

'I never said no to movies; I was just settling down with my husband's loss,' claims

SHANTHI PRIYA

PTI

-SPORTS

2

2

2

2

2

There were 89 cases against BJP MLA T. Raja Singh, who has been re-elected from Goshamahali. He is notorious for delivering hate speeches and has been booked many times for hurting the religious sentiments of other communities. BRS leader Gangula Kamalakara, who has been re-elected from Karimnagar, has 10 cases. There are nine cases against outgoing Chief Minister K. Chandrababai Rao, who has been re-elected from Gajwel.

to its promises of appointing a BC leader as Chief Minister and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to forming a committee on SC categorisation.

The BJP leader expressed the opin-



TS tops in cybercrime cases, increase in overall crime

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Overall cases recorded in 2022 has seen an increase in Telangana as per National Crime Records Bureau's annual 'Crime in India' report for the year 2022.

Telangana tops the country with most cybercrime cases and account to over 23% cybercrime cases in the country. Cybercrime increased by 48% in the State. Telangana recorded 15,297 cases of cybercrime in 2022. Across India, total of 65,893 cybercrime cases were registered in 2022, marking a substantial 24.4 per cent increase from the previous year's 52,974 cases.

Minors committing crimes, categorised as Juveniles in Conflict with law, for instance was one area where Telangana and Hyderabad fared better in

2021 compared to 2019. Across the State, this category, which had 1,352 cases in 2019, saw a dip in 2021 with the number being 1,152. In Hyderabad, the same saw a sharp dip, with 350 cases in 2019 and 197 in 2021.

Overall crime cases increased to 1,65,830 cases in 2022 from 1,58,809 in 2021 and 1,47,504 in 2020.

In 2022, there were 7,807 fatal accidents, 11 deaths due to medical negligence, 685 cases of sexual harassment, 814 rapes and 36 attempt to rapes.

There were 28 political riots in Telangana. About 1,555 cases reported were of disobedience by public servant

IPC and SSL crimes in Hyderabad increased to 23,183 in 2022 of which 20,142 were in 2021 and 18,055 in 2022.

There were about 14,541 rash driving cases with 17,300 victims.

About 9,996 cases of cruel-

4.45 lakh FIRs on 'crime against women'

A total of 4,45,256 cases of crime against women were registered across India in 2022, almost 51 FIRs every hour, up from 4,28,278 in 2021 and 3,71,503 in 2020, according to the latest NCRB data. The rate of crime against women per lakh population stood at 66.4 while the charge sheeting in such cases was logged at 75.8, showed the data in the annual crime report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which functions under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. The majority of crimes against women under the Indian Penal

ty by husband, 264 fake news cases and 3,596 criminal intimidation cases were recorded.

Number of women MLAs remain low

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The number of women MLAs in Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Madhya Pradesh assemblies remains much below the one-third mark, as provided under the women's reservation bill passed by Parliament recently, data compiled by think tank PRS Legislative Research said.

Their number in Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh assemblies has gone up marginally, while it has gone down in Rajasthan, the data said. Chhattisgarh scores the highest among all four states with 21 per cent of its newly elected lawmakers.

In 2018, Chhattisgarh had 13 women MLAs, 14 per cent of the total, which has gone up to 19 women now.

Centre plans cashless treatment of accident victims

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) plans to roll out the facility of cashless medical treatment of road accident victims across the country in three to four months, a top government official said on Monday.

Road Transport and Highways Secretary Anurag Jain while inaugurating an event organized by the Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE) noted India has the highest number of road accident deaths in the world.

"Free and cashless medical treatment to accident-injured victims is part of the amended Motor Vehicle Act 2019 (MVA2019). Some states have implemented it but now the Ministry of Roads in league with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will be fully implementing it across

"Free and cashless medical treatment to accident-injured victims is part of the amended Motor Vehicle Act 2019 (MVA2019)."



the nation," Jain said.

He added the facility will be rolled out in three to four months.

According to him, it is envisioned to provide access to cashless trauma care treatment for road accident victims at the nearest appropriate hospital in the country, in accordance with the Supreme Court ruling, and by drawing its power from the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act 2019 (MV Amendment Act).

"Such cashless treatment shall be extended to road acci-

dent victims including during golden hour, as defined by the MV Amendment Act," he added. Golden hour refers to the critical first hour after a road accident with casualties when prompt medical attention can make all the difference.

The road secretary said for education and awareness about road safety, the Union Ministry of Education has agreed to include road safety as part of the curriculum for schools and colleges to be implemented soon.

Shun negativity, learn from defeat

PM Modi tells Opposition

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday told the opposition to shun negativity and learn from defeat, a day after the Congress' huge poll debacle in three Hindi heartland states which also drew increasing criticism from its allies in opposition bloc INDIA.

The remarks by Modi came after the BJP on Sunday retained Madhya Pradesh with a two-thirds majority and ousted Congress in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh in the Assembly polls. In a face savor for the Congress, the party defeated incumbent BRS in Telangana.

Giving "good advice", the

prime minister asked the opposition not to vent its frustration inside Parliament over the assembly polls defeat and move forward leaving behind "negativity", saying that may change the people's perspective towards them.

"The country has rejected negativity," said Modi while talking to the media outside Parliament ahead of the start of the Winter Session.

"If I speak on basis of the assembly poll results, this is a golden opportunity for friends in opposition. Instead of making plans for venting frustration over defeat, they should learn from this defeat, leaving behind the habit of negativity of the last nine years.

Orange alert issued for AP

Michaung to make landfall between Bapatla & Machilipatnam

Winds expected to blow at 90-100 km/h and gusts up to 110 km/h

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

An orange alert has been issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for the Andhra Pradesh and adjacent north Tamil Nadu-Puducherry coasts as Cyclone Michaung advances towards the south Andhra Pradesh coast. Relentless rains have led to widespread inundation in several areas of Chennai and neighboring districts. Transportation services have been severely affected, with numerous train and flight cancellations on Monday. Meanwhile, alerts have been issued for the districts of Tirupati, Nellore, Prakasam, Bapatla, Krishna, West Godavari, Konaseema, and Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh.



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy conducted a review meeting on the cyclone with senior officials on Monday, initiating various relief efforts.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an Orange alert for Andhra Pradesh on Monday. The Severe Cyclonic Storm "Michaung" over West Central

& adjoining Southwest Bay of Bengal off south Andhra Pradesh moved north-north-westwards at a speed of 10 km/h as of 5:30 pm on Monday. The storm is approximately 80 km southeast of Nellore, 120 km north-northeast of Chennai, 210 km south of Bapatla, and 250 km south-southwest of Machilipatnam.



13 killed in gunfight between two groups in Manipur

PNS ■ IMPHAL

At least 13 people were killed in a gun-battle between two groups of militants in Manipur's Tengenoupal district on Monday, officials said.

The incident took place at Leithu village on Monday afternoon, they said.

"A group of militants on their way to Myanmar were ambushed by another group of insurgents dominant in the area," an official in the hill district said.

BRS will be responsible Opposition, says KTR

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS Working President Kalvakuntla Taraka Rama Rao said that the BRS will handle the responsibility of being the opposition successfully. He met MLAs and key party leaders at the Telangana Bhavan on Monday.

He congratulated those who won as MLAs and said that the Telangana Bhavan will be accessible to people. He said that those who had worked at the Secretariat and at the Pragathi Bhavan Centre while in power would now be available to the people at the Telangana Bhavan Centre.

The BRS working president said that BRS has taken up wonderful programmes in the last 10 years. The party achieved respectable positions. After the election results, he spoke to the elected party MLAs, contested

candidates and senior party leaders. Even if people give another party a chance, BRS is given respectable positions.

He said that after the election, there will be a positive response from people on the leadership. He said that a wide-scale meeting will be held soon with elected MLAs and party leaders. He said that in the meeting all matters will be thoroughly discussed, and action will be taken. Former Ministers Talasani Srinivasayadav, Sabita Indra Reddy, Srinivas Goud, Satyavathi Rathore, MPs Ranjith Reddy, Vaviraju Ravichandra, Potuganti Ramulu, MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha, MLAs Dana Nagender, KP Vivekananda, Arikepudi Gandhi, Madhavaram Krishna Rao, MLA Maganti Gopinath and others were present at the meeting.

Let's wait and...

Continued from page 1

Among those who met the CM are Tanniru Harish Rao, Talasani Srinivas Yadav, Sabita Indra Reddy, Mahmood Ali, Gangula Kamalakara, Srinivas Gow, Satyavathi Rathore, Mallar Reddy, Vemula Prashanth Reddy, Danan Nagender, Marri Rajasheer Reddy, Tellam Venkatarao, Kadiam Srihari, Palla Rajeshwar. Reddy, Maganti Gopinath, Kotha Prabhakar

Reddy, Sudhir Reddy, Kale Yadayah, KV Vivekanand, Padi Kaushik Reddy, Mutha Gopal, Kaleru Venkatesh, Dr. Sanjay, Sunitha Lakshmareddy, Lasya Nandita, Chintia Prabhakar, Prakash Goud, MP Ranjith Reddy, MLCs and other leaders.

Vantheru Pratap Reddy handed over the appointment letter to BRS leader who won for the third time from Gajwel constituency.

Resignations...

Continued from page 1

Retired DCP and Hyderabad Police Commissioner's Task Force OSD Radha Kishan Rao also resigned from his post. He was on an extension after the retirement in KCR government. Radha Kishan was also accused by the opposition parties of alleged abuse of power during the BRS regime.

KV Ramanachary, Advisor to Government, also resigned from his post.

Vice-chairman of Telangana

State Planning Board, Boianapalli Vinod Kumar resigned from his post. The Chairmen of various corporations sent letters of resignation to the Telangana Chief Secretary including Krishank Manne, Y. Sathish Reddy, Patimeedi Jagan Mohan, Gellu Srinivas Yadav, Erolla Srinivas, Bhuvanagiri, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Siddipet and Nagarkurnool districts. Thunderstorms to are likely in the above districts and in Mulugu.

On Thursday, light to mod-

IMD issues...

Continued from page 1

Similarly, an orange alert has been issued in Warangal, Mahbubabad, Suryapet and Hanamkonda districts on Wednesday.

Heavy rains are expected in Karimnagar, Pedappally, Nalgonda, Jangaon, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Siddipet and Nagarkurnool districts. Thunderstorms to are likely in the above districts and in Mulugu.

On Thursday, light to mod-

erate rains are expected to lash the above districts and Mancherial. Hyderabad is likely to experience rains or thundershowers and gusty winds due to Cyclone Michaung.

Meanwhile, according to the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS), no rainfall was recorded on Sunday in Telangana.

Hyderabad city has been experiencing a significant deficiency in rains since the start of the Northeast Monsoon on October 1.

TS demands status quo at Nagarjunasagar site

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana wrote to KRMB seeking restoration of the status quo on the Nagarjunasagar Dam issue.

The letter sent by ENC C. Muralidhar said, "Once again we request to restore status-quo ante at the

Nagarjunasagar Dam site as it existed on November 28, 2023, as decided in the virtual meeting held under the Chairmanship of the Secretary, MHA immediately." Telangana said that as decided at the meeting Telangana has complied by deploying the CRPF at the dam site.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Ashtami: Dec 04 09:59 PM to Dec 06 12:37 AM

Navami: Dec 06 12:37 AM to Dec 07 03:04 AM

Nakshatram: Purva Phalguni: Dec 05 12:35 AM to Dec 06 03:37 AM

Uttara Phalguni: Dec 06 03:37 AM to Dec 07 06:28 AM

Rahukalam: 2:51 PM to 4:14 PM

Yamagandam: 9:21 AM to 10:43 AM

Varjyam: 11:41 AM to 01:28 PM

Gulika: 12:06 PM to 1:29 PM

Amritakalam: 08:25 PM to 10:13 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:44 AM to 12:28 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Rain

Temp: 25°C

Humidity: 79%

Sunrise: 6:32 AM

Sunset: 5:41 PM

Updated: December 4, 2023 5:00 PM

Karnataka episode...

Continued from page 1

However, at the meeting held on Monday morning at the Park Hyatt Hotel with Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shiva Kumar, senior MLAs Bhatti Vikramarka, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, the Komatireddy brothers and D. Sridhar Babu and others declared that they will not accept Revanth for the CM's post.

It is learnt that they made it clear to DK Shiva Kumar that they will stay away from the government if the Congress high command makes Revanth Reddy the CM.

Later, the CLP meeting was held at Ella Hotel. At the CLP meeting, they adopted a single-line reso-

lution authorizing the AICC to select the CM.

TPCC President Revanth Reddy introduced the resolution and senior MLAs

MLAs authorise ...

Continued from page 1

TPCC President Revanth Reddy moved the resolution and 10 MLAs including Thummala Nageshwara Rao, Bhatti Vikramarka, Uttam Kumar Reddy, Ponnam Prabhakar and some others seconded it. The CLP also adopted another resolution introduced by Karnataka Dy CM DK Shiva Kumar thanking the people for making the Congress victorious in the Telangana Assembly elections.

Bhatti Vikramarka, Uttam Kumar Reddy and others seconded it.

However, it is learnt that senior MLAs Bhatti Vikramarka, Uttam Kumar Reddy, D. Sridhar Babu, the Komatireddy brothers, and Damodara Rajanarsimha have issued an ultimatum to the high command that they will not accept Revanth Reddy as the CM.

It is learnt that the observers tried to convince the senior leaders but they did not yield to their requests. It is learnt that senior MLAs asked the high command what they have to do if the CM post is given to Revanth Reddy as they have been in the party from the beginning of their political careers.

'Media reports just speculations'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Senior Congress MLA from Madhira, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, said that a CLP meeting was held in Hyderabad on Monday.

At this meeting, a one-sentence resolution was passed handing over the selection of the CLP leader to the party's leadership.

In a statement issued on Monday night, Bhatti said that the party leadership will announce the CLP leader soon. Currently, the stories coming out in the media are just speculation. Don't believe them, he added.

It may be recalled that news reports are coming on news websites that the party high command selected Revanth Reddy as CLP leader and that he will take oath on December 7.

New TS Assembly...

Continued from page 1

The notification was issued after Chief Electoral Officer Vikas Raj and Election Commission of India Secretary Avinash Kumar submitted the list of elected MLAs to the Governor, Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan. Earlier, the Governor dissolved the second Assembly of Telangana.

A communique from the Governor's office said that consequent to the resolution dated December 3, 2023, by the Council of Ministers recommending the dissolution of the Second Legislative Assembly of Telangana, the Governor dissolved the Assembly exercising the powers conferred on her by the Constitution.

This set in motion the

process of forming the next government of the state. A delegation of Congress leaders will call on the Governor and inform her the name of the leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) and will request her to invite him to take oath as the Chief Minister.

The Governor will confer the status of designated Chief Minister on the CLP Leader and invite him to take oath.

Arrangements are in full swing at the Raj Bhavan for the swearing-in of the Chief Minister.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the newly elected Congress MLAs was held in Hyderabad on Sunday. It unanimously resolved to authorise AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge to appoint the CLP Leader.

2 pilots...

Continued from page 1

In March, the defence ministry sealed a deal with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to procure 70 HTT-40 basic trainer aircraft at a cost of more than Rs 6,800 crore for the IAF.

The HTT-40 contains approximately 56 per cent indigenous content, which will progressively go beyond 60 per cent through indigenisation of major components and subsystems.

The aircraft is expected to meet the shortage of basic trainer aircraft of the IAF for training newly-inducted pilots.

In June, a Kiran trainer aircraft of the IAF crashed at Chamarajanager in Karnataka, but the two pilots made it out safely after ejecting from the plane before the crash.



New York Academy plans to open new campus in Hyd

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

New York Academy, an American progressive school located in Aziz Nagar, Hyderabad has planned to open its second state-of-the-art campus this fiscal year. The new campus will have the capacity to house more than 1,500 students, offering a wide range of facilities that transcend conventional expectations.

The standout feature of the campus is the introduction of a dedicated Makerspace, which aims to stimulate creative thinking and problem-solving among students. For aspiring musicians, NYA has established a cutting-edge audio-recording studio and music rooms. These areas are intended to ignite creativity and self-expression.



Beyond traditional classrooms, the campus will offer flexible learning spaces that encourage collaboration and different learning approaches. It will also house an advanced auditorium equipped with state-of-the-art sound technology, ensuring a top-notch experience

for both students and their audiences.

From basketball courts to soccer fields, a dedicated track and more, the campus is set to become a haven for sports enthusiasts, promoting physical fitness and teamwork. In addition to these features, the upcoming facility

will feature a lavish swimming pool, which will be utilised for training students in sports.

Viranica Manchu, Founder and Director of New York Academy, said, "With our new campus, we are dedicated to providing our students with the best of both worlds - a fusion of advanced technology and essential life skills. Our students' dedication remains unwavering and their thirst for knowledge never ceases. The future is full of promise and it's unfolding right here at New York Academy."

Also, the institute has received accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), marking it as the second institution in India to attain this prestigious recognition.

Day of persons with disabilities observed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ashray Akurti, a non-government organisation, has organised an event on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD) which is observed on December 4 at Satya Sai Nigamagaram. The event brought together leading corporates who are recognised for their outstanding contributions through CSR and volunteer awards and showcased the exceptional talents of people with disabilities.

Qualcomm's contribution of sound processors for cochlear implanted children and hearing aids, alongside State Street's generous donation of laptops for multimedia and animation students, showcased their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and fostering educational opportunities.

TS Open School Society releases SSC, Inter results

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana Open School Society (TOSS) released results of the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Intermediate public examinations that were organised from October 16 to 26 on the official website www.telanganaopenschool.org on Monday. Candidates can view or download their results on the website.

With regards to the SSC exams, the number of candidates who appeared is 11,357 while the number of candidates who passed is 4,053. The pass percentage of SSC exams is 35.69 whereas, in the case of Intermediate exams, the number of candidates who appeared is 15,348 while number of candidates who passed is 8,191. The pass percentage of Intermediate exams is 53.37.

The printed memorandum of marks of pass or fail candidates will be sent to the concerned institutions within 15 days. Candidates can download a copy of the memorandum from the official website. Any discrepancy in memos shall be brought to the notice of the State Office of Telangana Open School Society, Hyderabad, on or before December 21 through the District Educational Officer (DEO) or headmaster or principal and AI Coordinator concerned. No correspondence shall be entertained after the prescribed date for the corrections.



The fee payments for recounting of marks and re-

verification-cum-supply of photocopy of valued answer script will be scheduled from December 7 to December 16. Candidates can pay their fees through the official website or MEE-Seva on the scheduled dates. There is no need to send a separate application form to the TOSS. For SSC candidates, the fee for recounting of valued answer script is Rs 350 while for re-verification-cum-supply of photocopy of valued answer script is Rs 1,200 whereas for Intermediate candidates, the fee for recounting of valued answer script is Rs 400.

