into hate speech, it’s the duty of the anchor to immediately see that he doesn’t allow that person to say anything further. Unfortunately, many times somebody wants to say something he is muted, a person is not given proper time, he is not even treated courteously”.

Justice Joseph went on to add: Freedom of expression of the press, we don’t have it separately unlike the US....there should be free debate no doubt about it but, you should also know where to draw the line because there is a huge influence, particularly with the visual media....they produce a very serious effect on your brain. Freedom is for the listener. The freedom of speech is actually for the benefit of the listener. How would the listener ever make up his mind after listening to a debate where it is just a babble of voice, you cannot even make out what is happening.”

When Senior Advocate Sanjay Hegde stated that, “the industry is unregulated and there are no sanctions” one of the petitioners Ashwini Upadhyay countered, “Until hate speech is defined this will go on.”

Asserting that hate speech poisons the very fabric, and can’t be permitted, Justice Joseph said, “Political parties will come and go but the nation will endure the institution including press it is the important part, without an independent press no country can go forward, it is important that we have true freedom, there”, Justice Joseph said.

“Stressing the need for a regulatory mechanism, Justice Joseph continued: “The problem is we don’t have a regulatory mechanism for TV. I believe that all channels were fined heavily in England. We don’t have that system here. Law means sanction, sanctions must be effected...the problem is that they are not being dealt with firmly. If sanctions are effected this will go... Any anchor will have his views, any anchor will not diverge from the view the channel is taking, they will all be intertwined, you can’t divulge from it, but what is wrong is when you have people of different views you are calling them and you are not allowing them to express those views....in doing that you are bringing hate and your TRP is going up and you are driven by that and nobody is going to look into it and take care of it then it is very sad”.

(The writer is Executive Editor, The Pioneer)

DECODE 'THOSE' GENES

In a healthy person, BRCA1 (BRest CAncer gene 1) and BRCA2 (BRest CAncer gene 2) are genes that produce proteins that help repair damaged cells. But when these genes carry mutations, they are responsible for higher risk of breast, ovarian and uterine cancers. At least, five to ten per cent of all cancer cases are estimated to be hereditary. Oncologists tell THE HEALTH PIONEER how the new tool, Genetic Testing, can be used in high-risk hereditary patients, to help them opt for risk reduction surgeries as a preventive measure, screening and, regular follow-up.

DR SVS DEO

Head of Surgical Oncology at AIIMS,
Delhi and National Cancer Institute, Jhajjar, Haryana



LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT THESE CANCERS AMONG PUBLIC, LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF GENETIC COUNSELLING AND TESTING SERVICES, THESE SERVICES ARE MAJOR ROADBLOCKS

People having a family history of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, and cervical cancer can undergo this test to know the risk factor. If the test shows 60-80 per cent risk factor for cancer, then preventive medical care could be started immediately. Available at AIIMS, these simple and affordable genetic tests can detect genetic defects in time. At AIIMS, Delhi we have already conducted 30 risk reduction surgeries in the last few years on patients who were found to be carrying a cancer-causing gene.

Under risk-reducing surgery, a cancer surgeon removes the breasts at risk of cancer and can simultaneously perform breast reconstructive surgery to create new breasts. None of the patients developed breast cancer or ovarian cancer after risk reducing surgery. Similarly, women with genetic defects can undergo removal of both the ovaries along with Fallopian tubes after birth. This method is 95 % successful in prevention of cancer.

At present, Genetic testing in government settings is only being offered at AIIMS, New Delhi, and at Tata Memorial, Mumbai, at a cost of Rs 15,000 per test.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in India : a 40 % increase in breast cancer cases has been wit

nessed over the last 20 years. As many as 1.5 lakh new breast cancer cases are diagnosed in India every year.

Lack of awareness about these cancers among doctors and the general public, limited availability of genetic counselling and testing services, and reluctance to avail these services are major roadblocks to preventive health care in cancer treatment.

DR SUSHMA BHATNAGAR

Chief IRCH and National Cancer Institute (NCI) AIIMS,
Jhajjar, Haryana



As this is a relatively new and fast emerging field in oncology, the draft guidelines will also have various modules focussing on increasing awareness among doctors, patients and the public.

Women with hereditary gynecological cancers are more worried about the fate of their babies in future. If yes, what they should do. At our Jhajjar institute we already have a dedicated infrastructure and a dedicated team of experts and researchers to work in this area as pre-test counselling and post-test counselling are very important.

Within a year or two, we will be ready with a detailed educational draft guideline to help the family members, including sisters and daughters of the patient know about the genetic testing, their risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer and whether they should or not go for this test.

FACT FILE

- The genetic factor can raise the breast cancer risk from 4 per cent to 80 per cent and ovarian cancer risk from 1 per cent to 40 per cent.
- On an average, 20% ovarian cancers, 4 to 5% breast cancers and 3 to 5% uterine cancers can be prevented through genetic testing.
- On an average, four in 100 women in a given population get breast cancer, while one in 100 gets ovarian and uterine cancers.

DR NEERJA BHATLA

Professor & Head, Obst & Gynaec & WHO CCR, AIIMS,
Delhi. Head, Gynae Oncology NCI, Jhajjar, AIIMS



Genetic testing aids by revealing the normal organ of the patient after the genetic tests reveal the organ is at high risk of malignancy. These tools may also help the patients learn how to manage their risks with personalized cancer screening, and identify preventive steps that they can take to reduce the cancer risk. For those expecting a baby, can look for oncofertility.

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DR VAISHALI SHARMA

Senior Gynaecologist, Laparoscopic Surgeon and Infertility Specialist



In the family, we do a PGD (Pre-implantation Genetic Diagnosis) test in the embryo before transferring it inside the woman's womb. In cases

Genetic Tests is usually helpful in cases of couples with recurrent miscarriages, family history of any genetic diseases, or when woman's age is more than 40 years. There are many types of genetic tests ranging from basic karyotype to detailed whole exom microarray. When only a number of chromosomes or any major genetic abnormalities are suspected, then we do karyotype. In cases where we are looking for any specific genetic disease localised to specific gene on any chromosome, we go ahead with detailed genetic tests like Microarray.

In cases where there is a known genetic disease in

GENETIC TESTS IS MOSTLY HELPFUL IN CASES OF COUPLES WITH RECURRENT MISCARRIAGES, FAMILY HISTORY OF GENETIC DISEASES, OR WOMAN IS ABOVE 40 YEARS.

where there is a higher risk of genetic diseases due to the woman's age or history of previous pregnancies with genetic disease like Down's Syndrome, we do PGS (Preimplantation Genetic Screening) test.

DR RANJIT MANCHANDA

Consultant Gynaecological Oncologist at Barts Health NHS Trust, and Clinical Senior Lecturer at Queen Mary University of London



Technology to undertake gene testing on a large scale is now available and needs to be used more for cancer prevention. Identification of women harboring genetic mutations that cause cancer, not only allows their optimum treatment with newly available drugs, but also helps identify unaffected at-risk relatives who can then access screening and preventive strategies.

Ovarian cancer (OC), breast cancer (BC), endometrial cancer (EC) and colorectal cancer (CRC) account for approximately 50% of cancers in women.

There are several effective preventive therapy options like risk-reducing surgery (mastectomy, risk-reducing salpingo-oophorectomy (RRSO) or hysterectomy), chemoprevention (e.g. aspirin or selective estrogen receptor modulators) and screening for women at high risk of breast cancer or CRC to reduce these CSG carrier-associated cancer risks.

In fact, changing the paradigm to population testing can address the limitations in the current clinical genetic testing model for CSGs across healthcare systems. It also provides a forward-looking strategy to maximise precision prevention.

Precision prevention encompasses a prevention strategy that incorporates individual variation in genetic, epigenetic and non-genetic (environmental, hormonal, reproductive and lifestyle) factors.

Genetic tests are available for cancers like:
Breast cancer/Ovarian cancer/Colon cancer/Thyroid cancer/Prostate cancer/ Pancreatic cancer/ Melanoma/ Sarcoma/ Kidney cancer/ Stomach cancer

PROS AND CONS OF GENETIC TESTING

PROS

- A sense of relief from uncertainty.
- In-depth knowledge about one's cancer risk.
- Awareness to help make informed medical and lifestyle decisions.
- Opportunity to help educate other family members about potential risk.

CONS

- Testing may increase anxiety and stress for some individuals.
- Testing does not evaluate a person's risk for sporadic cancers.
- Results in some cases may turn out to be inconclusive or uncertain.

DR RAJIV SARIN

Professor of Radiation Oncology & In-Charge Cancer Genetics Unit at Tata Memorial Hospital & Advanced Centre for Treatment Research & Education in Cancer (ACTREC), Mumbai Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai



hereditary cancer every year, and a third of these families have breast, ovarian or uterine cancers.

There are several good private labs in the country that provide high quality and reliable genetic testing, but the cost, ranging from ₹ 5,000 - ₹ 40,000 is unaffordable for many families. We at TMC have provided free testing under research funded by the Indian Council for Medical Research to a few thousand families so far. The country urgently needs many more counsellors, oncologists as well as geneticists with expertise in handling hereditary cancer in families.

The cost of genetic testing also must be reduced for it to become more accessible to people.

DR NEENA MALHOTRA

Head, IVF Unit AIIMS, Delhi



Genetic testing has significant importance of preserving childbearing function as these women are young and keen to have pregnancies. The cancer treatments lowers the child-bearing potential but with advancements in the field of IVF, it is now possible to share their gametes prior to treatment and freeze them to be used once treatment is over.

COVID-19 Pandemic: The Battles India Won

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India -- a country of 1.3 billion people -- stood in unison to handle the pandemic. The Prime Minister ensured that we not only tackled this pandemic, but also progressed firmly towards an inclusive, accessible and affordable healthcare system, becoming an example for other countries to follow, says Prof (Dr) BALRAM BHARGAVA

The COVID-19 virus continues to linger amidst us since the onset of the pandemic two and a half years back. During this period, India has worked proactively towards solving the complex problems we faced on daily basis.

Now that we can finally sit back and reflect on the learnings from the past challenges and losses imposed by the pandemic, as well as the collective gains made during this challenging time, we are reminded of the countless stories of immense courage, solidarity and enterprise in addressing such an unprecedented health emergency.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India — a country of 1.3 billion people sharing several cultures, geographies and socio-economic backgrounds—stood in unison to tackle the pandemic. The Prime Minister ensured that we not only tackled this pandemic, but also progressed firmly towards an inclusive, accessible and affordable healthcare system. This has now become an example for other countries to follow.

The progress started with the collective efforts by India's researchers' and scientists' communities in streamlining the country's response towards an evidence-based approach to successfully tackle the pandemic.

They worked round the clock to study the virus, establish treatment protocols, create tools and technologies for managing cases and administering of vaccines, and build public awareness around COVID-19 appropriate behaviour. From the beginning of the pandemic, India defied all the odds to become one among the five

nations that successfully isolated the SARS-CoV-2 strain.