Rhinoceros treated for eyeball enlargement at zoo park

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A rhinoceros at the Nehru Zoological Park was on Monday treated for eyeball enlargement.

The male rhinoceros was identified as Sai Vijay (11) which experienced pain in the eye since June 2023. For the operation there was need of etorphine drug as this is considered the most widely used Ultra Potent Opioid (UPO) in zoo and wildlife anesthesia and is the induction agent of choice for elephant, rhinoceros, non-domestic equids and other hoof stock.

With the keen interest and efforts of MC Pargaen, Chief Wildlife Warden, Hyderabad, and VSNV Prasad, Conservator of Forests/Director, Zoo Parks, Hyderabad, Dr Sunil S Hiremath, Curator, Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad, it was procured from Mysore Zoo

on loan basis.

The surgery was successfully conducted for Enucleation (removal of eyeball) of the left eye by the team of Dr G Shambhulingam, Assistant Director (Vet.), Dr MA Hakeem, Deputy Director (Vet.) Dr Ch Praveen Kumar, Veterinary Assistant Surgeon, along with Dr J Radhakrishna Rao, Associate Professor of Surgery and Dr M Navin Kumar, Deputy Director (Retd.) with assistance of zoo veterinary staff and animal keepers.

All the samples were collected and sent to VBRI, Shantinagar, Hyderabad for Histopathological, Haematological and Serological for confirmatory diagnosis. This is a major surgical intervention taken up in Hyderabad Zoo in coordination with different veterinary doctors.



TSCOST to organise 31st Children's Science Congress

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Council of Science and Technology (TSCOST), in association with the School Education Dept., State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), will be organising the Telangana State-Level Event of the 31st National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) on Tuesday at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) and Institute of Genetics, Begumpet, Hyderabad.

About 127 projects are qualified to participate in the State-level event from among 2,423 projects presented at the district-level events. About 400 child scientists, guide teachers, district coordinators, district academic coordinators, evaluators, resource persons and TSCOST officials from all over the State will be participating in the event.

The focal theme announced by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India for the 31st NCSC, 2023, is "Understanding Ecosystem for Health and



Well-being" and the sub-themes are Know Your Ecosystem, Fostering Health, Nutrition and Well-being; Social and Cultural Practices for Ecosystem and Health; Ecosystem-based Approach for Self-Reliance and Technological Innovation for Ecosystem and Health.

Selected Science-based projects at the district-level events of NCSC will be presented by the respective child scientists (group leaders) at the State-level event before the jury members and will be evaluated based on their performance as per the guidelines of the National Council of Science and Technology (NCSTC). The evaluation process will be governed by scientists and

academicians.

The National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) is catalysed and supported by the NCSTC, Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India. It provides a unique opportunity for the child scientists to present their investigatory projects and interact with eminent scientists thereby creating a zeal for entering into the world of science and technology. TSCOST is the State Nodal Agency for the conduct of NCSC in the State of Telangana.

NCSC is organised at three levels district level, State level and national level for children belonging to age group from 10-17 years. A group of children not exceeding two can do the project with the help of scientists, school teachers and coordinators of the school. The teachers or guides receive special orientation on the theme of the CSC every year. As per the quota fixed in Telangana, 13 best projects will be chosen for presentation at the National Level Children's Science Congress (NCSC).

OU students demand removal of barricades

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Since the commencement of elections, Osmania University students have been demanding the administration officials to remove barricades around the university gates.

Hemanth, a student from Mass Communication and Journalism said, "We are demanding the administration officials to remove barricades at the university gates and want the gates to be open till 11 pm.

Also, some of the students accused the VC of removing the barricade near the police station and allowing movement of vehicles at all times 24*7. We demanded the officials not to make the university a closed campus."

Praveen Kumar Gaddam, an MSc student, said, "Since the commencement of elections, we have been demanding the VC to remove barricades. Vice-Chancellor Prof Ravinder is imitating the dictatorship like the former chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao by turning the OU into a



closed campus. He has set up barricades and bandobast near the administration building, university gates and police station.

We demanded the removal of barricades to allow the movement of vehicles at all times. We also demanded to construct more hostel buildings for the students and there are alarming rates of snake bites issues in the hostels, especially in the NRS-PhD hostel."

Responding to students' allegations, Prof Ravinder said, "When the Congress party comes to power, all the restrictions will be removed and there should be no conditions to meet the OU VC."

Special trains between Subedarganj & Secunderabad

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

To clear extra rush, South Central Railway (SCR) will run special trains between Subedarganj and Secunderabad from December 14 to January 27. Train No. 04121 (Subedarganj - Secunderabad) will depart from Subedarganj at 3:50 pm on Thursdays and will arrive at Secunderabad at 8 pm on Fridays from December 14 to January 25 while Train No. 04122 (Secunderabad - Subedarganj) will depart from Secunderabad at 4:30 am on Saturdays and will arrive at Subedarganj at 10 am on Sundays from December 16 to January 27. These trains will stop at Fatehpur, Kanpur Central, Bhimsen, Pokhrayan, Orai, Virangan, Lakshimbai, Bina, Bhopal, Itarsi, Jujharpur, Nagpur, Balharshah, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Mancherial, Peddapalli and Kazipet stations in both the directions.

The trains will consist of AC II tier, AC III tier, sleeper and general second class coaches.

BFSI CONCLAVE 2023

Diverse dimensions of inclusive growth discussed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Institute of Management Technology (IMT) Hyderabad, in collaboration with BFSI consortium, on Monday conducted the first edition of the BFSI Conclave titled "Innovations for Inclusive Growth."

India is poised to achieve a 5 trillion economy by 2027, while aiming to become the third largest economy in the world. It is the responsibility of the government and regulators to take every segment of the people in the growth story. India's digital push has created significant marks in banking the unbanked segment through various initiatives, 67 per cent of rural and semi-urban have been brought into the formal banking system through Pradhan Mantri Jan

Dhan Yojana. Still, India needs to go a significant distance to ensure inclusive growth. The conclave emphasised purpose based and impactful innovation to onboard the bottom of the pyramid.

The programme comprised various speakers from the Asian Development Bank (Manila), Insurance Regulatory Development Authority, Bandhan Bank, Axi Bank, Jana Small Finance Bank and SuSEED Innovation fund gathered to exchange insights and strategies. The event's agenda included dynamic panel discussions and addresses that explored the diverse dimensions of inclusive growth, from Banking, Financial Services and Insurance Sectors.

Dr Sriharsha Reddy K, Director of IMT Hyderabad,

welcomed everyone on behalf of IMT. Rajesh Balaraju, London Stock Exchange Group, Core group member BFSI conclave, mentioned the need for practical knowledge in this hour.

Prof Sarath Babu, BFSI Conclave Chair, IMT Hyderabad, discussed the conclave theme - Innovations for Inclusive Growth. He mentioned that digital finance is making it easier to take credits. He highlighted the need for Inclusive Banking.

Joined by esteemed guest Dr Subhash Chandra Khuntia, Chairman of Jana Small Finance Bank and former IRDAI Chairman, the conversation provided in-depth insights into the multifaceted dynamics of insurance penetration in rural versus urban India.

Suicides by farmers down by half in Telangana

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Suicides by farmers came down by half in Telangana as per the report 'Accidental deaths and suicides in India (ADSI) 2022', released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Of the 178 farmers who ended their lives in 2022, five were women. In 2021, of the 352 farmers who ended their lives, 29 were women.

No suicides by tenant farmers were recorded in 2022. All the suicides were by land-owning farmers. In all, 49 tenant farmers had committed suicide in 2021.

However, Telangana continues to rank fourth in the country in suicides by farmers and daily-wage labourers. It was in the same position in 2021 too. There is a decline in suicides by the unemployed to 133 in 2022 from 192 in 2021. In 2022, nine people ended their lives citing unemployment.

This was 28 in 2021.

Around 543 students ended their lives in 2022 while it was 567 in 2021. About 66 suicides were due to failure in examinations.

Suicides by professionals working for private companies declined to 714 in 2022 from 952 in 2021. Around 62 state government employees ended their lives in 2022.

In 2022 around 9,980 persons committed suicide while in 2021 there were 10,171 suicides. Overall, the state stood seventh in suicide deaths in 2022 while it was sixth in 2021. Around 5,390 suicides were due to family problems which were a major cause. Medical problems forced 1,658 persons to end their lives while indebtedness drove 1,163 to suicide.

Around 163 people committed suicide due to marriage-related issues and 221 due to love affairs in Telangana.

TS registered 937 murder cases in 2022, says NCRB

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A total of 937 FIRs were registered for murder in Telangana in 2022, that is, an average of 2.5 murders every day, according to the latest National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data.

A total of 28,522 FIRs were registered for murder in 2022 across India, an average of 78 killings per day. 'Disputes' were the reason behind 516 murder cases in 2022. This was followed by 258 cases of family disputes and 134 petty quarrels, says the annual NCRB report. The NCRB functions under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

The rate of murder per lakh population across Telangana stood at 2.5, while charge-sheeting in such cases was 92.2 per cent, says the NCRB. The rate of murder per lakh population across India stood

A total of 28,522 FIRs were registered for murder in 2022 across India, an average of 78 killings per day. 'Disputes' were the reason behind 516 murder cases in 2022

2022 were Sikkim (9), Nagaland (21), Mizoram (31), Goa (44) and Manipur (47), according to the NCRB, which collects and analysis crime data.

Among Union Territories, Delhi registered 509 cases of murder in 2022 followed by J&K (99), Puducherry (30), Chandigarh (18), Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (16), Andaman and Nicobar Islands (7), Ladakh (5) and Lakshadweep (0).

Across India in 2022, the murder rate was the highest in Jharkhand (4), followed by Arunachal Pradesh (3.6), Chhattisgarh and Haryana (both 3.4), Assam and Odisha (both 3).

Uttar Pradesh (1.5), Bihar (2.3), Maharashtra (1.8), Madhya Pradesh (2.3) and Rajasthan (2.3) fared better in terms of crime per lakh population.

Cong govt asked to allow admissions to students

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Due to the Telangana Legislative Assembly elections, young citizens and others had travelled across the State to cast their votes and return to Hyderabad and other places of work or study.

However, during this period, it was observed that the former government has not extended the last date for the first phase of web options for BSc.(MLT) which is on December 1. Due to this, an admission of a poor girl student got stranded when she exercised her web option past the last date i.e. on December 2.

The student was allowed to

pay a fee of Rs 6,000 and was issued an allotment letter for Khammam Nursing College to pursue a B.Sc (MLT). Subsequently, a message was issued to the student that her admission was cancelled thereby losing an academic year.

Dr Lubna Sarwath, an activist said, "On this basis, it is appealed to the Congress government, that the students who have exercised web options after December 1 for the first phase or all the students must be allowed to exercise their options in the second phase or allow admissions through second phase options to all those who have paid their web option fees."

‘Will strengthen party ahead of LS polls’

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen president Asaduddin Owaisi on Monday said that the party would introspect the lacuna during the Telangana Assembly elections and strengthen itself ahead of the general elections in 2024.

Addressing a query on low vote share for the party, he said, "There are quite a few reasons for low polling percentage. One of them being the police and paramilitary forces being deployed for no apparent 'sensitive' issues, barricading, road blocks which poses a challenge for people to step out. Secondly, the party may be lacking something and we will

look to improve on it.

Thirdly, the public seems to be losing interest, they see it as holiday and look to spend leisure time. Fourthly, I can't understand why polling booths be placed in private convention halls when government schools can operate in private buildings? The Election Commission of India must try and hire private marriage halls. Smaller buildings are being used as polling stations which have two polling booths. How will the polling percentage increase? Numerous elderly people missed out on voting since there are no arrangements for them at these polling stations. We will inspect the lacuna from our side and



ensure that the voting percentage increases during the parliamentary elections.

Speaking of the reduced majority in Yakutpura, Owaisi said, "The party will have to introspect over the weakness and what needs to be done. It is definitely a cause of concern for us and it will be addressed. I thank the Yakutpura voters,

however the results could have been better."

Addressing a question on the possibility of Congress approaching the AIMIM for support, the Hyderabad MP said, "I don't know what is going to happen. However, we wish for peace and prosperity of Telangana and for that we will play our role as an opposition party."

He further said, "It's too early to say what changes the new government will bring in. We will have to wait and watch. The incoming government has made various promises to the people; as far as we are concerned the government will be made accountable."

Film Nagar police arrests three for camel slaughter

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The North Zone Task Force, in coordination with the Filmnagar police, on Sunday arrested three persons for capturing camels with an intention to slaughter them. The police rescued four camels.

The incident occurred at Hakeempet Kunta; the accused were identified as Mohammed Ismail (31), Mohamed Salman (23) and Siraj Khan (40), all butchers and residents of Tolichowki. The police seized two butcher knives, three butcher cutting support wood, four weighing scale and measurement weights.

Ismail earlier worked in

beef shop as butcher. Currently he is running a beef shop named 'Best Beef Shop' near Gate No. 2, Pramont Colony, Hyderabad.

The accused planned to sell camel meat and gain easy money, for which they contacted Shyam, a resident of Indore. Three months ago they have purchased seven camels. Out of them they slaughtered three camels and sold the meat at Rs 400 per kg to customers.

Based on a tip off, Commissioner's Task Force, North Zone apprehended the accused and handed them over to SHO Filmnagar Police Station for taking further action.

Modi proves to be a Karma Yogi

In an endless criticism, the Opposition called Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a despot. He was accused of not paying attention to the welfare of the poor. He was described as a bad omen for the country. The PM was target of a lot of criticism by the Opposition parties.

The Opposition parties, whose alliance has been named after the name of the country INDIA, have tried to hoodwink the people. On every minor issue, they tried to filibuster the Parliament. They described Modi as an anti-democratic leader.

Raising above the criticism, Narendra Modi worked like a Karma Yogi day and night and worked hard to ensure the BJP victory in the recently concluded elections to five states. As part of the campaign, he explained to the people the development initiatives of the BJP at the Centre and also in states. He highlighted the issues like

free rations, enabling an Adivasi woman to become President of India, the honour India received through G-20 summit and the rise of the country as the third largest economy from the 10th position in world. He addressed 42 election meetings and 4 road shows explaining how corruption, family rule, politics of appeasement will come into play if the opposition parties were to come to power.

The recently-concluded Assembly polls proved that the people of the country realised which party should come to power at the Centre and also in states for the good of their future. The BJP posting grand victory in the states of MP, Rajasthan and Chattisgarh was not limited to these states alone but it demonstrated the nation's mood.

The results of elections held to the three northern states proved that the

The recently-concluded Assembly polls proved that the people of the country realised which party should come to power at the Centre and also in states for the good of their future. The BJP posting grand victory in the states of MP, Rajasthan and Chattisgarh was not limited to these states alone but it demonstrated the nation's mood.

Congress is not capable of entering into straight contest with the BJP. This is attributed to the failure of the Congress to play the role of the constructive Opposition.

Just for the namesake a Dalit like Mallikarjun Kharge was appointed Congress president, but the election campaign and strategy was totally devised by the members of the once ruling family and those who played second fid-

dle to it.

During the UPA regime, Manmohan Singh was reduced to a nominal PM, while the forces that wielded power were behind the screen. In the same fashion, the forces ran the show using the nominal president as the front.

It was campaigned that the Bharat Jodo Yatra revived the Congress. But, the people saw through the true colours



Y SATYA KUMAR
BJP National Secretary

of the Congress irrespective of subjecting the party to various changes, which are not real.

The people rejected Rahul Gandhi as he could not do anything except slinging mud on Modi with his immature criticism. They realised that Rahul Gandhi was not capable of leading the Congress.

The people have realised how the financial position of Karnataka became adversely affected upon handing over

reins of the State to the party attracted by the non-feasible guarantees promised by the Congress. They have noticed the scams perpetrated in all spheres of activity, including mining sector, in Chattisgarh and Rajasthan and how the governemnts played with the lives of students and failed to deliver the promises made to the people.

Similarly, the people have noticed the welfare and development programmes under way in Madhya Pradesh during the past 20 years since the BJP coming to power in the State in 2003. Results of elections held to the State legislative assemblies prove that the people realised the importance of having double-engine circar both in the State and at the Centre and how the country would grow in such an environment.

The prediction of Congress

imminent victory in Chattisgarh and having a keen contest in Rajasthan and MP went haywire.

The Opposition predicted that the people would be antagonistic to Sivraj Singh Chauhan government since the BJP was ruling MP since long. But Sivraj Singh Chauhan overcame the opposition to his government.

In Telangana too, the BJP surprised all by winning eight Assembly seats and ranked second in 19 seats. Across the State, the BJP polled 32.25 lakh, which is no mean an achievement. The BJP vote share, compared to last elections, has improved by 14% during the current polls. BJP candidate Venkatarami Reddy defeated CM KCR and pushed the PCC president Revanth Reddy to the third position, which is a historic development. It is clear that the people buried the BRS as

the people noticed how the family rule, corruption, anarchy and arrogance of power reached its heights during the past 10 years.

It became clear to outside world how AP Chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy tried to save KCR government by engineering clashes at Nagarjunasagar project in the last minute. Jagan tried to ensure KCR's victory as his financial interests were linked to both KCR and Hyderabad city. However, the people of Telangana repulsed Jagan's designs.

What is going to happen in 2024? The answer is obvious. Today, the BJP is in power on its own majority in 12 states. It is running coalition governments in four more states, while the Congress was limited to ruling only in three states. Moreover, the BJP will be able to emerge victorious easily in states where it is pitted face-to-face with the Congress.

Jagadish Reddy withstands Cong wave to post hat-trick

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Withstanding the Congress wave that swept across Telangana strongly, Energy Minister G Jagadish Reddy managed to keep his head above the water and won from his Suryapet seat for the third time posting a hat-trick.

He was serving as a minister in KCR Cabinet for the past nine-and-a-half years winning the elections on BRS ticket in 2014 and 2018 also. Because of creating a district with Suryapet as district headquarters and developing the district remarkably compared to his previous rulers enabled him to withstand the Congress onslaught, according to reports reaching here.

Out of the three rural mandals of his Assembly segment, he managed to get a slight lead in Atmakur (S) mandal, the BRS managed to get good majority in Penpahad and Chivvemla mandals. Till a fortnight before the elections, the main fight was largely confined between the Congress and the BRS. However, BJP candidate Sankineni

stepped up his campaign at the field level and gave a tough fight to both the Congress and the BRS.

The Congress rank and file attribute the defeat of Congress candidate in spite of clear wave in favour of the Congress in the State to delay on the part of the Congress high command in deciding the party candidate.

Though the Congress leaders were successful in getting the rebel candidate Patel Ramesh Reddy to withdraw from the contest, the party apparently lagged behind on other parties in campaign and poll management towards the fag end of the campaign leading to Congress nominee's defeat.