This was the first validation of our scientific vigour. Its testing started during January 2022 with just 1 laboratory. Over months, this base has expanded to over 3,300 COVID-19 testing labs spread all across the country. In diagnostics, India swiftly became self-sufficient, as the brightest of India's scientific minds worked on indigenous solutions for devising affordable testing kits for antibody detection. This led to India's emergence as the world's cheapest provider of RT-PCR tests.

Our vaccination ecosystem has always been supported by a strong manufacturing and production capacity which made us one of the leading low-cost vaccine providers across the world.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we utilized the existing mechanisms to successfully develop effective indigenous vaccines. India's first indigenous vaccine 'Covaxin' was developed in a record period of 9 months. It was a testament to India's strategic focus on public-private partnerships which provided the best of products and benefits to people at home as well as abroad.

The next big challenge was vaccination of a large indigenous population, although this was tackled with relative ease; we have achieved the historic milestone of administering vaccines to over 90 per cent of Indian population.

To ensure that these vaccines were widely available, India developed a one-of-a-kind digital platform, Cowin, which ensured easy access to



At a time when other nations were galvanizing their local resources to address the COVID -19 healthcare emergency which was ballooning beyond their control, India came to their rescue by providing them with abundant and affordable life-saving vaccines, testing and treatment aids.

vaccines to people across the country. To make these life-saving vaccines accessible to remote and geographically challenging terrains in India, drones were used which made delivery of vaccines possible in a short time. Like this, there have been several other achievements that helped India ace the pandemic.

While we made progress in preventive healthcare by developing diagnostics and testing kit, we did not forget to share the fruits of our enterprise with other countries across the world.

At a time when other nations were galvanizing their local resources to address the precarious COVID-19 healthcare emergency which was ballooning beyond their control, India came to their rescue by providing them with abundant and affordable life-saving vaccines, testing and treatment aids, and even the safety masks. India also participated in global trials and provided evidence on multiple interventions utilized across the pandemic.

India's multifarious achievements towards addressing Covid-19 pandemic were acknowledged by global leaders who praised India for its 'Vaccine Maitry (Friendship)' initiative which provided over 2,544 lakh vaccine doses to over 100 countries around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic cemented our reputation as a country with compassion, commitment and capacity to provide effective solutions to the global challenges.

We must acknowledge the critical role played by the scientific and medical fraternities in India, as without their collective and dedicated

efforts, such a success would not have been possible. It is also important to appreciate the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who by his constant and holistic support to all the stakeholders in the pandemic situation, ensured things worked efficiently and round-the-clock, and that the morale stayed high even during the most challenging times.

Despite the vicarious nature of an unprecedented health emergency, the Indian Prime Minister took unprecedented measures to ensure people had access to preventive healthcare infrastructure as well as speedy and effective treatment facilities. Without his constant efforts, such a large number of people could not have been vaccinated in time, and many more lives would have been lost.

Every cloud has a silver lining. It is thus not surprising that something good came out of the Covid-19 global health emergency. During the pandemic, our nation — led by an able Prime Minister and guided by its ancient philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' — soared above the daunting challenges to serve people in India and across the world as one large family.

Thanks to our collective efforts to combat an unprecedented pandemic, we are now better prepared to overcome obstacles and function to the best of our capabilities under the guiding principles of hope, health and cooperation.

(The author is Chief, Cardiothoracic Centre, AIIMS, Immediate Past Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR))

NEWSBRIEF

Microrobots treat deadly pneumonia in mice

Nanoengineers at the University of California San Diego have developed microscopic robots, called microrobots, that can swim around in the lungs, deliver medication and be used to clear up life-threatening cases of bacterial pneumonia.

In mice, the microrobots—made of algae cells whose surfaces are speckled with antibiotic-filled

nanoparticles—safely eliminated pneumonia-causing bacteria in the lungs and resulted in 100% survival. By contrast, untreated mice all died within three days after infection.

The results are published in Nature Materials.

The work is a joint effort between the labs of nanoengineering professors Joseph Wang and Liangfang Zhang.

SUGAR-COATED POUCHES IN BODY FLUIDS TO DETECT CANCER

Detection of the cancer microenvironment may soon become much easier with the help of a new molecular biosensor recently developed by a team of India scientists. Cancer cells secrete small pouches, namely extracellular vesicles (EV) covered with sugar molecules. Hyaluronan (HA), which has a direct link to tumour malignancy and is considered a potential biomarker for early diagnosis of colon cancer.

These EVs are abundant in body fluids (blood, faeces, etc.), and all types of cells secrete these EVs into the extracellular matrix. Cancer cells secrete at least two times more EVs into the body fluids than normal cells). Therefore, these EVs could be isolated non-invasively from a patient's body for early cancer diagnosis.

Dr. Tatini Rakshit laboratory, supported by Inspire faculty grant of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), at Shiv Nadar Institute of

Eminence, Delhi, in collaboration with S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS), Kolkata, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata and IIT Bhilai, Chhattisgarh has unravelled the contour lengths of HA-coated EVs in cancer helps them to withstand multiple external forces during extracellular transportation, uptake, excretion by cells, adhesion to cell surfaces, etc.

The study has been published in Physical Chemistry Letters.

Copyright falls prey to mighty Internet

Globalisation and post-globalisation have brought us ever closer to each other. This intricate journey was only made possible by a vast network of information and communication technologies (ICTs). As a result, we all have experienced a slew of modernisation, standardisation and deterritorialisation drives all around the world. At the heart of this colossal process lies a “superior and never seen before” brand new upheaval called “information revolution”. As this information is gone in the great internet machine, it has witnessed another global movement called the digital revolution. The information revolution accompanied by the digital revolution has pushed knowledge beyond the control of the sovereign nation-states.

Before moving into the problems and prospects of safeguarding the copyright laws, let us see what copyright is all about. Copyright is regarded as “author’s right”. In legal terms, it is meant to describe the set of rights that the creators or the owners have over their literary and artistic works. The very word “works” refer to books, music, paintings, sculptures, films, computer programmes, databases, advertisements, maps and technical drawings as specified by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). Regardless of the WIPO conventions and other relevant global covenants, the copyright law is territorial and national in scope. Therefore, wherever an author or a creator resides or his work is first published, the applicability of the copyright protection depends on the national laws of the country in which the particular author demands protection. The term of a copyright law depends on several factors such as whether the work has been published or if so, the date of its first publication. Once it is published, the copyright lasts for the life of the author and additional 70 years after his/her death. Under the US Copyright legislation, an anonymous work, a pseudonymous work or a work made for hire, the copyright is guaranteed for a period of 95 years from the year of its first publication or a period of 120 years

from the year of its creation, whichever expires first.

Precisely, there is nothing like international copyright law applicable to all the nations. Therefore, no single copyright law can protect an author’s work throughout the world with a single registration like the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) that allows patent filing in a multinational context. Nevertheless, nearly 180 nations have already ratified the historic Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works of 1886, administered by the WIPO. This convention sets a minimum standard for the protection of the rights of the creators of the copyrighted works across the nations. Besides, there have been serious efforts to bring copyright legislations under one single umbrella among the members of the European Union (EU). However, the biggest challenge to this harmonisation effort is emerging from a host of numerous national copyright laws currently existing in the EU nations. The Berne Convention, apart from calling for establishing minimum standards of protection, has two unique principles: “National Treatment” and “Automatic Protection”. The first principle of “National Treatment” underlines that works originating in one signatory nation are given the same protection in other signatory nations as each grant to works of its creators. The second principle of “Automatic Protection” refers to the idea that copyright inheres automatically in a qualifying work upon its fixation in a tangible medium and without any required prior formality.

Indeed, the origin of the global copyright governance system is very much linked to the invention of the printing machine by Johannes Gutenberg in Germany around 1440. By 1483, when printing machines reached England, various monarchs starting from King Richard III to King Henry in 1553 shaped a new regime of copyright that later defined the international copyright governance. Then, the era from 1661 to 1911 witnessed the evolution of a detailed copyright law in Britain.

Now in India, we have a



defined copyright regime, and its roots lie in the long British colonial regime. The copyright legislation was first introduced in India in 1874 during the time of East India Company. This act was replaced by the Copyright Act of 1914 which was just a replica of the then existing Copyright Act of 1911 in Britain. When India became independent, we got our first Copyright Act in the year 1957 which came into practice in 1958. The new Act immediately replaced the colonial

copyright laws thereafter. The same Copyright Act was subsequently amended in 1983, 1984, 1992, 1994 and 1999. Again, the Copyright Act was amended in 2012. It was done to bring the Copyright law into compliance with the WIPO treaties such as the WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT) and WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT). Further it must be highlighted that the obligation under Article 11 of Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property

Rights (TRIPS) which came into effect under the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, Article 7 of the WCT and Article 9 of the WPPT are to provide for commercial rental rights for computer programmes and cinematograph films. This right was introduced in India by using the word “hire” in Section 14 of the current Copyright Act. Thus, the Indian Copyright Law is now capable of addressing both national and global concerns under the new global govern-

nance regime brought by the WTO-TRIPS.

In spite of having a globally effective IPR regime, the information revolution and digital revolution have pushed knowledge maintenance to the brink of a serious danger. We receive information so very easily that we don’t even realise the worth of the creator or the owner. Information superhighway is widely perceived as a modern-day colonial tool both to subjugate and exploit the massive resources from the Global South by the rich and technologically advanced nations from the Global North.

With connectivity growing at an unimaginable speed, people are increasingly becoming restless. Once powerful nation-states seem to surrender to market forces. What Karl Marx, the legendary German socialist thinker, prophesied in the 19th century about the “withering away of the state” (capitalist) is now turning right at the very heart of the capitalist nations. Nonetheless the bitter truth is that today the mighty western liberal nation-state is facing challenges from several points, and they are all multinational forces. These counterforces are not only transnational corporations and the gigantic markets controlled by them but also from civil and human rights movements, global civil society and international non-governmental organisations and at times from international terrorist organisations consistently backed by very strong radical religious movements. It is all spearheaded by the availability of knowledge networks accompanied by advancements in communication and technology networks. Super knowledge owners like Google, Microsoft, Facebook and a host of other electronic platforms have made learning available to all. And it is both a boon and bane. The information superhighway is now dominated by a large network of MNCs mostly based in advanced nations like the US, Japan, the UK, Germany, France, Canada, etc. The global flow is in their hands. The poor and developing nations are at the mercy of these gigantic corporations controlled by the developed countries.

The world is now at a crossroads. Knowledge has exploded. The owners of knowledge are finding it too difficult to protect their creations. The intriguing part of the TRIPS and post-TRIPS global IP regime is that they all have failed to address the pitfalls of the huge information revolution. Today no single person or enterprise is the sole owner of knowledge or any other technical knowhow. It is fully diffused. It is there everywhere. Then how to safeguard it and how the creators will be benefitted from their long hard work? The solution to this problem is too complex.