Even urban voters lent their support to Jagadish Reddy helping him win from the constituency. Jagadish Reddy campaigned vigorously explaining the schemes and explaining the gatherings how the atmosphere in BRS regime was favourable to the businessmen here. Besides, his poll management methods helped him withstand the Congress wave to emerge as the sole BRS MLA in the district.



BJP will have done better if Sanjay was TS prez: Katipally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Giant killer Katipally Venkat Ramana Reddy said that the BJP would have done much better in the TS Assembly elections if Bandi Sanjay Kumar had continued as the BJP's TS unit president.

Speaking to the media on Monday, Katipally said that people are saying that the BJP would have done better if Sanjay had continued as the president of Telangana BJP. He said that he didn't know why the central party leadership removed him.

He said that the party



expects 30 to 40 seats but the party's important leaders lost



elections. He said that it is sad that the party stood second in

One charred to death as bus catches fire



However, an alert driver immediately made the bus passengers alight the bus immediately. In the fire mishap, one person was

charred to death and luggage of the commuters was completely gutted. On learning about the accident, the police immediate-

ly swung into action and rushed the injured to the District headquarters government hospital in Nalgonda and the Kamineni Hospital here. There were 39 passengers when the bus caught fire. The bus was proceeding to Chirala from Hyderabad when it met with the accident. The police took steps to dispatch the stranded passengers to their respective destinations in alternative vehicles.

BJP's vote share doubled in TS, says Kishan Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Declaring that those who spread falsehood against the Centre and the BJP were dispatched to their farmhouse, Telangana BJP President G Kishan Reddy said that the BJP will strive hard to put up a good show in the next Parliament elections.

He said that the BJP's voting percentage had increased 100 per cent compared to 2018 and that the BJP is the only party whose vote share had increased in Telangana.

Addressing the media on Monday, Kishan said that the BJP created history by defeating two CM candidates in Kamareddy. The BJP's Katipally Venkata Ramana Reddy's five-year effort succeeded in Kamareddy and the BJP's leadership has expressed happiness over it, Kishan said.

The Union Minister said that he was confident that



Prime Minister Modi will achieve a hat-trick by coming to power at the Centre in the 2024 LS elections.

He said that BRS president KCR went to Pragathi Bhavan while being a culprit before people.

Kishan said that the BJP is the party that had launched several public movements against the BRS's failures and added that both the Congress and the BRS gained by spending big money in the elections.

He said that the Congress lost power in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh and the people

gave a huge majority to the BJP in those states. He said the BJP retained power in Madhya Pradesh.

He said that the BJP would respect the people of Telangana who gave a majority to the Congress and that he would explain the election pattern and the conditions prevailing in Telangana to the BJP high command.

He said that the people had given an indication that they would vote for Prime Minister Modi and that the BJP would move forward without disappointment.

"We will analyse the results. The BJP's action plan will be an alternative to the Congress. The BJP will be a constructive opposition in the next five years. The coming Lok Sabha elections will decide the nation's future and we will take the help of everyone during Parliament elections," Kishan said.

Gandhi wins for the third time from biggest constituency

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The biggest-ever constituency in the country - Serilingampalli Assembly constituency - which is home to several IT units that employs lakhs of workers from all parts of the country sailed with the BRS because of development works implemented at a cost of Rs 9,000 crore with the support of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao and the then IT Minister KT Rama Rao.

The BRS has failed to achieve the feat of hat-trick in forming government in Telangana but its MLA Arikepudi Gandhi from Serilingampalli seat has achieved the hat-trick winning the seat for the third consecutive time in a row.

He achieved 47,000-vote majority over his nearest Congress rival Jagadeeshwar Goud. Though the poll per-

centage recorded in the constituency was only 48.85, a large chunk of the polled votes went to the BRS candidate. The BRS rank and file congratulated Gandhi, the BRS nominee for winning the third time.

Responding to the overwhelming victory, Gandhi said that he would fulfill his duty towards the people by developing the constituency comprehensively.

He demonstrated a clear lead from his nearest Congress rival right from the first round. The votes polled were counted in 23 rounds. As the BRS demonstrated clear lead right from the round one, an impatient Congress candidate Jagadeeshwar Goud left the counting hall after the counting of votes for the 11th round.

The BJP candidate who figured in the third position from the second round was not present at the counting hall at all.



The following are the votes polled to BRS candidate: 1st round-6,582, 2nd round-8,002, 3rd round-5,729, 4th round-7,197, 5th round-8,490, 6th round-10,074, seventh round-11,403, 8th round-12,691, 9th round-14,333, 10th round-17,412, 11th round -18,634, 12th round-24,064, 13th round-26,629, 14th round-24,939, 15th round-29,947, 16th round-33,793, 17th round-34,563, 18th round-36,413, 19th round-38,148, 20th round-38,569, 21st round-41,142, 22nd round-44,065 and 23rd round-46,647.

SCCL TU polls to be held on Dec 27

PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM

Elections to choose the recognised trade union (TU) of the Singareni Colliers Company Limited will be held on December 27, according to deputy labour commissioner and SCCL polls official Srinivasulu.

He handed over the list of voters comprising SCCL workers to the trade union leaders. The notification for holding elections to choose the recognised trade union in the SCCL was issued in the past. However, the polls were postponed in view of the impending elections to the State Legislative Assembly.

KCR era over in TS, says Dharmapuri Arvind

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP's Nizamabad MP, Dharmapuri Arvind, said that the era of BRS President K Chandrasekhar Rao has ended and that the 2023 TS Assembly polls would be the last election of the BRS. He said that the battle in the next election would be between the Congress and the BJP.

Speaking to the media in New Delhi on Monday, Arvind said that the BJP was very strong in TS till last year but the Congress gained a lot last year in Telangana.

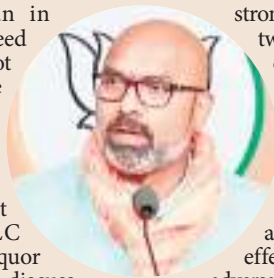
"Many changes took place in Telangana politics. Dignified language is coming back now in Telangana. I

hope the Congress will not use offensive language and that the culture of violence will end in the State. Our politics will be clean in Telangana. There is a need to discuss why the BJP got only eight seats. The people got the impression that the BRS and the BJP are one and so the BJP suffered losses. Another reason is not arresting BRS MLC Kavitha in the Delhi liquor scam. There is a need to discuss these issues," Arvind said.

He said that only the BJP and the Congress would survive in Telangana

and that the BJP would come to power again at the Centre. "I contested

Korutla where the party had no strong candidate. The BJP won two seats in this Lok Sabha constituency. I thank the people of Korutla. The people treated me like an MP. I contested without distributing a single paisa in these elections. The Congress wave spread across the State and it had its effect in Korutla too. My adversary spent Rs 34 crore against me. Revanth Reddy came up from the rock bottom. I extend my congratulations to him," Arvind said.



Lucky 8 and unlucky 9

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

There were eight lucky persons who in the last minute joined the Congress and won the elections as the BRS showed them an empty hand to nominate them.

The following are the candidates who crossed over to the Congress in the last minute and won the elections: Vemula Veerasam (Nakrekal), Jupally Krishna Rao (Kollapur), Kasireddy Narayana Reddy (Kalwakurthy), Mandula Samuel (Tungaturti), Tummal Nageswara Rao (Khammam), Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy (Palair), Payam Venkateswarlu

(Pinapaka) and Koram Kanakiah (Ilandu). In a similar incident, the voters gave a rude shock to nine MLAs out of the 12 MLAs who were elected to the legislative Assembly on the Congress, TDP and the BRS but crossed over to other parties by ensuring their defeat at the hustings. In the last elections, Haripriya Naik, Rega Kanta Rao, Vanama Venkateswara Rao, Rohit Reddy, Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy, Chirumarti Lingaiah, Gandra Venkata Ramana Reddy, Atram Sakku, D Sudhir Reddy and Sabita Indira Reddy were elected to the State Legislative

Assembly on the Congress ticket but later joined the BRS.

While Sabita Indra Reddy was elected to the State Legislative Assembly on the BRS ticket from Maheshwaram, Sudheer Reddy was elected to the Assembly from LB Nagar. The BRS denied ticket to Atram Sakku. The rest of the nine leaders were rejected by the voters. Sandra Venkata Veeraiah and Mechcha Nageswara Rao, who joined the BRS from the TDP, were also rejected by the voters. Similarly, Eatalla Rajender who resigned from the BRS to join the BJP tasted defeat at Gajwel as well as his Huzurabad constituency.

INDIA CORNER

Senior White House official meets External Affairs Minister Jaishankar

The US' Principal Deputy NSA Jonathan Finer on Monday separately met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and NSA Ajit Doval with a focus on shoring up bilateral ties, in the first publicly announced engagement between the two sides after Washington alleged an Indian link to a foiled plot to kill a Sikh separatist on its soil. Finer, currently on a visit to New Delhi, and his Indian counterpart Vikran Misri undertook the first comprehensive mid-term review of the India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) during wide-ranging talks. In May last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden launched the iCET to facilitate outcome-oriented cooperation between the two nations in new and emerging technologies. "During the consultations, the two Deputy NSAs reviewed key bilateral issues and exchanged views on regional and global developments," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.



Army deploys double humped camels for logistical support

The Army on Monday said it has deployed double humped camels for logistical support to the troops in eastern Ladakh. Ladakh, a cold desert, is home to the domesticated form of the Bactrian camels, also known as double-humped camels, which are mainly used for carrying goods but are also popular among tourists for safaris in the Nubra valley in the Union Territory. "Bactrian (double humped) camels are deployed in Eastern Ladakh as an innovative means for last mile delivery of critical load and mounted patrolling in sandy terrain of plateau," the Army's Udhampur-based northern command wrote on X. "The utilisation of camels, generated employment for Awam (public) and also paved way for conservation of fast dwindling population of double humped camels in Ladakh," the post added. The Army also shared a video of the deployed double humped camels along with the post.



Amazon to introduce advanced coding & AI modules in schools

Amazon.in on Monday announced the expansion of its Amazon Future Engineer (AFE) program to introduce advanced coding and artificial intelligence (AI) modules in 100 Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) schools. The company said in a statement it will also provide digital infrastructure enhancements for 30 KREIS schools. "This expansion will impact over 13,000 students in grades six to eight across 30 districts of Karnataka," it said. The expanded module will enable students to develop complex computer applications incorporating advanced programming concepts like control conditions, variables, and functions, the company said. "Additionally, through project-based learning, students will also be introduced to the basics of AI with a further understanding of its relevance and future possibilities.



RS passes Post Office Bill to amend 125-yr-old Act

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Monday passed the Post Office Bill, 2023 that seeks to repeal the 125-year-old Indian Post Office Act and consolidate and amend the law relating to post offices in the country. According to the proposed legislation, "the central government may, by notification, empower any officer to intercept, open or detain any item in the interest of the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, emergency or public safety, or upon the occurrence of any contravention of any of the provisions of any law for the time being in force". Replying to the discussion for the consideration of the Bill in the Upper House of Parliament, Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw explained the provision for interception. "In a society which is as complex and diverse, and times



which are as difficult as they are, it is very important that interception is done. This kind of a provision is kept for national security," he said. The Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha during the Monsoon Session of Parliament. According to the statement of objects and reasons of the bill, over the years, the services available through post offices have diversified beyond mail and the post office network has become a vehicle for delivery of a variety of citizen-centric services, which necessitated the repeal of the Indian Post Office Act.

Bill infringes right to privacy: Oppn

Several opposition parties like the Left and AAP in Rajya Sabha on Monday opposed the new post office bill, which has provisions allowing the postal officer to "open, detain, or destroy" parcels in the interest of national or public security. They claimed it was an infringement of the fundamental right to privacy. Members from parties including the NCP, AIADMK, and TDP also raised concerns over Section 9 of the Post Office Bill, 2023, which grants the "Power to intercept, open or detain any item or deliver the item to customs authority" and said it against federal principles. Some MPs alleged that the Act can be "misused" and is akin to allowing surveillance of citizens. Participating in the debate, Congress' Shaktisinh Gohil objected to the provision of the

bill that gives the power to intercept shipments to specified officers, saying it would infringe on the right to privacy. "The right of privacy is a fundamental right. I understand that security is important and you are doing it for the safety of the people but in the name of security...in which direction are we going?" he asked. The act allows the interception of a shipment being transmitted through the post on certain grounds such as any public emergency, or in the interest of public safety or tranquillity, Gohil said, asking the government to clarify what is a "public emergency, public safety or tranquillity". "Such interceptions may be carried out by central, state governments or any officer specially authorised by them."

71% rural households have tap water connection

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 71 per cent rural households across the country have tap water connection under the Jal Shakti Mission till now, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Monday. In a written reply, Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti Prahlad Singh Patel said nine states/Union territories -- Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Telangana, A&N Islands, Dadra Nagar Haveli and Daman Diu and Puducherry have reported that they had provided tap water connection to all rural households as on September 30. At the time of announcement of Jal Jeevan Mission on August 15, 2019, 3.23 crore (17 per cent) rural households were reported to have tap water connections. So far, as reported by states/UTs as on November 29, around 10.46 crore additional rural households have been provided with tap water connections, the minister said.

MIZORAM POLLS

ZPM dethrones MNF, bags 27 of 40 seats

PNS ■ AIZAWL

The Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) stormed to power in Mizoram by dethroning the Mizo National Front (MNF) bagging 27 seats in the 40-member House on Monday. Prominent ZPM winners include the party's CM face Lalduhoma, who secured the Serchhip seat defeating his MNF rival J Malsawmzuala Vanchhawng by 2,982 votes. The ruling Mizo National Front won nine seats and was leading in one. The BJP won the Palak and Saiha seats. The Indian National Congress bagged the Lawngtlai West seat. Prominent losers include Deputy Chief Minister and MNF candidate Tawnluia who lost to ZPM candidate in Tuichang, Health Minister and MNF candidate R Lalthangliana who lost to ZPM's Jeje Lalpekhluia in

South Tuipui and Rural Development Minister Laruatkima who lost to ZPM nominee Lalngthinglova Hmar in Aizawl West II, according to the Election Commission. Chief Minister and MNF chief Zoramthanga lost to ZPM's Lalthansanga by 2,101 votes, it said. ZPM emerged winners in Kolasib, Chalfih, Tawi, Aizawl North-I, Aizawl North-II, Aizawl North-III, Aizawl East I, Aizawl East II, Aizawl West-I, Aizawl West-II, Aizawl West-III, Aizawl South-I, Aizawl South-II, Aizawl South-III, Lengteng, Tuichang, Champhai North, Champhai South, Tuikum, Hrangturzo, South Tuipui, Lunglei North, Lunglei East, Lunglei West, Lunglei South, Lawngtlai East and Serchhip seats. The MNF won in Hachhek, Mamik, Tuirial, Serlui, Tuivawl, East Tuipui, West Tuipui, Thorang and Tuichawng seats and was leading in one.

Lalduhoma, the man who guarded Indira Gandhi, set to be Mizoram CM

From earning the dubious distinction of the first MP to be disqualified under the anti-defection law to being all set to becoming the chief minister of Mizoram, 73-year-old Lalduhoma's political journey has been all about battling against odds. Lalduhoma, an ex-IPS officer who served as the in-charge of former prime minister Indira Gandhi's security, is the chief ministerial face of the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM). The ZPM which was registered as a political party only in 2019 secured a majority in the Mizoram assembly on Monday, winning 27 of the 40 seats and leading in one other, as votes were being counted, according to the Election Commission.

‘Over confidence’ cost us Rajasthan, MP, Chhattisgarh: Assam Cong chief

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Assam Congress chief Bhupen Kumar Borah on Monday said that the grand old party lost the assembly elections in the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh due to "over confidence". He praised the "fighting spirit of the BJP" in the three states and said that the saffron party was "striving for victory even when all indications were pointing at the BJP's defeat". "The results of the assembly elections were a warning for us not to be too confident," Borah told reporters at state party headquarters Rajiv Bhavan here. He said that during his interaction with Congress leaders of these states, there was no indication from them that the party could lose the assembly polls. "We have to give it to the BJP that they fought till the end



even when they were told that they are losing. But we (Congress) thought that we had already won," he said. "It is a lesson for us in Assam also (not to be over confident)," Borah added. The BJP retained Madhya Pradesh, while it wrestled Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh from the Congress in the state assembly polls, the results of which were declared on Sunday. Telangana was the only state where the grand old party emerged victorious. He maintained that the elec-

toral results in these states would not have any bearing on the party's fortunes in Assam. "The election issues are state-specific. In Assam, our main issues will be corruption and syndicate raj by the BJP-led regime here. Wherever we fought with corruption as the main agenda, like in Karnataka or Telangana, we emerged victorious," he said. Borah claimed that central agencies such as CBI and ED, which the opposition accuses of working at the behest of the BJP-led NDA government, would align with the INDIA bloc as soon as they see that public opinion was in favour of the now opposition camp. "These agencies are being used to create problems for Congress leaders. But in 2024, as soon as the agencies see that INDIA bloc is gaining ground, they will shift allegiance towards us," he added.

NEED TO WORK HARDER, SAY OPPOSITION LEADERS

Assembly poll results won't impact INDIA bloc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The recently concluded Assembly polls that saw the BJP win three states will not impact the INDIA bloc but the opposition parties need to work harder for the Lok Sabha polls next year, opposition leaders said on Monday. The BJP swept Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh on Sunday, inflicting a resounding defeat on the Congress to tighten its stranglehold in the Hindi heartland, in a big boost for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and setting the tone for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. In some consolation for the

Congress in the face of the saffron wave after it lost Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the party ousted the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) in Telangana. A day after the results, National Conference (NC) leader Farooq Abdullah said the opposition INDIA bloc parties will have to work harder. Asked about the results and its possible impact on the alliance, he said, "It will make no difference to the alliance. We will have to work harder." "Victories and losses happen. We should learn from the defeat, as well as from those who have won. India has to be one, it is for everyone, and we



need to strengthen the country," the NC leader said. Asked about the Samajwadi Party not being accommodated in Madhya Pradesh by the Congress while announcing its candidates for the state and its possible impact on the

results, Abdullah said, "All will have to be accommodated and we will have to move forward." Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Manoj Jha also said the results will not impact the alliance.

"These were state polls. These should be left behind. National elections will be held on different issues. It (Assembly poll results) will not have any impact, everyone will have to understand the unity of the INDIA bloc... there is no contradiction," he said. ongness General Secretary KC Venugopal said his party will introspect on what went wrong in the polls and maintained that it will not impact the opposition grouping. All opposition parties attended the meeting at Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge's office in Parliament on Monday morning, he said.

OPPN MEMBERS TO LS SPEAKER BIRLA

Discuss Moitra's expulsion report before taking any decision

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition members on Monday demanded a discussion in the Lok Sabha on the Ethics Committee report, recommending the expulsion of TMC member Mahua Moitra, before any decision was taken on the matter. The opposition members made the demand during the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to finalise the agenda for the House this week. Parliamentary sources said the report of the Ethics Committee on the expulsion of Trinamool Congress leader Moitra from the Lok Sabha was expected to be tabled in the House on Tuesday. The report was listed for presentation in the Lok Sabha on Monday, but the agenda item was not taken up by the presiding officer, raising questions over the continuance of Moitra as a parliamentarian. The Business Advisory Committee also decided to allot 12 hours for discussion on the three bills to replace the colonial-era criminal laws. It also decided to allocate three hours for discussion on the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill. The Lok Sabha's Ethics Committee, chaired



by BJP member Vinod Sonkar, had adopted its report at a meeting on November 9, recommending Moitra's expulsion from the lower house over the "cash-for-query" allegation. Six members of the panel, including Congress member Preet Kaur who had earlier been suspended from the party, voted in favour of the report. Four members of the panel belonging to opposition parties submitted dissent notes. The opposition members termed the report a "fixed match" and said the complaint filed by BJP Lok Sabha member Nishikant Dubey, which the panel reviewed, was not supported by a "shred of evidence". Moitra can be expelled only if the House votes in favour of the panel's recommendation. Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, Moitra said that Trinamool leader Sudip Bandyopadhyay asked the presiding officer as to why the report of the Ethics Committee was not tabled in the Lok Sabha. She said Congress' K Suresh and RSP's N K Premachandran also raised the same question but there was no reply. Later, Congress leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said that for reasons best known to the committee, the report has not been tabled. He said there would have been some reason which "forced them" not to table the report on Monday.

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said with the Centre directly sending funds to panchayats, the power of state governments has been curbed. Because of this, the state is not always updated about the work done by the respective panchayats in an area, she said in the assembly. "As the Centre is now directly sending funds to panchayats with the state having little role, our power has been curbed. We don't have updates about the works done by panchayats," she said. The district magistrate and block development officer concerned have no say in the work of panchayats in their area, she added. Banerjee said, "The Centre has not released Rs 7000 crore due to West Bengal for implementing various projects." The ruling TMC has sever-



al times claimed that due to non-release of funds for MGN-REGA and Awas Yojana by the Centre along with other projects, lakhs of poor people in West Bengal are being affected. "Despite the Centre's attitude (towards Bengal), we will ensure that people do not face hardship," she said. As the chief minister was about to begin her speech, around 25 BJP legislators present stood up and walked out shouting "chor chor" (thieves) donning black badges. The treasury bench did not react and she resumed her speech soon afterwards.

Results indicate BJP returning to power at Centre : Rajnath

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday hailed the BJP's victory in three states as a "spectacular" feat and said the results indicate that the party will return to power at the Centre with a clear majority in 2024. "A spectacular victory it is," Singh told reporters in Parliament Complex. "It seems that the country has made up its mind to ensure that BJP forms its government, winning the 2024 Lok Sabha elections with a clear majority," the former

BJP president added. The BJP swept Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh on Sunday inflicting a resounding defeat on the Congress to tighten its hold in the Hindi heartland, in a big boost for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and setting the tone for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. In some consolation for the Congress in the face of the saffron wave after it lost Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the grand old party ousted the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) in Telangana.

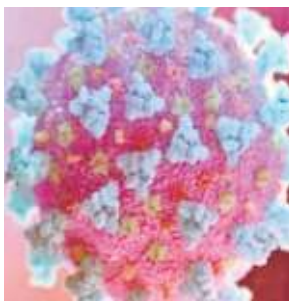


Being overweight hampers immune response

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Being overweight can impair the body's antibody response to SARS-CoV-2 infection but not to the protection offered by COVID-19 vaccination, according to a study. The finding, published in the journal Clinical & Translational Immunology, builds on the team's existing research on how COVID-19 affects people who are overweight. "We have previously shown that being overweight not just being obese increases the sever-

ity of SARS-CoV-2," said Marcus Tong, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Queensland in Australia. "But this work shows that being overweight creates an impaired antibody response to SARS-CoV-2 infection but not to vaccination," Tong said. The team collected blood samples from people who had recovered from COVID-19 and not been reinfected during the study period, approximately three months and 13 months post-infection. "At three months post-infec-



tion, an elevated BMI was associated with reduced antibody levels," Tong said. "And at 13 months post-

infection, an elevated BMI was associated with both reduced antibody activity and a reduced percentage of the relevant B cells, a type of cell that helps build these COVID-fighting antibodies," he added. The body mass index (BMI) is defined as the body mass divided by the square of the body height. In contrast, an elevated BMI had no effect on the antibody response to COVID-19 vaccination at approximately six months after the second vaccine was administered, the

researchers said. According to Kirsty Short, Associate Professor at the University of Queensland, the results should help shape health policy moving forward. "If infection is associated with an increased risk of severe disease and an impaired immune response for the overweight, this group has a potentially increased risk of reinfection," Short said. "It makes it more important than ever for this group to ensure they're vaccinated," she added.

Battle lines drawn

Stormy debates set the tone for the winter session of Parliament as key Bills await passage

The BJP, buoyed by recent triumphs in Assembly elections, is up against a resolute Congress in the hallowed Houses of Parliament with the commencement of the winter session. The session's importance, especially for the Congress, is that it finds its dominance even within the Opposition's INDIA bloc challenged following the electoral setback and needs to restore its image. And since it is the penultimate Parliament session before the general elections, the Government wants to push as many Bills through as possible. The last session would be the budget session, with focus mainly on the Lok Sabha elections and the budget. This session has set the stage for crucial discussions and debates that will shape the nation's legislative landscape ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. Concluding on December 22, the session is poised to be eventful, with a comprehensive agenda comprising 21 Bills and a charged political atmosphere. Adding to the expected drama, the Lok Sabha Ethics



Committee has recommended the expulsion of TMC MP Mahua Moitra over a 'cash-for-query' complaint and the report is scheduled to be tabled in this session. But the report was surprisingly not tabled at least till lunch time Monday though it was item number five on the day's agenda, leading to speculation from the Opposition benches. This led the Congress to raise concerns about the functioning of parliamentary committees, urging a review of rules and processes. It would be interesting to observe what happens next.

One of the focal points of the session is the introduction of three Bills seeking to replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Indian Evidence Act. This move signifies a overhaul of the legal framework and is likely to spark intense debates in both Houses. Another contentious move includes the Bill regarding the appointment of the CEC and Election Commissioners. The Opposition parties are expected to staunchly oppose this Bill. The list comprises 19 legislative business and two financial business Bills. The latter segment will involve the presentation, discussion and voting on the first batch of supplementary demands for grants for 2023-24. Simultaneously, attention will be given to demands for excess grants for 2020-21, accompanied by the introduction, consideration and passing of the related appropriation Bill. With a host of Bills on the agenda and political dynamics at play, the session is likely to be a litmus test for the NDA Government's legislative agenda and the Opposition's resilience. The nation will keenly observe the proceedings as the lawmakers navigate through a range of issues that will shape the nation's legal and political landscape. But the biggest question is, will Parliament function smoothly or be marred by walkouts and pandemonium? If its functioning is disrupted, it could be a big loss to the nation in general and our democracy in particular.

PICTALK



Tourists visit the Marina Beach as high tidal waves lash the shore owing to Cyclone Michaung, in Chennai

PTI

No rationale for giving subsidies to Tesla

Concession given to import of Tesla cars would could hamper the efforts being made by other car companies operating in India

Once again the issue of reducing import duty for importing their cars is in discussion for American electric car company Tesla. Till now, a 60 per cent import duty has been imposed on any car whose price is less than \$ 40,000 and a 100 per cent import duty is imposed on cars costing more than \$ 40,000. This is done to protect the Indian automobile industry from unfair foreign competition.

India's automobile industry has made remarkable progress in the last few decades. The share of the automobile sector in the total manufacturing output of the country is about 49 per cent and it constitutes 7.1 per cent of the total GDP. Most of the vehicles plying in the country are manufactured in India and very few vehicles are imported. Not only this, India's automobile exports were worth \$21.2 billion. Tesla company has put up the condition of duty cut on the import of its cars to 18 per cent, for setting up a plant of car manufacturing in the country. The company says it is ready to invest \$2 billion in the country, provided the



import duty on its cars is reduced. Its request is under consideration. Today almost all the automobile companies in India have started producing electric and hybrid cars. In such a situation, customers already have options to buy electric cars. In India, nearly one lakh electric cars are sold monthly and the number is expected to rise rapidly. Keeping in mind the growing market of Electric Vehicles (EVs) in the country, Tesla company has come up with a proposal to set up its plant in India, about which there is no opposition per se. To encourage the production of electric cars in the country, the import duty on components has already been reduced significantly. Today, spare parts for electric cars are being imported at only 10 to 15 per cent import duty. These are much lower than the import duty on conventional automobile parts. Due to low import

duty on electric car components, established automobile companies and startups in the country have started adding value to a large extent in the country. Given the incentives being given to electric cars by the Government of India, it seems that soon India will start meeting its requirement of electric vehicles. Till now, the key to the development of the automobile industry in the country has been the protection given to this industry by the government. Concession given to import Tesla cars would not be right, as it could hamper the efforts being made by the companies already operating in the country. But more importantly, Tesla company manufactures luxury cars. In 2019-20, only 40637 luxury cars were sold in the country, which was reduced to only 19700 in 2020-21 during the Covid-19 period. The reason for this is that only a very small section of the country can buy luxury cars more expensive than 16 to 17 lakh rupees i.e. \$20000 US and even a smaller section can buy a car worth \$40000 i.e. 32-33 lakh rupees. In such a situation, if Tesla company is given an

exemption in import duty, then rich people who can buy expensive cars will naturally buy imported Tesla cars. This will affect the manufacturing of luxury electric cars in the country. Not only this, many other companies, including Volkswagen, who are also in the queue, will also demand lower import duty. We also have to understand that domestic companies are already putting a lot of effort into research and development in manufacturing electric cars. An Indian company 'Ola', with the help of investors, has made significant progress in manufacturing electric scooters in the country. Similar efforts can be made in cars, but the concession in import duty will hamper these efforts. We have to understand that Tesla's business model is such that it does not encourage domestic manufacturers of components, and only uses internal manufacturing technology. The expectation that the downstream value chain will develop with the arrival of Tesla company is not correct.

(The writer is a Professor, at PGDAV College, DU, views are personal)



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

Searching for the right CM candidate

After the state assembly poll results, speculation about who the new chief ministers will be, is rife

The exit polls had predicted a neck-to-neck battle in these states, with a tied result of 2-2 for both Congress and the BJP. However, despite a close fight in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, the Party could only win Telangana. Despite the stringent anti-defection laws, MLAs are tempted with large sums of money to change sides, often resulting in the winning Party's government's collapse has strengthened itself in the North, but it has yet to find a foothold in the South. The BJP's successful poll strategy united its supporters and minimised internal conflicts. Fielding Parliament members as candidates helped the Party reduce internal sabotage.

Congress gained an advantage in Telangana due to its strong local leadership. The Party also benefited greatly from the defections of many leaders who began to see it as a viable contender, especially after its success in Karnataka. Voters shifted towards the Congress once it became evident that it posed a severe challenge to the ruling BRS, BJP and Congress did not announce chief ministerial candidates before the polls. Both parties must decide whether to continue with established leaders or search for new leadership. Congress must decide whether to appoint Revanth Reddy or a new face.

The Party has many potential candidates, so the main question is how to implement the new rules. The BJP favours phasing out old guards like Vasundhara Raje, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, and Raman Singh, who have had their innings. Another crucial factor when selecting new candidates is their caste. A diverse mix of castes is essential, not limiting it to Rajputs or forward castes. Additionally, their performance will also be taken into consideration. Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants a suitable candidate to deliver the States in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. This is his top priority for performing a hat trick.

Let's take a look at Madhya Pradesh as an example. Shivraj Singh Chouhan, one of the



longest-serving Chief Ministers, is ready to continue. During an event in Madhya Pradesh, Chouhan even asked the public for their opinion on whether he should run for Chief Minister again if elected.

There are many potential candidates for the top post in Madhya Pradesh. They include three Union Ministers, Narendra Singh Tomar, Fagga Singh Kulaste, and Prahlad Patel, who provide a range of options. Kailash Vijayvargiya, the Party's General Secretary and Jyotiraditya Scindia, the Union Minister who helped bring down the Kamal Nath government, are also on the list of potential candidates.

The prominent candidate in the State of Rajasthan would be the former chief minister Vasundhara Raje. Union ministers Bhupender Yadav and Ashwini Vaishnav, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Minister Arjun Meghwal, and Mahant Balaknath are also in the race. Rajyavardhan Rathode is a Rajput and a multiple-time cabinet minister. Satish Poonia served as the Rajasthan BJP president when the Party was out of power. In early 2023, C P Joshi, a Brahmin and two-

“
DESPITE THE STRINGENT ANTI-DEFECTION LAWS, MLAS ARE TEMPTED WITH LARGE SUMS OF MONEY TO CHANGE SIDES, OFTEN RESULTING IN THE WINNING PARTY'S GOVERNMENT'S COLLAPSE

time MP, replaced Poonia as the state BJP president. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, the Union Minister for Jal Shakti, a new-generation BJP leader, is also a potential candidate for the CM of Rajasthan.

In Chhattisgarh, too, former chief minister Raman Singh is a front-runner. Raman Singh, the BAMS doctor who ruled Chhattisgarh for 15 years till 2018, is the most recognisable face of the Party in the State. He was a union minister before he became the chief minister of Chhattisgarh in 2003. However, he has been sidelined in the past five years. Vishnu Dev Sao is also a contender for CM. He has a clean image, comes from an RSS family and has risen. Union Minister Renuka Singh, a prominent tribal leader, from the Bharatpur-Sonhat constituency is yet another option.

Congress, on its part, must choose a leader to keep the Party united in Telangana. The leader of BRS., K Chandrashekhhar Rao is known for his talent in luring away members from other parties. Historically, Congress has lost its ability to protect its flock. This was visible in



KALYANI SHANKAR

Goa, Karnataka, and other states.

Revanth Reddy is the most likely candidate in Telangana. He belongs to the robust Redd and had the full support of Congress leadership despite criticisms from within the Party for his style of functioning. Starting with ABVP as a student, he has ended up at the top.

Reddy faces various challenges, including winning more seats in the Lok Sabha polls in 2024. However, it's more crucial for him to keep his Party united. Of late, the instability kicks off with horse trading, commencing immediately after the government's formation.

Despite the stringent anti-defection laws, MLAs are tempted with large sums of money to change sides, often resulting in the winning Party's government's collapse. Political parties use tricks to buy the required M.L.A.s to snatch the government. The BJP is upbeat about its success and is already strategising for the 2024 polls. The opposition group INDIA's future is still being determined after the huge BJP win.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HOAX EMAILS

Sir—Around 48 schools in Bengaluru received such hoax e-mails about the Bombay threat that had troubled the entire state machinery in Karnataka. The point of contention is that hoax mail had been targeting the school children. To understand the peculiarity of the matter, the school authorities immediately alerted the police as well as the parents of the children and ensured the immediate vacant school premises. The probe is being conducted by the police authorities, meanwhile, the question is who could be the actor doing so? The mail raised eyebrows among parents, about how such a cyber loop arises in the metro city of Bengaluru.

The matter is of urgent importance, as it is concerned with the safety and security of children. The police and the cyber cell must reach the top of the matter and must unearth all the facts and intentions of all those who are planning such acts of unrest, fear and chaos in society. Until and unless the situation is normal, it is the right time for the government too, to think about an appropriate plan of action and measures via which the security of school children can be ensured.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

PROTECTION FOR JOURNALIST

Sir—The Supreme Court on Friday extended the interim protection from arrest it had granted to four journalists against whom the Gujarat Police had issued summonses in connection with an article published on the Adani Group. The top court was hearing the pleas filed by Ravi Nair, Anand Mangnale, Benjamin Nicholas Brooke Parkin and Chloe Nina Cornish against the summonses. Nair and Mangnale have challenged the summonses issued by the Ahmedabad crime branch asking them to appear for questioning with respect to the preliminary enquiry (PE) into their article published on the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) website. Nair and Mangnale received notices from the

Saffron surge



The BJP's surge in the northern states with a 3-1 victory against the 'INDIA' bloc, again proved Modi is the heartland's hero. The saffron party stormed and accomplished the much-needed victory just a few months before the national elections. The BJP's star campaigner PM Modi led the party's campaign single-handedly in the elections proved himself as a popular vote-catcher and remained a towering figure in the national political arena.

The Telangana's victory of Congress in the bi-

terly fought contest is the only solace to the oldest party which miserably failed to retain Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh while facing a humiliating debacle in MP, which it hoped for a comfortable win. While the Telangana Congress could demolish the KCR's BR's fort, which was seen as a corrupt and familial outfit, the credit for the party's handsome victory in the state mainly goes to its firebrand and flamboyant state Congress Chief A Revanth Reddy. The Telangana's victory also implies that A Revanth Reddy is emerging as Telangana's YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the AP CM.

But, these results are a rude shock and fodder for thought for the Opposition's 'INDIA' bloc, yearning to trounce the BJP. Should this be a pointer to the next Parliament elections, the faultless among INDIA Constituents such as DMK's antagonist comments on Sanatana Dharma and Rahul Gandhi's distasteful remarks on Modi are proving costly and merit corrective steps.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

crime branch in October directing them to appear in person in connection with the PE launched on the complaint by an investor Yogeshbhai Mafatlal Bhansali. The other pleas have been filed by Parkin and Cornish, who were summoned by the Gujarat Police for a preliminary enquiry on a complaint filed by an investor in the Adani group companies.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

ED OFFICERS INDULGING IN CORRUPTION

Sir—Remember, during the two years before 2014, what did those in power complain about today's opposition? How were the Central Bureau of Investigation agencies accused of misuse? The Enforcement Directorate and the Central Bureau of Investigation were called caged parrots. When the same allegations are being levelled against the ruling party, those allegations are being rejected outright. The world is watching how one by one the opposition, critics, leaders, writers, journalists and

activists who have raised their voices against government policies are being raided by the CBI, ED or Income Tax Department every day. The question here arises is whether only opposition leaders are thieves and indulge in illegal affairs. Are the ruling parties saints? There is no corruption happening during today's rule? They never answer this. Now the people of the Enforcement Directorate appointed by them are themselves infiltrating and getting arrested red-handed. A few days ago, it was reported that the Rajasthan Anti-Corruption Bureau had arrested two Enforcement Directorate officers, Naval Kishore Meena and his associate Babul Meena, for allegedly taking a bribe of ₹ 15 lakh to settle a case related to the chit fund case. The central government officers are turning out to be a robber!

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

BECOME AN OBSERVER

After having done what we could, we must leave it to God, and become an observer



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

How is this word defined in English? An observer is a person who watches or notices something. But in Sanskrit, it has wider meaning. To understand it, let us refer to the verse # 2.47 of the Bhagavad-Geeta. What does this very famous verse teach us? “You have a right only in action, not ever in predetermining its fruits (results). You should not try to speculate about the fruit of action.” What do we normally do? We are habituated to speculate, predetermine, get attached to results, etc. Unfortunately, we have not been given this right. So, what happens? We suffer. This article is to dissuade us from acting in this fashion, because of ‘gahana karmano faith’ (the intricacy of action is very difficult to understand).