The global and national copyright legislations are facing an uphill task today. Nowhere the knowledge is safe. And there is no place to hide. Of course, there are stringent punishments awarded to law breakers, but then there is no end to predators till date. Frankly, the wide network of the transnational forces has weakened the long hand of the copyright law that used to be there much before the advent of the mighty Internet. Today the global knowledge economy is beyond the reach of the nation-state. Therefore, the knowledge networks that are supposed to aid all and share the benefits of innovations do not accord equal power to all. It further leads to a great digital divide between the countries of the North and the South. And this is creating an uneven world of knowledge. There is a large gap between access to knowledge and exploiting the benefits of the same in both sides of the globe. Today the global knowledge economy has gone beyond the arms of the copyright laws. It has long been Microsoftified. Thus the owners of knowledge are solely in the hands of the big corporations of the advanced nations.

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

Despite a robust IPR regime, the information revolution and digital revolution have pushed knowledge maintenance to the brink of a serious danger. We receive information so easily that we don’t even realise the worth of the creator or the owner... Therefore, the knowledge networks that are supposed to aid all and share the benefits of innovations do not accord equal power to all. It further leads to a great digital divide between the countries of the North and the South



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Tobacco ads: Celebrities shirk moral responsibility

Professional ethics entail a cluster of values and principles that guide the behaviour of the professionals concerning what is right and what is wrong based on loyalty, accountability, honesty, and respect for the law. Hence, the celebrities’ acts of promoting harmful practices like tobacco consumption certainly are incompatible with the professional moral principles that posit serving larger social interests



NIBEDITA PRIYADARSHINI JENA

The “smoking zone” has been shifted from industrialised developed countries to developing countries. While eighty per cent of the 1.3 billion tobacco users belong to the third-world countries, India sees more than a million deaths due to tobacco consumption accounting for 9.5 per cent of all deaths. Going by a World Health Organization report of 2014, a scary health concern induced by tobacco consumption puts a heavy burden on India’s economy as around 53 per cent of the tobacco-related deaths are attributed to non-communicable diseases and 80 per cent of them include chronic respiratory diseases, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes. Accordingly, it is no surprise that the Indian state has been struggling to reduce tobacco consumption by 30 per cent by 2025.

At this juncture, promoting tobacco consumption by cinema celebrities is indeed not only depressing but also immoral, unsocial if not completely illegal. In a country like India, the cinema celebrities are often followed and imitated by the people passionately. Such fan following is often capitalised on by the big business and corporate bodies to further their business interests. It is not uncommon to see the people imitating the dressing and other

styles of the cinema celebrities in their daily life. Such imitations reflect upon the tremendous effect the celebrities have on the fans. While these celebrities are well within their rights to endorse a brand, the promotion of tobacco consumption invites criticism on moral and social grounds, for society demands a minimum amount of moral and social responsibilities from the public figures.

Accordingly, the general actions of the cinema celebrities and their acts of promoting tobacco consumption warrant moral scrutiny. These actions of promoting something as bad as tobacco that has negative implications on human health and societal integrity can be evaluated on various moral parameters. First, the performance of the action in the realm of restricted individual liberty (harm principle) can be employed. According to utilitarian philosopher John Stuart Mill, two types of actions are performed by humans: Self-regarding action (SRA); and Other-regarding action (ORA). The SRA is the one that influences the agent himself or herself. Explaining further, Mill says, an action ceases to be an SRA when it directly impairs others. However, the ORA is the one that affects others and thus it entails moral criticism.



This distinction, fundamentally, serves as a base for the broader horizon of individual liberty as well as serves as a reason to delimit individual liberty by justifying the state/country’s interference in it. The state’s interference in individual liberty is conditioned by the “Harm Principle” which says, “The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant”. It entails

that the harmful ORA of an agent morally permits others, including the state, to intervene in individual liberty. Thus, the state has the right to interfere in an individual’s liberty when it is required for the well-being of others/society. However, drawing a sharp line between SRA and ORA is difficult which leads to the claim that they both overlap each other and the act of promoting tobacco consumption is a good example in this regard.

Although the cinema celebrities do have their liberties to select the

roles to enact, the platform and the message they want to deliver through the act cannot be left unevaluated. With a clear knowledge that tobacco causes irrecoverable diseases and immense suffering, the action of the cinema actors’ promotion of tobacco consumption certainly influences the common people in many ways, eventually harming their bodies. Thus, these other-regarding actions of the celebrities fail to satisfy the condition which prevents the state to interfere and it is immoral as well since it ceases to bring maximum good in maximum number. While the state is taking major steps in the form of enacting laws to prevent tobacco consumption, those laws should include taking stringent actions against those who foster harmful practices like tobacco consumption despite their social position.

The second moral issue concerning advertising tobacco centres on the action itself. It violates the moral universal humanity principle that says, “act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end.”

In other words, this principle entails that an agent should act in

such a way that action never uses humans as means for any end. On the contrary, the cinema celebrities are using, though indirectly, other humans for their vested interests of making fortune ignoring their moral responsibility and respect towards other fellow humans and the society. Accordingly, these celebrities fail to satisfy the humanity principle since they are using others in the form of exploiting the passionate emotions of the common humans and thereby these celebrities lap into the sphere of immorality.

Moreover, it is pertinent to reiterate that the noble professions tend to serve the well-being of fellow humans and society alike. Professional ethics entail a cluster of values and principles that guide the behaviour of the professionals concerning what is right and what is wrong based on loyalty, accountability, honesty, and respect for the law. Hence, the celebrities’ acts of promoting harmful practices like tobacco consumption certainly are incompatible with the professional moral principles since it entails responsibilities to serve larger social interests.

(The writer is ethical consultant, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru)

IF PUTIN CARRIES OUT THREATS...

Sanctions and isolation for Russia, more arms for Ukraine

How do American leaders and their allies intend to respond if President Vladimir Putin seeks to escalate his way out of a bad situation on Ukraine's battlefields, and makes good on renewed threats of annexing territory or even using nuclear weapons?