The following example will clarify. We apply for a job, as do so many. We have certain qualifications. Do they match with what the job requirements are in the eyes of those deciding? They ask certain questions, for which we are not well prepared, but someone else is. How do they formulate these questions? As we go deeper into it, complications compound. Because what will ultimately happen is what was destined. This is the eternal truth. We all get what is destined, no more or no less.



Another example will shed more light on the subject. A golf player reaches the top of the world standing, but then his form dives. What happened? Good karmaphalas took him to the top, but when bad karmaphalas manifested, his fortune suffered greatly. This we do not accept and keep on struggling. What should we do? Do we have an option to overturn our luck? We do and we don't. First, we cannot do anything about it, even if God doesn't intervene. Why? Because the creation functions based on the 'Karmaphala Principle', which is: "What we sow we reap." Every act by body, mind and words results in a fruit good or bad. These must come to fruition. Then, are we stuck? No, we are not. God is very kind; we are never condemned. We have to approach God for help. Why? Because God can help us come out of our bad karmaphalas. It is not easy, though we have to start doing what yogis do, which is, "karmayogis, giving up attachment, perform acts by body, mind, intelligence and by senses also for self-purification only." God is very generous; He begins to help us as we get started. Let us go into further details about what happens and can happen, if we approach God. There is just not one type of help available. In verse #7.16, Lord Krishna has commended four kinds of people, out of which two are distressed and seekers of wealth. In the last verse of the Geeta, Sanjay has spoken about being blessed with opulence, victory, wealth and morality, if one makes a connection with God. (18.78) These are the other types of our desires. But what we will ultimately get will be decided by God only. Therefore, after having done what we could we must leave it to God, i.e. become an observer. If we wish to further secure ourselves, then, we must become devotees of God.

In the second part of this verse, Lord Krishna mentions that His devotees become special. What happens? God takes charge of their lives. What does it mean? (11.33) Some famous examples besides of Arjuna are Adi Shankaracharya, who established four 'mathas' in Badrinath, Dwarka, Puri and Sringeri. God used Swami Vivekananda to spread Sanatana dharma across the world. These are very famous examples, but, those placed in the lower levels of devotion, are used for doing good to people around them. We, souls, expected to do two roles? One is to do our duties, and the other is to constantly evaluate what we are doing. This is what being an observer is. In the case of non-devotees, God is an observer, and in the case of devotees, they become observers. Because God takes the role of 'Karta' (doer) in their lives. They have reached the third level while doing karma (duties) and having taken 'sharan' (shelter). They can well and truly become observers fully assured about their future. How else?

(The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

Balochistan: An undeclared war zone- II

Human rights violations are rampant in Balochistan. The Pakistan is waging an undeclared war on Baloch people, writes Mir Khan Baloch



Anwarul Haq Kakar was a senator in the Balochistan assembly before resuming office as Prime Minister of Pakistan. ISI has given him special instructions to pursue the narrative of Islamabad to counter the ongoing Balochistan freedom movement. His NGO, 'Voice of Balochistan' publishes content on social media and YouTube. He is head of well-known state-sponsored death squads whose prime objectives are to facilitate Pakistan ISI, MI (Military Intelligence) and the army to locate the Baloch activists and freedom-loving patriots and later kill them in fake encounters. He often can be seen with Sarfaraz Bugti who is another cabinet member of the current government but he runs dozens of death squads in Sui, Dera Bugti, Pirkoh, Loti, Sibi and adjoining areas of Dera Bugti. His most active death squad militia is the Bugti Aman Force which openly confesses to killing patriot Baloch fighting against Pakistani illegal occupation of Balochistan. Sarfaraz Bugti had countless meetings with another notorious radical death squad Shafiq Mengal involved in the abductions, and killings of Baloch in district Khuzdar, Wadh, Sorab, and Kalat areas. His proxy militia is also involved in sectarian violence such as targeting Shia communities living in Balochistan, he enjoys the full support of the Pakistan army. Pakistan army distributed ministries to all of its proxy assets, one of them is Jamal Raisani 20 years 20-year-old boy, who is the son of Siraj Raisani who openly advocated assassinations of pro-independent seeking leadership and activists. He was killed in a suicide attack in Mastung along with his 100+ party members. Islamabad had given them ministries as compensation to acknowledge their contribution to facilitating the army and the ISI. Pakistan is repeating the Bangladesh style of Baloch genocide and hiring death squads like Al Shams and Al Badr who were used against Mukti Bahini the freedom fighters of Bangladesh in 1971. It is very sad that on 27 March 1948, Jinnah

BALUCH PEOPLE ARE DEMANDING A PEACEFUL FUTURE FREE OF FEAR; THEY WANT COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE AND GOOD RELATIONS WITH INDIA

ordered its army to invade Balochistan in a similar fashion Russia invaded Ukraine. They attacked the Palace of Balochistan's King, they fired artillery shells and opened indiscriminate firing. The mosque of the King of Kalat still bears the marks of bombing. Hence the instrument of annexation was signed by force with the Prince of Balochistan. The people of Balochistan did not join Pakistan willingly and they reserve the right to regain their independence. After the invasion of Pakistan, they kept resisting on various occasions but unfortunately, none gave any heed to their suffering and problems. China is exploiting the resources of Balochistan For many decades China made entry into Balochistan and extracted minerals of Balochistan such as Gold, Copper, Silver, and Uranium from Balochistan's Rekodet, Saindak and other areas. Pakistan is brutally suppressing the voices of ordinary Baloch people. Baloch people are demanding a peaceful future free of fear, they want complete independence and good relations with India and the rest of the world. Reports are emerging that Pakistan and China are abducting Baloch civilians, among them are women being raped, children being terrorized, and students being made victims of enforced disappearances. Pakistan under the nose of the United Nations and civilized world, is repeating the atrocities its army perpetrated against Bengalis in 1971. Baloch people are being butchered and bombed which must be a matter of worry for the civilized world. How can we sleep when humanity in Balochistan is under constant threat and Baloch people

are facing heinous crimes by the Pakistan army? To quell their liberation movement, the Pakistan establishment is using air force to bomb ordinary unarmed Baloch people which is against the international laws. About 30,000 Baloch prisoners are being kept in secret detention centers and 2 lakh Baloch have been killed since 1948. This is a huge ratio of ethnic cleansing and it must be recognized genocide of Baloch people. Pakistan is repeating the same cruelty that its army did in Bangladesh in 1971. Today Baloch people are being butchered, their land is being occupied and their resources are being exploited. If Balochistan becomes independent I believe there will be peace because they are not radicals, they are not against India, they are not against peace, and they are not pursuing any sort of policy to invade any country. I urge the government of India to speak about the massive scale of the Baloch genocide taking place and how people over there are deprived of fundamental rights to independence. There is no harm in inviting pro-independent Baloch leadership to India because Balochistan historically is not part of Pakistan and they don't accept Pakistan's occupation. We must listen to them and accept the genuine stance of the Baloch people rather than relying on Pakistan's fabricated lies and illegal rule of Balochistan. Our leadership of both countries must sit together and help their cause so we can have a friendly country of Balochistan to end Pakistan's day-to-day border infiltration, terrorism, proxy wars, and use of other anti-India elements. Balochistan is not an internal issue of Pakistan and we have the right to talk about

Balochistan in the open, in parliament, in the media and globally. India is a strong country it has the guts to take a strong position to help Balochistan get its liberation. Liberating Balochistan is tantamount to solving many problems internally and internationally at a time. The situation in occupied Balochistan is pathetic and deserves international attention. The aspiration of 1.4 billion Indians echoes the current government to make appropriate decisions by giving a helping hand to support the aspirations of millions of Baloch people. Who Leads the Balochistan Movement? In the world liberation movements are led by one leader who has the vision, and background of not compromising on a national cause and people trust him/her. Balochistan liberation movement is led by Baloch nationalist leader Hyrbayir Marri who from his childhood is attached to Balochistan cause. He is the son of Baloch veteran leader late Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri. He enjoys the full support of his people from Balochistan and the overseas population. He had never accepted the slavery of Pakistan. His determination and commitment to his people are adorable. Marri is an international calibre leader and the world community has always given him immense respect and space. He urged the Baloch community to join hands and work for the independence of united Balochistan. *(The writer is a Baloch human rights activist covering Balochistan, Central Asia and the Middle East. Views are personal)* This is the second part of the two-part series on Balochistan. **Concluded**

Climate change: Challenges and COP28

India's unique and novel initiative– Mission LiFE and Green Credit Program (GCP) can be replicated by other countries

The whole world is concerned about climate change and its ill effects. Climate Change concerns have attained centre stage in all environmental, social and economic deliberations at the National as well as Global levels. In this sequence, again during the 28th session of the COP (Conference of Parties) related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which started November 30 in Dubai, UAE, more than 190 countries are deliberating on various issues. In this conference, countries around the world are discussing the challenges related to climate change and reviewing the progress made in the decisions taken in previous conferences as well as global brainstorming.



VIVEK SAXENA

India has taken several concrete initiatives at the national and international levels in recent years to address the challenges of climate change. To take this movement forward, the Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, Government of India has notified the Green Credit Scheme (GCP) and rules in October 2023. Its objective is to encourage every individual and community to promote a healthy and environment-friendly lifestyle. The concept of the Green Credit Scheme will be based on a very simple process to benefit from environmentally favourable conditions. Therefore, common people, community organizations, industries and corporations will be encouraged to adopt

and support environment-positive actions under the Green Credit Program (GCP), proposed at the National Level. The program will also enable India to meet Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), submitted to UNFCCC. The program envisages incentives for voluntary environmental actions of various stakeholders. Presently the guidelines and rules have been notified for tree planting and water conservation-related activities. Sustainable Agriculture, Waste Management, Air Pollution Reduction, Mangrove Conservation and Restoration, Ecomark-based trading by manufacturers, Sustainable Building and Infrastructure are the other sectors that will also be covered under the

Green Credit Program (GCP) for financial incentives. Under this scheme, various stakeholders will be encouraged to voluntarily adopt environment-friendly activities by encouraging competitive market-based trading for availing benefits of green credits. The main objective of this scheme is to encourage environmentally positive actions so that the challenges of environmental protection and climate change can be faced at the individual and community levels. It aims to allocate credit as per the activity and also to encourage the process of measuring and verifying the progress of the activity and also to encourage environment-positive actions to raise awareness at the grassroots level on a large scale and fulfil the vision of Mission LiFE.

This will also support the adoption of environment-friendly lifestyles and meeting sustainable development goals (SDGs), based on values and policies. GCP will also encourage individuals, farmer producer associations, environment-friendly agriculture, industries, urban and rural local bodies, private sector, industries, NGOs and community organizations etc. to adopt environment-friendly positive actions in the form of tradable 'Green Credits', for which market-based system is being envisaged under the program. Green credits, certified as per the notified format of the Green Credit Program will be verified by the Program Administrator as a unit, the benefits of which will be determined as per market-based

assessment. The eligible entity has to register to generate green credit units. There will be a system of third-party certification to certify the activities of the registered units as units of green credit. Under this, any activity by the consumer or community to obtain or spend green credit is subject to market-based verification. The quantum and value of green credit will be determined by the authorized agency and will be determined on the environmental positive benefits associated with the activity. The quantity and value of green credit will be determined by the authorized agency as per the rules and norms approved by the Central Government. The promotion of green credit will have many benefits, such as the

promotion of green industries, and pollution control which will ensure improvement in air and water quality and protection of biodiversity. The pace of community and individual-driven planting of trees will increase. Challenges of climate change will also be addressed. The Green Credit Scheme is a novel and unique initiative to achieve the goals and objectives of Mission LiFE, launched by Prime Minister Modi. This unique initiative can be adopted by other nations at the global level by adjusting environment-friendly lifestyles. *(The author is Dy Director General in the Ministry of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, Views are personal)*

MONEY MATTERS

IEX total trade volume jumps 18 % to 9,136 million units

The Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) on Monday posted 17.5 per cent growth in its overall trade volume to 9,136 million units (MU) in November 2023 as compared to the year-ago period. The exchange had recorded total trade volume of 7,764 MU in November 2022, as per IEX data. "IEX achieved 9,136 MU overall volume, including 7.55 lakh Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) (equivalent to 755 MU), marking a 17.5 per cent increase on YoY (year-on-year) basis," an IEX statement said. IEX achieved 8,371 MU total electricity volume in November 2023, registering an increase of 13 per cent on YoY basis. Market clearing price in Day Ahead Market (DAM) during November 2023 was Rs 3.98 per unit, down 13 per cent year-on-year, due to various factors including lower demand owing to festive season, temperature drop and improved sell side liquidity on the exchange, it stated. Price on the exchange has been experiencing a downward trend and the average monthly price is at its lowest level this financial year.



IN-SPACE launches seed fund scheme for startups

The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE) on Monday announced the launch of a seed fund scheme for start-ups operating in the area of urban development and disaster management by using space technology. As part of the scheme, selected start-ups will receive seed funding for transforming an original idea into a prototype using space technology. ISRO facility support including Earth Observation (EO) data for validation of the concept, mentorship support, and access to data algorithm as transfer of technology from Department of Science (DoS), according to a statement. The scheme has the provision of providing financial assistance of up to Rs 1 crore in addition to mentorship support, training and networking opportunities, it said. IN-SPACE is the nodal agency in DoS, responsible for promoting, enabling, authorising as well as supervising space activities of the Non-Government Entities (NGEs).



Apple battery vendor TDK to set up plant in Haryana

Phone maker Apple's vendor TDK will set up its lithium-ion battery plant in Haryana, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Monday. The Japan-based company is expected to set up a plant with an investment of Rs 6,000-7,000 crore in a phased manner for making lithium-ion cells and employ around 7,000-8,000 people once it is operational at full scale, according to an industry source. "TDK, a leading supplier of cells to Apple, is setting up a 180-acre facility in Manesar, Haryana to build cells for batteries which will be used in the #MadeInIndia iPhones. Several thousand new jobs will be created and an increase in domestic value addition," Chandrasekhar tweeted. The local production of lithium-ion battery cells will enhance local value addition in Apple's products. According to the source, TDK is awaiting environmental clearance to start production. An email query sent to TDK did not elicit any reply.



No proposal to relax borrowing limits for Kerala, other states

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said there is no proposal to relax the existing terms for borrowing capacity of state governments, including Kerala for 2023-24. Kerala has requested the Centre to allow an additional borrowing equivalent to one per cent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) over and above the borrowing ceiling fixed for 2023-24 fiscal year. In a reply in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman said the Centre applies a common yardstick while fixing the annual borrowing limit of all state govern-



ments under Article 293(3) of the Constitution. In doing so, it is guided by the recommendations of the Finance Commission, she said. To a question on whether the Centre proposes to relax the

existing borrowing terms considering the financial crisis of Kerala, Sitharaman replied in the negative. For current fiscal year, the gross borrowing ceiling of Kerala has been fixed at Rs 47,762.58 crore. Out of this, Rs 29,136.71 crore is Open Market Borrowing (OMB) while the rest is borrowing from other sources. Out of the total OMB, consent has already been given to borrow an amount of Rs 23,852 crore so far, Sitharaman said. Borrowing from other sources is resorted by the state government from time to time as per its requirements. An amount of Rs 36,231 crore has been provided to the Kerala government as Revenue Deficit Grant from 2021-22 to 2023-24 (till November 2023). Additionally, to help states enhance their capital expenditure and managing liquidity stress, the Centre is providing 50-year interest free loan to state governments since 2020-21 under Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure / Investment. "An amount of Rs 2,141 crore has been released under the scheme to the state government of Kerala during FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23," Sitharaman added.

Govt allows export of 9 lakh tonnes broken rice

Govt allows export of 9 lakh tonnes broken rice

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

National Cooperative Exports Ltd (NCEL) has been allowed to export nearly 9 lakh tonnes of broken rice and about 35,000 tonnes of wheat and wheat products to various countries. According to a recent gazette notification, the government has permitted export of 34,736 tonne of wheat and wheat products and 8,98,804 tonnes of broken rice.



Fractious politics can slow reforms, derail policymaking: Fitch

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fractious politics can slow reforms and derail policymaking, and contentious elections can encourage the prioritisation of short-term growth objectives over longer-term structural initiatives," it said. Fitch Ratings said on Monday as a large number of nations go to the polls. In its Global Sovereigns Outlook 2024, Fitch highlighted that a large number of elections are scheduled in 2024, including Bangladesh, Croatia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and the US. UK elections must be before the end of January

2025. "Fractious politics can slow reforms and derail policymaking, and contentious elections can encourage the prioritisation of short-term growth objectives over longer-term structural initiatives," it said. Fitch said lower inflation might not help incumbents much, given prices remain well above pre-pandemic levels in most countries. The international environment is marred by two major conflicts entering 2024, neither of which appears to be on the verge of resolving longer-term underlying issues. An escalation in these conflicts would likely trigger a marked increase in oil prices,

which could have credit implications for oil exporters and importers. Larger global fault lines, primarily aligned along US-China spheres of influence, are not conducive to the expansion of global trade and the unfettered deployment of capital across borders, but there may be modest improvements -- or at least a pause in the deterioration -- in 2024. Fitch said real GDP growth and real interest rates are two macroeconomic factors critical for sovereign credit. Fitch Ratings forecasts a decline in global economic growth to nearly 2 per cent in 2024 from about 3 per cent in 2023.

1.06 lakh cos voluntarily exited in last five years:Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 1 lakh firms voluntarily exited under the companies law in nearly five years, the government said on Monday. Besides, many companies have sought voluntary liquidation under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). "From FY 2018-19 to FY 2023-24 (up to 30th November, 2023), 1,06,561 companies have exited voluntarily under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013. "From FY 2018-19 to FY 2023-24 (up to 30th September 2023) final reports of 1,168 companies have been submitted by liquidators under section 59 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (Code),



of which final dissolution orders have been passed by NCLT in 633 cases during the said period," Union Minister Rao Indrajit Singh told the Lok Sabha. Section 248(2) of the Companies Act pertains to voluntary exit of companies while Section 59 of the IBC relates to voluntary liquidation of companies. In the last five years, Singh said the time taken for voluntary exit under Section 248(2)

of the Companies Act, 2013 has varied between an average of 6-8 months to even 12-18 months in some cases. Under the IBC, the average time taken for dissolution of companies after submission of final report by the liquidator has been in the range of 7-9 months. The average time taken by liquidator to submit final report for Adjudication to NCLT has been about 14 months, Singh, who is Minister of State for Corporate Affairs, said in a written reply. Earlier this year, the government set up the Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (CPACE) to centralise and expedite voluntarily exit of companies under Section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013.

ReNew inks initial pact with Asian Development Bank

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Renewable energy firm ReNew Energy Global Plc has inked an initial pact with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for a funding of USD 5.3 billion. "The MoU was signed at COP28, Dubai by ReNew's Founder, Chairman and CEO, Sumant Sinha and Suzanne Gaboury, Director General, Private Sector Operations Department, ADB," a company statement said. According to the statement, the MoU identified potential investments in renewable energy projects, manufacturing, carbon offset projects, green hydrogen, to jointly support sustainable energy transition. ReNew Energy Global Plc and ADB will also collaborate on climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, it said. The initial pact covers lending of more than USD 5.3 billion between 2023 and 2028, it informed. The MoU, a first of its kind in the Indian Renewable Energy sector, is expected to draw interest from additional international investors to participate in financing long-term debt for significant Renewable Energy infrastructure projects, it said. In addition, it will help ADB achieve its funding ambition of USD 100 billion in green energy projects by 2030. Sumant Sinha, Founder, Chairman, and CEO of ReNew in a statement said, "Today's agreement marks an exciting time for ReNew. Significant financing is needed to reach global climate targets and this agreement helps secure the capital needed.

Investors richer by Rs 5.81 lakh cr

Stock markets surge over 2 pc results

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty soared more than 2 per cent to settle at record high levels on Monday, marking the fifth straight day of gains as the BJP's victory in assembly polls in three states boosted investor sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,383.93 points, or 2.05 per cent, to close at a lifetime high of 68,865.12. The index touched an intra-day record peak of 68,918.22. The barometer logged its biggest single-day jump since May 20, 2022. The total market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies surged by Rs 5.81 lakh crore to Rs 343.48 lakh crore. The broader Nifty also climbed 418.90 points, or 2.07 per cent, to hit its all-time closing high of 20,686.80. On



the 50-stock benchmark Nifty, 44 closed with gains. Analysts said BJP's clear majority in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh state polls strengthened the positive sentiment built up last week following robust macro-economic numbers and unabated foreign fund inflows. Besides, crude oil prices hovering below USD 80 per barrel fuelled investors' sentiment, they said. Among the Sensex firms, ICICI Bank and SBI led the index with the maximum gains of 4.68 per cent and 3.99 per cent, respectively. Other major gainers were Larsen & Toubro, Kotak Mahindra Bank and HDFC Bank. On the other hand, Wipro and Tata Motors defied the trend and traded in negative. "The benchmark index hits its all-time high following the landslide victory of BJP in elections in three states. It spurred a rally with an anticipation that the country will witness a stable government post the general elections next year," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said. "All the sectors have broadly participated in the rally with an optimism that the FIIs will continue its value buying, indicating positive commentary on the global inflation data and stable domestic macroeconomics," Nair said.

SAT quashes Sebi's order against Mukesh Ambani, 2 others

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) on Monday set aside the penalty imposed by Sebi on Reliance Industries Ltd's Chairman Mukesh Ambani and two other entities in a case related to alleged manipulative trading in the shares of erstwhile Reliance Petroleum Ltd (RPL) back in November 2007. The ruling has come after all the entities appealed before the tribunal against the order passed by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in January 2021. In January 2021, Sebi imposed a Rs 25 crore fine on Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), Rs 15 crore on Ambani, who is the company's Chairman and Managing Director, Rs 20 crore on Navi Mumbai SEZ Pvt Ltd and Rs 10 crore on Mumbai SEZ Ltd in RPL



case. Both -- Navi Mumbai SEZ and Mumbai SEZ -- are promoted by Anand Jain, who once served in the Reliance Group. In its 87-page order on Monday, the tribunal quashed Sebi's order

passed in 2021 against Ambani, Navi Mumbai SEZ and Mumbai SEZ. The tribunal also directed the Sebi to return the fine amount in case it has been deposited by them with the regulator. The case pertains to sale and purchase of RPL shares in the cash and the futures segments in November 2007. This followed RIL's decision in March 2007 to sell around 5 per cent stake in RPL, a listed subsidiary that was later merged with RIL in 2009. The tribunal said that RIL's board had specifically authorised two persons to decide the disinvestment. Further, the tribunal noted that it cannot be suggested that the Managing Director is ipso facto responsible for every alleged contravention of law by the corporate entities. "In view of the stark evidence in

the form of minutes of the two board meetings of RIL which conclusively proves that the impugned trades were carried out by two senior officials without the knowledge of the appellant, no liability can be fastened upon noticee no. 2 (Ambani)," the tribunal said. Sebi failed to prove that Ambani was involved in the execution of the trades carried out by two senior executives, it added. With regard to RIL, a bench consisting of Justice Tarun Agarwala and Presiding Officer Meera Swarup dismissed the company's appeal saying "we do not find any reason to interfere with the impugned order in so far as it relates to the company RIL". The impugned order refers to the order passed by Sebi in March 2017 wherein it had directed RIL and certain other entities to disgorge over Rs

447 crore in the RPL case. In November 2020, the tribunal dismissed the company's appeal against the order. Meanwhile, in its order passed in January 2021, Sebi had stated that RIL appointed 12 agents to undertake transactions in the November 2007 RPL Futures. These 12 agents took short positions in the Futures and Options (F&O) segment on behalf of the company while the company undertook transactions in RPL shares in the cash segment. Sebi, in its order, had also alleged that RIL violated PFUTP (Prohibition of Fraudulent and Unfair Trade Practices) rules by entering into a well-planned operation with its appointed agents to earn undue profits from the sale of RPL shares in both the cash and the F&O segment.

Spotify axes 17% of workforce in third round of layoffs this year

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Spotify says it's axing 17 per cent of its global workforce, the music streaming service's third round of layoffs this year as it moves to slash costs while focusing on becoming profitable. In a message to employees posted on the company's blog on Monday, CEO Daniel Ek said the jobs were being cut as part of a "strategic reorientation." The post didn't specify how many employees would lose their jobs, but a spokesperson confirmed that it amounts to about 1,500 people. Spotify had used cheap financing to expand the busi-



The post didn't specify how many employees would lose their jobs, but a spokesperson confirmed that it amounts to about 1,500 people.

ness and "invested significantly" in employees, content and marketing in 2020 and 2021, the blog post said. But Ek indicated that the company was caught out as central banks started hiking interest rates last year.

Gold surges Rs 450 to hit record high



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices on Monday increased Rs 450 to hit a fresh record high of Rs 64,300 per 10 grams in the national capital amid strong global trends, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 63,850 per 10 grams. However, silver remained flat at Rs 80,200 per kilogram. "Gold prices extended gains

on Monday, trading at a record high of Rs 64,300/10 gram, up by Rs 450 following a bullish trend in the overseas markets," HDFC Securities' Senior Analyst of Commodities Saumil Gandhi said. In the international markets, gold was trading higher at USD 2,077 per ounce while silver was down at USD 25.40 per ounce. Spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,077 per ounce, up USD 6 from its previous close.

Corporate bond market likely to double by 2030: Crisil

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Indian corporate bond market is poised for rapid growth despite clocking a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of nine per cent over the past five years. Crisil Ratings expects the outstanding size of the market to more than double from around Rs 43 lakh crore as of last fiscal to Rs 100-120 lakh crore by fiscal year 2030, a statement said on Monday. "The growth will be driven by a confluence of factors. Large capital expenditure (capex) in the infrastructure and corporate sectors, growing attractiveness of the infrastructure sector for bond investors, and strong retail credit growth

are expected to boost bond supply, while the rising financialisation of household savings should drive demand. Regulatory interventions are also helpful," Crisil senior director, Somasekhar Vemuri said. Capex in the infrastructure and corporate sectors is anticipated to be propelled by decade-high capacity utilisation, healthy corporate balance sheets, and a favourable economic outlook, he said. Crisil envisions a capex of around Rs 110 lakh crore in these sectors between fiscals 2023 and 2027, approximately 1.7 times higher than that of the past five fiscals. The rating major expects this pace of capex to continue beyond fiscal 2027. The corporate bond



market is projected to finance about a sixth of the anticipated capex. Infrastructure assets are emerging as strong contenders for investment owing to their improving credit risk profile, promising recovery prospects,

and long-term nature. Currently, infrastructure accounts for only about 15 per cent of the annual corporate bond issuance by volume, the note said. However, structural improvements facilitated by a

raft of policy measures are expected to make infrastructure bond issuances more attractive to patient-capital investors, particularly insurers and pension funds, who constitute the key investor segment in the bond market. Crisil estimates assets in the managed investment segment to double to around Rs 315 lakh crore by fiscal 2027, and the trend is expected to continue well past fiscal 2027. These investments will be in both equity and debt and a good portion of it may flow to the corporate bond market. The agency stated that retail credit growth is expected to maintain its momentum, fueled by private consumption growth and the formalisation of last-

mile credit flow. The bond market, being a crucial funding source for larger NBFCs and accounting for a third of the funding mix, will play a pivotal role in financing retail credit flow. Managed investments are expected to continue to outpace bank deposits in terms of growth. Factors such as increased digitisation, rising investor sophistication in retirement planning, higher awareness and utilisation of insurance, investment objectives aimed at surpassing inflation, and a burgeoning middle-income population are contributing to the growth of managed investments. Karunakaran said.

WITH THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED 28TH EDITION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL UNFOLDING IN NEW DELHI, **THE PIONEER** INTERACTS WITH THE CURATOR OF THE FESTIVAL, VERONICA FLORA, AND ESTONIAN DIRECTOR ANU AUN, BRINGING SOME MORE INSIGHTS ON THE SAME.

TANISHA SAXENA

In its myriad expressions, cinema remains a potent force, weaving connections and fostering unity that transcends geographical boundaries. Serving as a conduit for the exchange of emotions, fears, and aspirations, it offers a glimpse into the inner recesses of our beings. Marking the arrival of the highly anticipated 28th edition, the European Union Film Festival, titled "Window to Europe," which unfolded in New Delhi on December 1.

This cinematic extravaganza showcases exceptional, award-winning European films, delivering compelling narratives directly to the haven of our homes. A celebration of the multifaceted nature and cultural richness of European cinema, the festival extends an invitation to cinephiles to register at no cost, granting them exclusive access to the cinematic tapestry and accompanying events. Crafted under the aegis of the Delegation of the European Union to India, in collaboration with Member States, associate countries, and esteemed Indian and European partners, the festival beckons audiences to embark on a journey of



diverse stories and cultural profundity.

The EUFF 2023 is dedicated to celebrating women in cinema. Indeed, the significance of this theme for the film fraternity and the audience is immense. In an exclusive interaction with *The Pioneer*, Veronica Flora, Curator for the festival, shared, "When it comes to cinema, I am naturally inclined to gravitate towards the works of formidable female directors, a deliberate choice that I perceive as an embodiment of diversity. Given the historical underrepresentation of women in cinema, this intentional selection serves as a proactive step in reshaping the narrative. Notably, the landscape is witnessing a positive shift with an increasing number of women assuming influential roles as producers, thereby wielding economic influence to catalyze this transformative process."

The empowerment of women within the industry is a palpable reality, facilitating a departure from stereotypical portrayals. She further explained, "This phenomenon extends beyond mere symbolism, as women directors often offer a more nuanced and intricate perspective. Nonetheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that male directors, exemplified by figures such as Antonio Pietrangeli, can also contribute meaningfully to fostering a multifaceted narrative regarding women's experiences." Flora lamented the



LIGHTS,
CAMERA,
UNITY

loss of Pietrangeli, an illustrious Italian film director and screenwriter who left behind a legacy of films that delved into the pivotal role of women in postwar Italy. His cinematic exploration during a period marked by societal upheaval and the impending sexual revolution is emblematic of the profound questions he posed about representing the reality of women in that era.

She added, "While I advocate for inclusivity and recognize the potential of any director, irrespective of gender, to evoke genuine emotional responses, I posit that the audience serves as the ultimate arbiter of cinematic authenticity. Viewers possess the discernment to distinguish between

true, evocative storytelling and contrived, insincere narratives. Emphasizing this discernment, I have curated a selection of films based on their capacity to elicit a spectrum of emotions and, most crucially, foster empathy."

Saint Omer and *Talking About the Weather* were chosen to kick off this festival. When asked about the peculiarities of screening these films at the inauguration, Veronica mentioned, "These films explore the theme of language, a vital tool in human communication. Language, being a complex reality, serves as both a revealer and a concealer of truths, echoing the cautionary wisdom of a German philosopher who advocates refraining from expressing certain thoughts or posing certain questions, recognizing the dual nature of language in unmasking and obscuring reality."

Saint Omer by celebrated director Alice Diop showcased the prejudices and preconceptions surrounding a crime that go beyond all comprehension while subtly weaving the issue of racism. It chronicles the journey of young novelist Rama, who attends the trial of Laurence Coly, a young woman accused of killing her 15-month-old daughter.

Annika Pinske's critically acclaimed *Talking About the Weather*, which was also screened on the inaugural day at the Goethe Institute, deals with a sensitive social study about home and imprinting, post-reunification traumas, and milieus from which one can emancipate oneself but never completely overcome them.

With a thoughtfully curated selection, the festival presents a lineup of 28 films spanning over 25 languages, featuring 18 works directed by women. Showcasing the pinnacle of European cinema from both European Union nations and Ukraine, the event commemorates recent cinematic triumphs at renowned festivals such as Cannes, Tribeca, Tallinn, Venice, Berlin, and San Sebastian.

Notable figures such as French actress Guslagie Malanda, Finnish director Hanna Marjo Västinsalo, Finnish producer Cyril Jacob Abraham, and Estonian director Anu Aun provide audiences with an insider's perspective.

Estonian director Anu Aun told us, "My film took root in a genuine love for poetry. The main character, a captivating figure a few years my

senior, is akin to a fairy and holds the admiration of everyone in Estonia. Crafted meticulously over the course of a decade, the film delves into the complexities of womanhood and the quest for balance in life. It explores the challenge of embodying a free-spirited, artistic nature while fulfilling practical roles as a daughter, mother, and woman. I perceive the film as profoundly beautiful, often characterized by critics as a "conditioner for the soul." Women watching may discern parallels with the protagonist, discovering shared experiences. Interestingly, I've observed that the film also grants men a deeper insight into their wives."

In our everyday conversations, cinema becomes a captivating storyteller, painting pictures that resonate with everyone. It's more than just movies; it's a shared experience that brings us together, sparking conversations and revealing different aspects of life. In the quiet moments of a movie, we find a common ground to explore emotions, laugh, and sometimes shed a tear. Cinema, in its simplicity, becomes a universal language, connecting us through the stories it tells and the feelings it evokes.

In the global tapestry of storytelling, international film festivals serve as vital hubs of cultural exchange. They provide a platform for diverse voices and perspectives, transcending borders to bring stories from every corner of the world to a shared stage. As cinematic ambassadors, international film festivals not only celebrate artistic excellence but also foster cross-cultural understanding. They weave a cinematic dialogue that unites audiences in appreciation of our shared humanity, making these festivals crucial in fostering a more interconnected and culturally aware world.

Throughout its existence, the EUFF has evolved into a familiar forum for showcasing the diversity and richness of European cinematography to enthusiastic Indian viewers. The festival serves as a testament to the shared passion for cinema between Europe and India. This year, the festival has an excellent line-up of films that have won accolades at top film festivals worldwide, including Cannes, the Academy Awards, the Venice Film Festival, the Tribeca Film Festival, and IFFI, among others. Rich in genre, the EUFF brings some of the best stories and creators from Europe to the Indian audience. The festival is being held at three distinguished locations: the India Habitat Centre, the Instituto Cervantes (Spanish Cultural Center), and the Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan. The event is scheduled to continue its cinematic showcase until December 10th, 2023.

'I WAS QUIET FOR 12 YEARS, ALL MY EMOTIONS CAME OUT IN THE *BIGG BOSS* HOUSE'

TEJAL SINHA

A part from just the squabbles, brawls, and emotional turmoil, another thing that has been constant in every season of *Bigg Boss* is a duo that gives us 'oh-so-precious' bond goals. Just like the previous seasons, the currently ongoing season of Hindi *Bigg Boss* saw two major friendship goals: Arun-Tehelka (Sunny) and Jigna-Rinku. However, eventually, the duos broke down due to the eviction of Jigna Vora and, more recently, Sunny Aryaa.

Today, we have with us Jigna Vora, whose eviction was no less than an emotional moment for many of the housemates, and she begins, "Rinku and I were each other's support system, and maybe because of the age group we belonged, and life struggles what we had gone through in our lives, so there was some sort of respect for each other. I wouldn't want to give that bond any names. Certain relationships do not need a name tag. But yes, my takeaway from *Bigg Boss* for sure is Rinku and Munawar."

No surprise to the fact that with so many intelligent contestants around and with the experience that she carries along, she's been one of the contestants who has motivated her co-contestants individually. But still, she reveals, "After coming out, I see people trolling me left, right, and center, saying, 'Oh, boring aunty'. But that boring aunty has had a very adventurous and interesting life, and you cannot expect me to do what 20-year-old people are doing in the show. I have a certain dignity, and so I have played that way. My life lessons and experiences were very useful in the house."

However, with the contestants giving the 'fake' tag to each other, she feels, "See, most of them are actors, so they know how to act. I wouldn't call them fake, but they know how to act. So they know the tricks of trade, and I, Rinku, and Munawar, to some extent, were real, and we are in the outside world. This was probably a disadvantage for us. For me and Rinku, especially."

Enclosed space, no connection to the real world, no phones, no family, limited food, continuous tasks, nominations, and evictions—many emotions surface in the house, although some people do attempt to control them. So did she also control her emotions, or how was it? "No, I was never controlling my feelings and emotions. As



Former journalist and *Bigg Boss* contestant Jigna Vora, who was recently evicted from the show, gets candid with *The Pioneer* about her bond with Rinku Dhawan, her stint in the show, and more.

everybody saw, I was crying a lot like a 'cry baby', but in real life, I'm not like that. Maybe the 12 years that I was quiet, and because I never expressed myself. All of my emotions were inside me for whatever reasons. And in *Bigg Boss*, the way my emotions came out, the way people respected me, I am very thankful to them. Be it Abhishek, Munawar, or anyone, they respected me a lot, and maybe I got very attached to them. Some people in the house used to call me 'Mother', some used to call me 'Mother-in-law', and I was getting all these tags (she laughs)."

Well, this time the season brought its own twists and turns. And so was it for the kitchen duties, be it from contestants of the same 'Makaan' or from the other ones. Bringing much more pressure, she says, "We did have a lot of pressure because we had to cook in like 40 minutes and that too, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I am an excellent cook outside, and I have done many food businesses in the past 12 years. So for me, it wasn't pressure but fun." By the way, not only she, but every contestant has lost weight in the house, FYI!

Talking of the entire television vs. YouTube chaos, the former journalist shares, "I was playing my individual game. People had their own issues, especially Anurag, Tehelka, and Arun, who were on a different feeling altogether and got offended with the kind of treatment the television celebrities used to get."