At least to start with, by trying to double down on the same tactics that have helped put Russia in a corner in Ukraine, US and European leaders have made clear: more financial penalties and international isolation for Russia, more arms and other backing for Ukraine.

That won't necessarily be easy. It's been tough enough staying the current course of persuading all of dozens of allies to stick with sanctions and isolation for Putin, and persuading more ambivalent countries to join in. Global financial and energy disruptions from Russia's war in Ukraine already promise to make the coming winter a tough one for countries that have depended on Russia for their energy needs.

And there's no sign of US or NATO officials matching Putin's renewed nuclear threats with the same nuclear bluster, which in itself might raise the risks of escalating the conflict to an unimaginable level. Even if Putin should act on his nuclear threat, President Joe Biden and others point, without details, to an ascending scale of carefully calibrated responses, based on how far Russia goes.

To start with, they'll become more of a pariah in the world than they ever



have been, Biden told CBS' 60 Minutes just ahead of Putin's new wartime measures and renewed nuclear threat.

What they do will determine what response would occur, Biden said on the nuclear side, adding that the US responds in that case would be consequential.

I do not believe the United States would take an escalatory step in the event of a one-off, limited nuclear detonation by Russia aimed at trying to scare Ukraine and its supporters off, said Rose Gottemoeller, former deputy NATO secretary-general and former US undersecretary of state for arms control. Certainly, it would not respond with nuclear weapons.

Putin this week pledged to use all available means to stave off any challenges as Russia moves to summarily claim more Ukrainian territory despite heavy losses on the battlefield to NATO-armed Ukrainian forces. In case NATO missed the point, another senior Russian political figure specified the next day that included nuclear weapons. Putin also mobilized Russian fighters to throw into the seven-month invasion of Ukraine, and announced

votes in parts of Ukraine that the West says are meant to provide political cover for illegally absorbing those regions into Russia.

US and European Union officials say new sanctions are in the works in response to Putin's latest moves. Russia, its political leadership, and all those involved in organising these referenda' as well as in other violations of international law and international humanitarian law in Ukraine will be held accountable," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell pledged this week, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

But political declarations are the easy part. It's unclear what type of measures can be agreed upon, as the financial punishments against Russia are also increasingly inflicting pain on other European economies weighed down by high electricity and natural gas prices and spiralling inflation. Hungary has led resistance to sanctions that might hit its supplies from Russia, but it isn't alone

in hesitating.

New sanctions may come only after much debate and hand-wringing among the 27 EU member countries in coming weeks, probably only after Russia has held its referendums.

The last round of sanctions over Russia's invasion of Ukraine was announced May 4, but only agreed on four weeks later, as concerns over oil divided member countries. Rather than a new set of sanctions, a maintenance and alignment package was sealed in July, mostly to close loopholes on measures already agreed upon. Pressed by reporters in



New York for details about what might be coming, Borrell said the sanctions would target new areas of the Russian economy, especially if I can be a little more concrete the technological ones.

Ursula von der Leyen, who heads the EU's executive branch the European Commission which has been responsible for drawing up most of the sanctions, also appeared resolute, but she was hardly more forthcoming. We stand ready to impose further economic costs on Russia and on individuals and entities inside and outside of Russia who support (the war), politically or economically. Plus we will propose additional export controls on civilian technology as Russia moves to a full war economy, she told CNN.

Beyond the economic sanctions, the EU since Russia's February invasion of Ukraine has slapped asset freezes and travel bans on more than 1,200

Russians, including Putin, Russia's foreign minister and other senior officials.

As unrest spreads, Iranian govt scrambles to contain it

The large-scale protests against the Iranian government over the custodial death of a 22-year-old Kurdish woman who was arrested by the country's notorious "morality" police for allegedly violating the strict law on headscarves has reportedly spread to about 80 cities and towns.

Hundreds of protesters, mostly women, took to the streets following the death of Mahsa Amini - a Kurd native, chanting anti-government slogans that target the core of the Islamic regime and its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The death toll in the violent clashes with security forces has reached as high as 26, Iranian state TV indicated on Friday. The unrest, said to be the worst in recent years, has also



spread to about 80 Iranian cities and towns.

At least five security personnel have also been killed and several others injured while trying to confront protesters in Mashhad, Quchan, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Karaj, it added.

Amini's tragic death has fuelled an outpouring of long-simmering anger over restrictions on personal freedoms in the Islamic nation.

In the past days, some protesting women have set their headscarves on fire on the

streets in what can be described as an unprecedented act of disobedience, while men burned banners of the Supreme Leader in several towns including religious cities of Qom and Isfahan.

Protesters also tore and burned posters of Qasem Soleimani - the Revolutionary Guard commander who was killed in a US drone strike in January 2020 - in his hometown Kerman. The late commander is celebrated as a symbol of the Iranian regime's strategic power projection in Syria and Iraq.

Iranian law requires all women to wear a head covering and loose-fitting clothing while in public places. The rule has been enforced since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and it is obligatory for every woman in the country.

National Cinema Day draws over 6.5 million

Over 6.5 million people went to the theatres on National Cinema Day, which was celebrated on Friday to commemorate the successful reopening of movie halls, the Multiplex Association of India (MAI) has announced.

More than 4000 screens from across the country, including cinema chains like PVR, INOX, Cinepolis, Carnival, Miraj, Citypride, Mukta A2, Movie Time, Wave, M2K and Delite, participated in the initiative.

As part of the one-day event, various cinema halls started shows at 6 am on Friday, offering "celebratory admission price" of Rs 75.