Contestants on *Bigg Boss* are sequestered from the outside world and kept in a restricted space with only one another for company. The cramped setting can elicit a variety of feelings, from tension to camaraderie.

With the many debates, of course, that came out every season on mental health in the house, she says, "As far as I am concerned, trust me, *Bigg Boss* House has helped me a lot mentally. For the past years, I have been into medication and a lot into spirituality too, because I am also a tarot card reader and astrolo-

gist, and I also go to various medication camps. So all this has helped me a lot to be mentally strong. My nature and my behavior were constantly sweet, be it before or after nomination. On the other hand, there were contestants who used to just flip-flop; either it was their game plan or they were really anxious. But yeah, everybody used to cry at one point in time, feeling lonely or anxious; people do have it in the house." One of the most controversial incidents was Jigna washing Arun's underwear. So in any case, was she guilty about making him guilty conscious? Well, not at all, because "I did, and I will tell it in 'Danke ki Chot pe', yes, I washed it. I don't have to give any justification. Even in our houses, our maids come, and they do wash our clothes. So why do you have to have a dual face? I never made him feel guilty; it is just shown out of proportion. His fans are trolling me, and that actually shows their mental framework and not mine. I did it with my heart because he was hurt. Yes, but to say, I volunteered for it; he never forced me."

The bond that she shared with Munawar was evidently very special. In fact, one of the contestants to break down after her eviction was him. Jigna, who is hoping for Munawar to win the trophy, shares, "We had an initial bond that probably started with a Guju connection. And yes, I share a very special bond with him, and I miss him a lot. I just pray that he wins the trophy because he deserves it. He is a very humble and grounded person. I don't really want to say that he's like my son, and, like I said earlier, I don't want to give a tag and there is no name to certain relationships, but yes, he is very special to me. Surprisingly, my son has started feeling insecure about Munawar. He says, 'Mumma, you have started loving Munawar more than me.' Again, talking of her eviction episode, it was definitely one of the most heated episodes, with Khanzaadi wishing to leave the house. In fact, she ended up questioning people in the house and the show, including Salman Khan, making fun of her trauma and physical health."

"Let me make it very clear that no one has made fun of her health. I am being trolled for that also. Salman sir has also said on the national television show 'Weekend Ka Vaar' that no one has made fun of her. We tried to do whatever we could in our best capacity to motivate her to do her duty. I used to wash dishes on her part; Rinku used to wash, and still whenever we used to go and talk to her, she felt we were sugar coating it. It's been she who is going around and talking about her health and trying to get sympathy or whatever. She is 'not' taking medicines, which we all told *Bigg Boss*. She goes to the doctor but does not take medicine. This is a fact. We all supported her very much, but her friends and doctor, everybody outside, are saying that we have done some injustice to her," she signs off, adding, "fans or viewers, that people don't accept real people, and that's really sad. They just want all the mirch-masala, and they need to change their perception of *Bigg Boss* House. *Bigg Boss* is not about toxic relationships but about responding and not reacting."

People are trolling me left & right calling me 'Boring aunty'; but that boring aunty has had a very adventurous and interesting life.

Exploring the relationship between osteoporosis and autoimmune disorders

Recent findings from a study conducted by the National Institute of Health unveiled that approximately 30.5% of our nation's population grapples with osteoporosis. This condition, characterized by the weakening of bones due to the loss of tissue, often goes unnoticed until a fracture occurs. Termed the "silent disease," it predominantly affects women, especially post-menopause, and the elderly. The high prevalence of osteoporosis raises a significant question: is there a deeper connection between this bone-weakening condition and autoimmune diseases?

At the heart of comprehending osteoporosis is the concept of bone density, which measures the minerals present in bone tissue. As bone density decreases, bones become more porous and brittle, raising the risk of fractures, especially in areas like the hip, spine, and wrist. Even minor falls or everyday activities can result in fractures, causing severe pain, reduced mobility, and a diminished overall quality of life.

Autoimmune disorders manifest when the immune system, originally crafted to protect the body from external threats like bacteria and viruses, experiences a malfunction. Consequently, it mistakenly launches an assault on the body's cells and tissues, triggering inflammation and harm to various organs and systems. These disorders manifest in a wide range of ways, impacting the skin, joints, muscles, and essential organs.

Frequent autoimmune conditions like rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, multiple sclerosis, and celiac disease typically present with a variety of symptoms. These may include joint pain, fatigue, skin rashes, and digestive problems, all of which can have a considerable impact on a person's holistic health and well-being.

The relationship between osteoporosis and autoimmune diseases is characterized by complex processes. Various autoimmune conditions are linked to an increased susceptibility to osteoporosis. The persistent inflammation that marks many autoimmune diseases can hasten bone resorption, a process in which the body absorbs bone tissue more rapidly than it can regenerate. Additionally, autoimmune diseases can disturb hormone levels, including vital ones like estrogen and cortisol, which have significant roles in maintaining bone health. This disruption further contributes to a reduction in bone density.

Moreover, medications frequently prescribed to treat autoimmune diseases, such as corticosteroids and immunosuppressive drugs, can potentially exert unfavorable impacts on bone health.

Despite their essential role in controlling the autoimmune response, these medications can unintentionally accelerate bone loss. Individuals living with autoimmune diseases often experience the challenging task of maintaining a delicate balance between managing their conditions effectively and the potential risk of developing osteoporosis.

Considering the gravity of osteoporosis and autoimmune diseases, timely identification and diagnosis are of utmost importance. The diagno-



sis of autoimmune diseases typically entails a comprehensive evaluation, encompassing clinical symptoms, blood assessments, and specialized imaging studies. In many instances, this process necessitates consultations with specialists such as rheumatologists.

Successfully addressing osteoporosis in individuals with autoimmune diseases requires a holistic strategy. This entails making lifestyle modifications that encompass ensuring an appropriate consumption of calcium and vitamin D, engaging in regular weight-bearing exercises, and embracing healthier practices, including smoking cessation and moderation of alcohol consumption. These steps are vital for the maintenance of bone density.

Managing the coexistence of autoimmune diseases and osteoporosis can present significant challenges. Support networks, which encompass patient advocacy groups, provide valuable resources and emotional assistance. Furthermore, counseling and mental health support can assist individuals in addressing the emotional and psychological dimensions of their journey with these conditions.

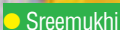
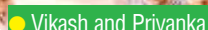
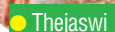
Sustained research endeavors hold the potential to enhance comprehension and treatment of osteoporosis in individuals with autoimmune conditions. Ongoing investigations delve into innovative therapies and precision methodologies aimed at addressing bone health within the context of managing autoimmune diseases.

The evolving field of precision medicine fosters optimism in customizing treatments according to an individual's distinct genetic and medical attributes, potentially mitigating the effects of osteoporosis in this susceptible demographic.

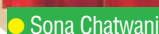
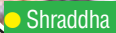
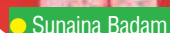
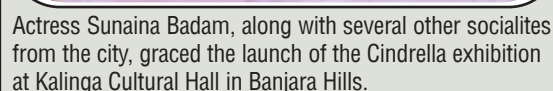
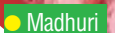
As we move forward, it's imperative for individuals contending with autoimmune diseases to proactively engage in the preservation of their bone health and establish a close collaboration with healthcare professionals who possess an in-depth comprehension of the distinctive challenges associated with these conditions. Through these collaborative endeavors, we can collectively strive to reduce the influence of osteoporosis in individuals with autoimmune diseases and improve their holistic well-being.

(The author, Dr. K. Hemanth Kumar, is a Consultant, in Orthopaedic Surgery, at Omni Hospitals.)

what's brewing?



Actress Sreemukhi, along with other guests, and organisers, inaugurated the women's exclusive Sri Pushkara Art Studio, at Sanathnagar in Kukatpally.



Actress Lakshmi Manchu, along with the four visionary women founders of Maha Parikrama, unveiled the label for their flagship exhibition at Radisson Blue Plaza in Banjara Hills. The 2-day exhibition will be held on December 8 and 9, at Hitec in Hyderabad.



Maharashtra Tourism has commenced its 8-city road show tour across the nation, in addition to participating at various trade fairs in association with its stakeholders and partners. These trade-fairs are a one-stop shop for depicting the enormous travel and tourism landscape that Maharashtra, as a state, offers. This travel and trade show has received an overwhelming response from Hyderabad. The event was organised on Monday at Marriott, which was graced by prominent personalities from the tour and travel fraternity of the city.



FUN

VERONICA MADE THE PIE? HOW IS IT?

TYPICAL!



Panel 1: Jon says "TIMES CHANGE". Garfield replies "TRUE".

Panel 2: Jon says "I USED TO BE AWESOME...". Garfield thinks "I USED TO BE AWESOME...".

Panel 3: Jon says "NOW I'M REALLY AWESOME!". Garfield celebrates with a large "1" on his chest.

© 2011 PANG, INC. All Rights Reserved. www.thefox.com

Jim Davis

WE'VE GOT "THE KARDASHIANS,"
"MONEY 800 800" AND
"TEEN MOM"--- WHEN
WE USED TO HAVE

"FAMILY TIES,"
"EIGHT IS ENOUGH"
AND "THE
FACTS OF LIFE!"
SOMETIMES
I JUST SHAKE
MY HEAD IN WON-
DER AND ASK---
"WHAT
HAPPENED?"

GUY CLARKE

©2015 LPS. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication

MUM, WHAT HAPPENED ON EASTER SATURDAY?

EASTER SATURDAY WAS WHEN JESUS LAY IN HIS TOMB ALL DAY.

THE SIMILARITIES ARE FRIGHTENING.

DIB BY ANDREW NELSON

GIMMEEYES.COM

A cartoon by Whammy. A woman with long brown hair and glasses, wearing a pink top and a patterned skirt, says in a speech bubble, "I GAINED 15 POUNDS FOR A ROLE-". A man with a large nose, wearing a blue shirt and dark pants, replies, "ROLL ON!". The cartoon is signed "WHAMMY '07" in the bottom left corner.

I'M JUST GLAD TO BE OUT OF MY UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATERS AND BACK INTO MY UGLY EVERYDAY SWEATERS.

KOTKEW 1/1
 © 1999 University of Southern California

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

1 People in jail	made of baked clay
2 The centre of your eye	8 The least difficult
3 Have a quarrel	11 Author
4 Things to play with	13 Speed competitions
5 Flat dishes	15 Something you imagine
6 Mistakes	while asleep
7 The part along the side	16 A brother or sister the
or end of something	same age as you

2 Answer
3 A fine glossy fabric
4 Almost
5 Correct



‘I never said no to movies; I was just settling down with my husband’s loss,’ claims Shanthi Priya

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Shanthi Priya became an overnight sensation immediately after she was seen in *Enga Ooru Pattukaran*, the Tamil film that flooded her offers soon after. Because she's all set to make her come back to the South, we had an exclusive interaction with the Rajahmundry lass. After doing some fantastic lead roles, the actress left acting for a while to be the emotional anchor to her married life, totally and completely.

Helicopter mom of all sorts, she recalled, "I was a proper school girl accompanying my elder sister to her shoots. A Tamil director was literally looking out for a fresh girl from school. He saw me with my sister and asked, 'Where do my interests lie?' And like any other mom, she said a blatant 'no'. I convinced her for just 'one' film, and after the success, I made a splash everywhere. I didn't turn around. My debut film was known to be an evergreen film for the now-golden-aged. Whenever I go to Chennai, I am known by that character."

Born to a Telugu-speaking family, the actress elaborates for us: "Recently, when I was shooting in Dharavi, the slum dwellers came up to me and asked whether I was Bhanupriya's sister or that of the South sensation. It's been thirty years, and I am being remembered. What better than this? I want to beat this record now."

Indeed, the younger sister of Bhanupriya, who has won so many Nandi Awards for her filming spree in the south, Shanthi Priya, elucidates, "She has always cared for me when I was so very new to this industry. She wasn't moralistic about what I should or should not

do; instead, she led me on a professional path. That professionalism comes from our roots in the Kuchipudi dance form. I have never seen her throw a tantrum on her set! I was disciplined too. My family never pressured me after an ever-green hit; I was allowed to return to normalcy."

Sharing some more tidbits on the same, we heard her saying, "Both of us never discussed what happened on our respective sets once we were home. Neither did we ever come on the radar of any controversies; we were very straightforward like that. The Tollywood industry was way too quick with their shooting schedules; we sisters hardly used to get time to hang around. Both of us were living in a suitcase. She was a more established actress than me, and her schedule was totally packed. Akka was never interested in doing B-town films; she rather loved the South Indian filmmaking style. When I became a B-town actress, we physically grew apart. I had to go meet her in Chennai."

So why the hiatus? The *Saugandh* fame opens up to our publication exclusively and says, "I wanted to settle down in my married life

with my late husband, Siddharth Ray I got married into a Bengali-Maharashtrian family, so I wanted to enjoy my own space for a while. I was happy to be a homemaker in the joint family. I chose not to come late at night from my movie shoots; I wanted to be fully immersed as a married woman to Siddharth. I never said no to movies! And whenever I returned, it was always a hit movie or show."

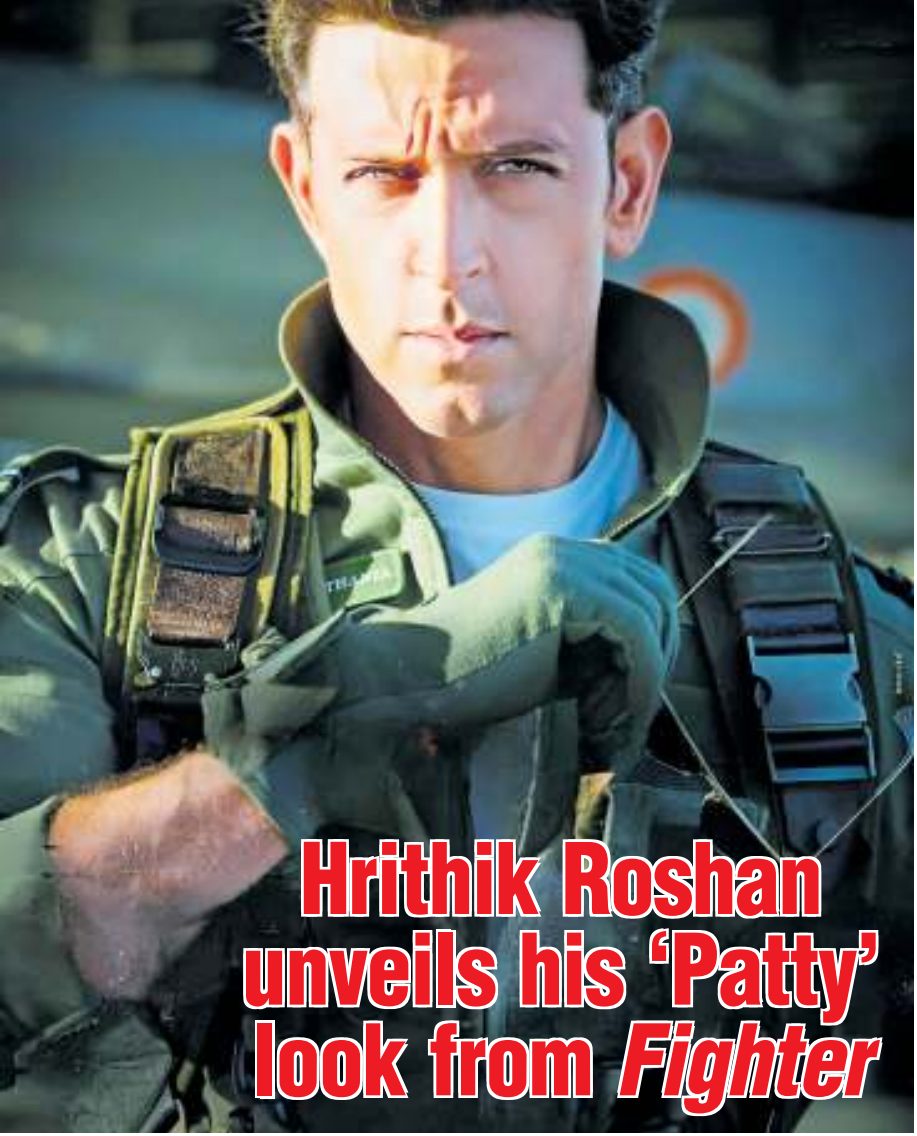
Her children are her life now, and why wouldn't they be? They are so encouraging. The actress described, "I lost my husband to a heart attack. I am a single parent, and my boys were extremely young. They needed me! Gradually, they were growing up, understood the dynamics, and were upset—why am I not acting anymore? They took pride in me that our mother was an eternal actress. They have now grown into beautiful men, and I am going all out as an actress now, just like they wanted me to. I belong in cinema."

Drawing a contrast between her 1988–2022 shooting style and her latest stint in *Dharavi Bank*, she said, "Technicalities have also changed. During the 90s, everything was on the spot! We used to design our own costumes, c'mon. There were no script narrations; examples were given to us as references. Today, the actors are being managed by agencies! They don't know what else is going on behind their backs. They are also being prepared for fight sequences. I was amused. Anyone can act now. I never have the habit of going and checking myself on the monitor, even if the director persuades me to."

Curious to know how the experiences were when she tasted massive stardom down South, she calls to mind, "I miss the crazy stardom. Fans used to wait for hours to see our glimpse! Zeenat Aman tasted real stardom in my eyes. Our fans used to post letters for us, and in return, our secretaries used to post our photographs to our fans. The charm of stardom has vanished. Stars have become next-door neighbors for them! Amitabh Bachchan Ji is a superstar for a reason; you will never spot him so casually on the streets of Mumbai."

Talking about her comeback now, the actress is so elated. She couldn't wait to see herself on the celluloid of the regional industry and uttered, "I don't like to call it my second innings; I deserve to be in the South Cinema and otherwise. It's Vetrimaaran's production house. I hope it works out in my favor, and I am back in the limelight in South now. I was the focus of attention on OTT with Suniel Shetty recently; it's time to change gears again. I was already a pan-Indian actress during the 1990s; I don't have to hop onto these latest trends to gain public attention. Even after massive silver screen hits, I have gone back to television. I can proudly say I am a repeat artist for every director I have worked with."

Veteran actress Shanthi Priya, who is all set to make her comeback down South, gets candid with *The Pioneer* recalling her debut film days, her bond with sister Bhanupriya, still having the same fandom, and more.



Hrithik Roshan unveils his ‘Patty’ look from *Fighter*

The much-anticipated look of Hrithik Roshan from the film *Fighter* has been revealed, leaving fans in awe. Portraying the role of Squadron Leader Shamsher Pathania, known by his call sign 'Patty', Roshan perfectly steps into the shoes of a Squadron Pilot from the Air Dragons unit, promising a high octane adrenaline-packed journey.

Taking to his social media, Hrithik Roshan shared the first look. *Fighter* traces the journey of Hrithik Roshan as Patty, who became the best fighter pilot of India.

This unveiling heralds the commencement of an exhilarating cinematic ride as *Fighter* gears up to embark on a mission to redefine action, blended flawlessly with patriotic fervor, on the silver screen. The film also showcases the first-time pairing between Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone, intensifying the anticipation for unparalleled on-screen chemistry and their individual prowess and promising a compelling display of acting mastery. Helmed by Siddharth Anand and presented by Viacom18 Studios in collaboration with Marflix Pictures, the movie is set to transcend boundaries with its stellar cast and gripping storyline.

The film's release date is set for January 25th, 2024, on the eve of India's 75th Republic Day. Audiences can brace themselves for a high-flying adventure that promises to soar beyond expectations with India's first aerial action franchise film. Get ready to take off with *Fighter*, where the skies will witness the spectacle of cinematic brilliance!



Ashika Ranganath in & as Varalaxmi in **NAA SAAMI RANGA**

Naa Saami Ranga, the highly anticipated Tollywood film starring Akkineni Nagarjuna and directed by Vijay Binni, has generated buzz with the official announcement of Ashika Ranganath as the lead actress playing Varalaxmi. A captivating character introduction video, where Ashika adorns traditional attire and imitates Nagarjuna, has been unveiled online, leaving a lasting impression. The makers have teased fans with the upcoming release of the first single, *Yetthukelli Povalanipisthunde*.

Produced by Srinivasaa Chitturi for Srinivasaa Silver Screen, the film features a compelling storyline and dialogues crafted by Prasanna Kumar. The musical genius MM Keeravaani further elevates the excitement surrounding the project. Stay tuned for more exciting updates on the much-anticipated *Naa Saami Ranga*.



YASH 19 TO GET ITS OFFICIAL TITLE ON DECEMBER 8

Celebrated for his blockbuster release *K.G.F. I and II*, rocking star Yash is hailed as one of the most loved movie stars in Pan-India. His involvement beyond acting in the film showcases his multifaceted talent and commitment to the film's success through his involvement in various aspects of its creation. However, after the massive success of *K.G.F.: Chapter 2*, the superstar surprised everyone by staying silent for over a year, busy working on his highly anticipated next. A believer in giving nothing but the best to his millions of fans, rocking star Yash chose quality over quick announcements.

Finally, after a long wait, Yash is now gearing up to make the official big announcement about his next project, which has sent waves of excitement amongst his followers and industry insiders. The actor will be unveiling the official title of his upcoming project, currently referred to as *Yash 19*. Taking to social media, Yash, along with the production house, KVN Productions, informed his followers in a collaborative post that he would be announcing the official title of the film on December 8, 2023, at 9:55 AM.

After getting the ball rolling for the mass action genre, he has been known for his vision, conviction, and making choices that have proven to be pathbreaking.

Interestingly, a day before revealing the date of the announcement, the superstar changed his profile display picture on social media to 'Loading'. Only a change of profile picture by the Rocking Star sent social media into a frenzy, with #Yash19 trending at #1.

With such unprecedented hype, *Yash 19* is one of the most anticipated announcements.



Deepika Padukone becomes the first Indian actor to be invited to the Academy Museum Gala

The Academy Museum Gala is the second biggest stage in the world after the Oscars, which is organised by the same board. Earlier this year, Deepika created history as she stepped on stage at the Oscars to present the Indian song act.

The actress ends the year 2023, which is her biggest year ever, on a big high. Both her films, *Pathaan* and *Jawan*, broke lifetime records and collected over 2200 crores worldwide. She was among the handful of Indians ever to feature on a TIME magazine cover without being part of any list. She presented an Indian song act on the biggest stage, the Oscars, and now this.

She looked absolutely stunning in a purple velvet gown and minimal jewellery. Fans couldn't contain their excitement as their idol made India proud yet again by representing the country on such a big global stage.



Sharad Kelkar once again lends his voice for Prabhas

December is undoubtedly a blockbuster month for Bollywood, with some of the biggest films releasing. One of the most anticipated ones is Prabhas starrer *Salaar – Part 1*. The film's trailer was recently released and gained immense popularity. And while everyone is already celebrating the film, Sharad Kelkar has all the more reason to do so. Once again, Sharad has lent his voice for Prabhas in the Prashanth Neel film, and it just fits so perfectly. Earlier, Sharad lent his voice for Prabhas in *Baahubali* and *Adipurush*.

Now with *Salaar* getting added to the list, the actor seems quite elated, as he took to social media and wrote, "Glad to be a part of *Salaar*. Once again, the magic of the face and voice combo. Thank you Prashanth Neel sir and Prabhas for this." Talking about the same Sharad says, "It is a great combination of face and voice we discovered with me and Prabhas films. Right from *Baahubali* I have received great appreciation. Even with *Salaar*, the journey was great, and I am full of gratitude. Finding the right face for the voice is rare and I am glad I got to be associated with such a perfect combo."

On the work front, Sharad will be seen in *Ayalaan*, *Sri*, *Indian Police Force*, *Slum Golf*, *Nayeka*, and many more projects.

BISHNOI EMERGES AS INDIA’S THIRD SPIN OPTION

PTI ■ BENGALURU

When Ravi Bishnoi was named in India’s T20I squad for the away series against South Africa, it, perhaps, was the clearest indication about his place in the think tank’s long-term plans with the next year’s T20 World Cup in mind. With only six T20Is remaining for India ahead of the showpiece, it can be assumed that the 23-year-old leg-spinner has moved ahead of veteran Yuzvendra Chahal in the pecking order, for now at least. Chahal is not a part of India’s T20I side to face the Proteas. Chahal is 33 and Bishnoi is 23, but the latter getting as much or more game time in T20Is is not just about a natural generational transition. Chahal has played nine T20Is this year, grabbing as many wickets whereas Bishnoi appeared in 11 matches and picked up 18 wickets. The difference is there for everyone to see. In the just-concluded series against Australia, Bishnoi was India’s go-to bowler and he rewarded the faith reposed on him by emerging as the ‘Player of the

Series, taking nine wickets from five matches. It was not just about the wickets but the whole attitude shown by him to bowl under any condition or situation was praiseworthy. In fact, Bishnoi had an eminently forgettable first match at Visakhapatnam, leaking 54 runs in four overs and his fielding too was in a shambles marred by a dropped catch and a few misfields. But he fought back with gusto and his run-rate never exceeded eight thereafter. Out of the 20 overs he bowled against the Aussies, seven were in the Power Play segment (1-6 overs). In this phase, he took five wickets at a fine economy rate of 6.45, besides bowling 20 dot balls. Australian skipper Matthew Wade admitted that facing Bishnoi even on some of the batting-friendly tracks here was not an easy job. “Their spinners bowled well. They got us tied down and we couldn’t really break away in that middle period. So, that was probably the biggest difference in the game. “Bishnoi, obviously, has been great throughout the four games. He has been quite hard to get a hold of. Some of our guys with less



experience will learn a lot from facing him,” said Wade. But if one watches from outside, Bishnoi’s bowling has this pattern wherein he tries to purchase wickets with a series of googlies. He is not a huge turner of the ball either, and hardly ever tries to outfox the batters like Chahal does with wide of the off-stump bowling. But Bishnoi is quick off the surface, making the ball skid to the batters to catch them napping. Legendary Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan underlined this part of Bishnoi’s game. “Bishnoi is different from any other leg spinner out there. He bowls quicker and he slides the ball a lot, and it is tough to face him on helpful wickets,” Muralitharan said on Jio Cinema. The young Indian spinner showed precisely through the dismissal of Travis Head. The Australian opener has been nothing less than a thorn in the flesh for India this year, crushing them at the WTC and World Cup finals with hundreds. The left-hander looked dangerous in Bengaluru as well en route his 18-ball 28 that contained five fours and a six. Indian skipper Suryakumar gave

the ball to Bishnoi in the fifth over. Head had initial success, slog sweeping the spinner for a six over mid-wicket. But in the very next ball, Bishnoi skidded the ball at a fair clip to beat a tentative prod by Head to rattle his timber. Australia’s early momentum was snapped. However, Bishnoi will face harder challenges from within the team itself to find a place in the 11 when senior pros like Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja return to take the mantle of lead spinners. But Bishnoi has made a strong impression for himself in the run-up to the marquee event next year. “Bishnoi has given this Indian side the option of a solid third spinner now. It is not easy to come in for someone like Chahal. But Bishnoi has made it look easy, and I hope he continues that,” a former India spinner told PTI. “The T20 World Cup is going to be played in the West Indies and the USA and the pitches there might offer some assistance to the spinners. Having three quality players in that department will give the team a certain edge,” he added.

England won’t deviate from Bazball against India: McCullum



PTI ■ BENGALURU

Bazball’ has changed the dynamics of England’s batting approach in Test cricket and their Kiwi coach Brendon McCullum is very clear that irrespective of outcome, his team won’t deviate from its aggressive tactics against India in the five-Test series, where most tracks will offer substantial turn. The term ‘Bazball’, coined after McCullum’s nickname ‘Baz’ and the attacking philosophy that he endorses, has also found its pride of place in ‘Collins dictionary’. The meaning of ‘Bazball’ is “a style of test cricket in which the batting side attempts to gain the initiative by playing in a highly aggressive manner.” England will face India in five Tests at Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Rajkot, Ranchi and Dharamsala, starting January 25. “We have got a huge challenge against a very good Indian team in five Tests in India,” McCullum said at the Royal Challengers Bangalore Innovation Lab’s Leaders Meet India. “I am excited about it because you want to test yourself against the best side and I genuinely believe that India is the best in their own condition. It is going to be a good challenge for us. If we have success then fabulous, if we don’t, then I know we will go down in the style that we want to go down,” McCullum used the platform, signal his and

his team’s clear attacking intent for the marquee series. In his address, McCullum also expressed his thoughts on the essence of ‘Bazball’ and what it stands for. “We are playing the game, because we love cricket and we want to try and be as good at cricket as we possibly can. During the time that you are in the chair, you want to make sure you enjoy it and you shouldn’t wait till the end of your career to do so. We are very lucky that we have had some immediate success but I don’t think it is the ceiling for us.” The style of cricket has also allowed England to check the real potential of some of its younger players. “I think we have seen some guys who have unlocked their potential in the last 18 months or so and that’s what the job is as a leader; to get the most out of the people that you’re in charge of,” he added. The 42-year-old also recalled his fearless and unbeaten knock of 158 off 73 balls in the very first IPL game. He credited the knock as the inspiration for the Bazball phenomenon. “The reason why I daydream about that moment is because it literally changed my life. I was just a cricketer for New Zealand, where no one really knew what you did where you’re from, or what you’re capable of. But that day provided the platform, the forum, and the opportunity to change my life,” he said.

PTI ■ LONDON

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has instructed Jofra Archer to skip next year’s Indian Premier League (IPL) in order to manage the injury-prone pacer’s workload in the run up to the 2024 T20 World Cup, according to a report. Archer, who was bought by Mumbai Indians ahead of the 2022 IPL for a whopping INR 8 crore, was released by the franchise last week. His name doesn’t figure in the list of players who have registered for the IPL auction, set to be held on December 19 in Dubai. Archer, who has been plagued

ECB tells Archer to skip 2024 IPL

To manage workload ahead of T20 World Cup



by multiple injuries, suffered a recurrence of his elbow stress fracture while playing for MI during the IPL in May. The 28-year-old Barbados born cricketer hasn’t played any professional cricket since then and also missed the ODI World Cup. “... The ECB believes that it will be easier to manage Archer’s comeback if he is in the UK in April and May under its supervision than if he is in India on the books of an IPL team looking to get their money’s worth from him,” ‘ESPNCricinfo’ reported. As per the report, he has signed a new two-year contract with the ECB and ahead of the T20 World Cup in the West Indies and the United States from June 4 next year; the board has “opted to take as much control over Archer as possible.” Archer had briefly travelled to India for the World Cup but returned to the UK after less than a week due to elbow pain. ECB is hopeful that the pace spearhead will be a part of England’s squad for the T20 World Cup “We take that bet with him that we want him back fit and able to

play for England, because of the upside,” former England opener (men’s cricket) Robert Key had said last month. “You start looking at things like the Ashes in two years, the T20 World Cup... Jofra adds so much to that,” he had said back then. As many as 34 England players, including Harry Brook, Adil Rashid and Chris Woakes, have registered for the IPL auction. While the likes of Moeen Ali, Jos Buttler, Jonny Bairstow, Sam Curran, Liam Livingstone, Jason Roy, Mark Wood, Will Jacks and Reece Topley have been retained by their franchise.



Bavuma, Rabada rested for white-ball series against India

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma and pace ace Kagiso Rabada have been rested for the white-ball leg of this month’s home series against India with the duo set to return for the two Tests. The Proteas host India for a full series, which includes three T20Is, as many ODIs and two Tests, beginning with the short-test format on December 10 in Durban. “Captain Temba Bavuma and Kagiso Rabada are amongst a group of players that have been omitted for the white-ball leg of the tour in order to play red-ball cricket as emphasis is placed on the Test series for which both will return,” Cricket South Africa said on Monday. Both India and South Africa are gearing up for the new World Test Championships cycle, starting with the Boxing Day Test in Centurion on December 26. In Bavuma’s absence, Aiden Markram will lead South Africa in the white-ball fixtures. Wicketkeeper batter Tristan Stubbs, who has played 1 ODI and 16 T20Is, has been included in the Test side for the first time while Heinrich Klaasen has been left out of the red ball squad. Pacers Gerald Coetzee, Marco Jansen and Lungi Ngidi have also been left out of the ODIs, which is low priority after the conclusion of the 50-over World Cup. The trio is a part of the squad for the opening two T20Is and subsequently, the two Test matches.

With valuable WTC points at stake and next year’s T20 World Cup looming large, South Africa like India have named several new faces in their ODI squads, including uncapped duo of medium pacer Ott Niel Baartman and all-rounder Mithali Mpongwana. Batter David Bedingham (Test) and pacer Nandre Burger (all three) — have also earned maiden national call-ups.

SQUADS:

South Africa T20I squad: Aiden Markram (captain), Ott Niel Baartman, Matthew Breetzke, Nandre Burger, Gerald Coetzee (1st and 2nd T20Is), Donovan Ferreira, Reeza Hendricks, Marco Jansen (1st and 2nd T20Is), Heinrich Klaasen, Keshav Maharaj, David Miller, Lungi Ngidi (1st and 2nd T20Is), Andile Phehlukwayo, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, and Lizaad Williams
South Africa ODI squad: Aiden Markram (captain), Ott Niel Baartman, Nandre Burger, Tony de Zorzi, Reeza Hendricks, Heinrich Klaasen, Keshav Maharaj, Mithali Mpongwana, David Miller, Wiaan Mulder, Andile Phehlukwayo, Tabraiz Shamsi, Rassie van der Dussen, Kyle Verreynne and Lizaad Williams
South Africa Test squad: Temba Bavuma (captain), David Bedingham, Nandre Burger, Gerald Coetzee, Tony de Zorzi, Dean Elgar, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Keegan Petersen, Kagiso Rabada, Tristan Stubbs and Kyle Verreynne.

‘You always have a lot more time than you think’, Hope reveals inspirational chat with Dhoni

PTI ■ NORTH SOUND (ANTIGUA)

Master chaser MS Dhoni’s advice to “take the game deep” inspired Shai Hope to lead his side to a thrilling victory against England in the opening ODI, the West Indies skipper revealed. Former Indian captain Dhoni is known for his calm demeanour and match-winning abilities, as he always looks to take the chase deep when the target is massive. And after West Indies were reduced to 213/5 in pursuit of 326 here on Sunday, Hope, a wicketkeeper batter just like Dhoni, recalled a chat with one of the best finishers in the game. “A very, very famous person, MS Dhoni — we had a chat a while ago, and he was saying, ‘You always have a lot more time than you think’ Hope said at the post-match presentation. “That’s one thing that has stuck with me throughout the years I’ve been playing ODI cricket,” Hope added. West Indies faced the uphill task of scoring



106 in the last 10 overs. But along side Romario Shephard (48; 28b), Hope smashed an unbeaten 109 off 83 balls, that included four hits to the fence and seven maximums, to take eke out a memorable win here on Sunday.

The 30-year-old struck three sixes in four balls off Sam Curran in the penultimate over of the chase to give West Indies a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. In the process, he also recorded his 16th ODI and fastest century of his career.

Once I got wicket of Wade, belief came in that we can win match: Singh

PTI ■ BENGALURU

After leaking 37 runs in his first three wayward overs on a languid Chinnaswamy Stadium pitch, Arshdeep Singh’s night was seemingly doomed. But then the left-arm pacer found a chance to redeem himself in the dying moments of the fifth T20I against Australia to seal a 4-1 series win. Arshdeep grabbed it with both hands, defending 10 runs in the final over to give India a six-run win, nailing a bouncer and yorkers that he looked so incapable of bowling during that horror start. So, what was going through his mind when captain Suryakumar Yadav tossed the ball to him ahead of the 20th over. “I did not feel that it was bowling-friendly conditions as I bowled a lot of loose deliveries,” Arshdeep began his post-match press meet, even allowing himself the luxury of a relieved chuckle. The 24-year-old had in front of him an in-touch Matthew Wade and Arshdeep surprised him with a bouncer outside the off-stump and to be fair to the Aussies captain that ball ought to have been called a wide for the height. The second ball was an inch-perfect yorker on the off-stump as Wade could only squirt it back to the bowler. Arshdeep missed a yorker again off the third delivery, but the low



full-toss was enough for him to get the wicket of Wade through a catch in the deep by Shreyas Iyer. Arshdeep thought the match turned in India’s favour at that moment. “I was just thinking that I have nothing to lose as I have already given away a lot of runs. Surya bhai was also saying the same thing that ‘let’s see how it goes.’ “My gut feeling was to bowl a bouncer off the first ball to put some doubt in Wade’s mind and once I got his wicket the belief came (in me) that we can win this match,” said Arshdeep.

The pacer was effusive in his praise for the way Suryakumar led the side during this series. “Surya bhai gives a lot of freedom. We had played in a few batting-friendly pitches earlier in the series but he said wherever there are challenges opportunities too will be there. “He was telling us not to worry about the results but to focus on the process and force the batsmen to score runs off good deliveries. He never put us under pressure,” he said. Arshdeep emphasised his point while giving context to it with the example of the last over here.

“He told me to bowl whatever you want to in the death overs and his full support will be there. Sometimes, he gives a bit of input, you know, this kind of ball will be good at this stage,” he added. Arshdeep was not yet ready to think deeper into India’s tour to South Africa, beginning in a week’s time. “Right now, we are focusing on this series. We are not looking too far ahead (in terms of South Africa tour) and once we go there and see the conditions, will take a call accordingly,” he said.