Audiences of all ages came together to celebrate this historic day at the cinemas. We are thankful to the 6.5 plus million moviegoers who attended their local cinema to purchase movie



tickets, making 23 September the highest attended day of the year for the Indian cinema industry," MAI president Kamal Gianchandani said in a statement. Theatres across the country have been struggling to record a decent footfall since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. The National Cinema Day, which was celebrated weeks after the release of Ranbir Kapoor-Alia Bhatt's blockbuster hit "Brahmastra: Part One Shiva", led to a good turnout.

NASA delays moon rocket launch due to potential hurricane

NASA is skipping next week's launch attempt of its new moon rocket because of a tropical storm that's expected to become a major hurricane.

It's the third delay in the past month for the lunar-orbiting test flight featuring mannequins but no astronauts, a follow-up to NASA's Apollo moon-landing programme of a half-century ago. Hydrogen fuel leaks and other technical issues caused the previous scrubs.

Currently churning in the Caribbean, Tropical Storm Ian is expected to become a hurricane by Monday and slam into Florida's Gulf coast by Thursday.

The entire state, however, is in the cone showing the probable path of the storm's center including NASA's Kennedy Space Centre.

World Bank president says won't resign over climate remark

World Bank President David Malpass said Friday he won't resign after coming under criticism for his remarks earlier this week regarding climate change.

At an event sponsored by The New York Times on Tuesday, Malpass wouldn't answer directly when asked whether the burning of fossil fuels has contributed to global warming. Instead, he said, "I am not a scientist."

In an interview with Politico Friday, Malpass said he wouldn't resign, and that he hasn't been asked to do so by any of the bank's member governments. He acknowledged he should have done a better job responding to questions on Tuesday, including from former Vice President Al Gore, who asked if he was a "climate denier."

"When asked, are you a climate denier? I should have said no," he said. But he said he did not plan to resign.

Malpass also said the World Bank is taking a forceful leadership position on climate issues.

Malpass was nominated to the

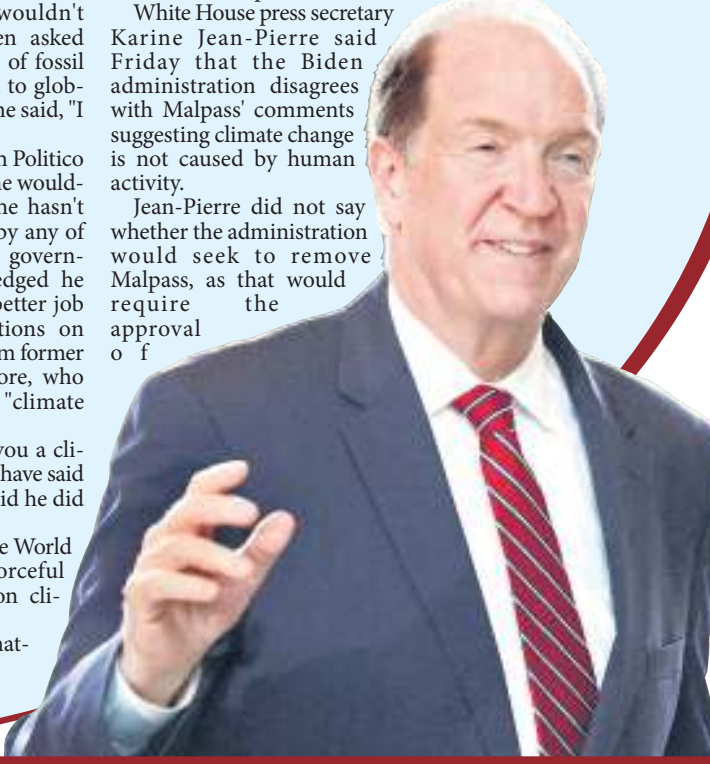
position by former President Donald Trump in 2019, under the longstanding tradition that allows the US to choose the head of the World Bank and European governments to pick the head of the International Monetary Fund. His five-year term ends in April 2024.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Friday that the Biden administration disagrees with Malpass' comments suggesting climate change is not caused by human activity.

Jean-Pierre did not say whether the administration would seek to remove Malpass, as that would require the approval of

other World Bank members.

The Treasury Department will hold Malpass accountable, Jean-Pierre said, "and support the many staff working to fight climate change at the World Bank. But again, removal would require a majority of stakeholders."



Hindu woman, 2 girls abducted, converted



A woman and two teenage girls belonging to the Hindu community have been kidnapped with two of them forcibly converted to Islam and married to Muslim men in Pakistan's Sindh province, the latest in a string of such atrocities committed against members of the minority community.

Meena Meghwar, 14, was abducted from the Nasarpur area and another teenage Hindu girl was kidnapped while returning home from the market in Mirpurkhas town, police said.

In the third instance, a married Hindu woman with three children went missing from Mirpurkhas and later showed up after allegedly converting to Islam and

marrying a Muslim man.

In the last case, police have refused to register an FIR on the complaint of the woman's husband Ravi Kurmi who says she was forcibly abducted and converted to Islam by their neighbour Ahmed Chandio who used to harass her wife.

A local police officer in Mirpurkhas said all three cases are being investigated. The officer, however, said married woman Rakhi claims she converted and married the Muslim man of her own will.

The abduction and forcible conversion of young Hindu girls have become a major problem in the interior of Sindh province which has a large Hindu population in Thar, Umerkot, Mirpurkhas, Ghotki and Khairpur areas. Most of the Hindu community members are labourers.

We can use drones to learn more about active volcanoes

Volcanic eruptions cannot be predicted with 100 per cent certainty. However, details about an upcoming eruption can be estimated using the hot and smelly gases a volcano produces.

These gases provide clues about the timing, duration or severity of upcoming eruptions which can help local authorities decide if and when the surrounding communities need to be evacuated.

On average, there are up to 50 volcanoes actively erupting on the planet at any given time. Many of these volcanoes are more likely to be spewing hot gases like steam and carbon dioxide than lava. Collecting these gases is key to understanding the mysterious ways of volcanoes, but it can be dangerous.

Now, drones are making it safer and easier than ever before.

Gassy volcanoes

For the better part of the last decade, I have been visiting such gassy volcanoes regularly to catch them just before, during or after an eruption.

I have worked with other scientists and engineers to measure volcanic gases with a variety of devices attached to



drones.

Our latest research uses drones to capture volcanic carbon dioxide at Po's volcano in Costa Rica. We measured the isotopes of carbon in this carbon dioxide and discovered a pattern in the way these chemical fingerprints change during different stages of activity.

Unique carbon makeup

Carbon dioxide is everywhere: in the air we exhale, in vehicle exhaust and dissolved in magma. At volcanoes, it escapes from magma to the surface through cracks and hydrothermal systems (like the geysers in Yellowstone National Park), by seeping through the soil or by puffing

out in a plume of gas.

By obtaining a sample of this volcanic carbon, we can measure the stable carbon isotopic ratio, a unique chemical makeup which reflects the source and pathway the CO2 took to the surface.

Each volcano around the world produces a unique range of these carbon isotopes which change when the volcanic system changes. However, it took a long time to collect each sample when researchers needed to hike down into a crater, putting them at risk each second they remained in the danger zone. With the evolution of unoccupied aerial systems (UAS, also known as drones), researchers have started sending these machines into the danger areas.

Can we really deflect an asteroid by crashing into it?

Nasa's Double Asteroid Redirection Test (Dart) spacecraft is designed to be a one hit wonder. It will end its days by crashing into an asteroid at 24,000 kilometres per hour on September 26. Launched from Earth in November 2021, Dart is about the size of a bus and was created to test and prove our ability to defend the Earth from a dangerous asteroid.

Landing a direct hit on a target from 11 million kilometres away isn't easy. But while this sounds far, the asteroid was actually selected by Nasa because it is relatively close to Earth. This will give engineers the opportunity to test the spacecraft's ability to operate itself in the final stages before the impact, as it crashes autonomously.

The target asteroid is called Dimorphos, a body 163 metres in diameter that's orbiting a 780

metre-wide asteroid called Didymos. This binary asteroid system was chosen because Dimorphos is in orbit around Didymos, which makes it easier to measure the result of the impact due to the resulting change in its orbit. However, the Dimorphos system does not currently pose any risk to the Earth.

Regardless, Nasa is attempting nothing less than a full scale planetary defence experiment to change an asteroid's path. The technique being used is called kinetic impact, which alters the orbit of the asteroid by crashing into it. That's essentially what is known as a safety shot in snooker, but played on a planetary level between the spacecraft (as the cue ball) and the asteroid.

A tiny deflection could be sufficient to prove that this technique can actually change the path of an asteroid on a collision



path with the Earth.

But the Dart spacecraft is going to be completely blown apart by the collision because it will have an impact equivalent to about three tonnes of TNT. In comparison, the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was equal to 15,000 tonnes of TNT.

So, with this level destruction and the distance involved, how will we be able to see the crash? Luckily, the Dart spacecraft is not travelling alone on its quest,

it is carrying LICIACube, a shoebox-size mini spacecraft, known as a cubesat, developed by the Italian Space Agency and aerospace engineering company Argotec. This little companion has recently separated from the Dart spacecraft and is now travelling on its own to witness the impact at a safe distance of 55km.

Never before has a cubesat operated around asteroids so this provides new potential

ways of exploring space in the future. The impact will also be observed from Earth using telescopes. Combined, these methods will enable scientists to confirm whether the operation has been successful.

It might, however, take weeks for LICIACube to send all images back to Earth. This period will be utterly nerve wracking waiting for good news from a spacecraft is always an emotional time for an engineer.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

An investigation team will look at the aftermath of the crash. These scientists will aim to measure the changes in Dimorphos' motion around Didymos by observing its orbital period. This is the time during which Dimorphos passes in front and behind Didymos, which will happen every 12 hours.

Ground telescopes will aim to capture images of the Dimorphos' eclipse as this happens. To cause a significant enough deflection, Dart must create at least a 73-second orbital period change after impact visible as changes in the frequencies of the eclipses.

These measurements will ultimately determine how effective kinetic impact technology is in deflecting a potentially hazardous asteroid we simply don't know yet.

This is because we actually know very little of the asteroids' composition. The great uncertainty around how strong Dimorphosis is has made designing a bullet spacecraft a truly enormous engineering challenge. Based on ground observation, the Didymos system is suspected to be a rubble pile made up of lots of different rocks, but its internal structure is unknown.

Puerto Ricans seething over lack of power days after Fiona



Half of Puerto Rico is without power more than five days after Hurricane Fiona struck including an entire town where not a single work crew has arrived.

Many on the US territory are angry and incredulous, and calls are growing for the ouster of the island's private electricity transmission and distribution company.

Fuel disruptions are worsening the situation, forcing grocery stores, gas stations and other businesses to close and

leaving apartment buildings in the dark because there is no diesel for generators.

Many are questioning why it is taking so long to restore power since Fiona was a Category 1 storm that did not affect the entire island, and whose rain not wind inflicted the greatest damage.

It's not normal, said Marcel Castro-Sitriche, an electrical engineering professor at the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez. They have not given a convincing explanation of what the problem is.