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THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF Telangana People's Government

The opening of a new chapter in progress and development

Today 07.12.2023 at 1:04 pm, LB Stadium, Hyderabad

Shri Anumula Revanth Reddy Garu

will take oath in the grand ceremony as
new Chief Minister of Telangana along with his new Cabinet.



We are grateful to the people of Telangana for creating
history by enabling us to form the first people's
government in the State.

A BIG THANK YOU

Issued by Special Commissioner, Dept.of Information and Public Relations, Govt.of Telangana



Revanth, the second direct CM from Congress

SNCN ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

After N Kiran Kumar Reddy now A Revanth Reddy is becoming a Chief Minister directly. Like Kiran Kumar Reddy, Revanth Reddy also has no experience as a minister.

Before becoming the Chief Minister, Kiran Kumar Reddy worked as a government chief whip and later became Assembly Speaker in the United Andhra Pradesh. But Revanth Reddy did not work as a minister or in any other important posts. From the Congress, Revanth Reddy won as an MLA for the first time. In the past in 2009 and in 2014 Assembly elections, Revanth Reddy won as an MLA from Kodangal constituency from the TDP.

In 2018 Telangana Assembly elections, Revanth Reddy con-



Revanth Reddy is the youngest Chief Minister of Telangana State. Revanth, with his fighting spirit against the BRS, attracted the Congress high command. He is a relative of late former MP S Jaipal Reddy

tested as an MLA from the Congress party from Kodangal and was defeated by BRS candidate P Narendar Reddy. But now Revanth Reddy defeated the same BRS sitting MLA Narendar Reddy with a huge majority.

In 2007, Revanth Reddy won as an MLA from local bodies as an independent. Revanth Reddy became the TPCC president in 2021 and in 2023 he is becoming the Chief Minister. Revanth Reddy is the second Chief Minister of

Telangana State. BRS president K Chandrasekhar Rao was the first Chief Minister of Telangana State. When K Chandrasekhar Rao became the Chief Minister of Telangana state, his age was 60 years. Now the age of Revanth Reddy is 54 years.

Revanth Reddy is the youngest Chief Minister of Telangana State. Revanth, with his fighting spirit against the BRS, attracted the Congress high command. He is a relative of late former MP S Jaipal Reddy. This has also become an advantage to Revanth Reddy to attract the Congress high command. He fought against the BRS all these days as the TPCC president. Now as a Chief Minister, Revanth Reddy should fight with the BJP-led Central government for the development of Telangana State.

Siricilla residents apprehensive of development under Cong regime

PNS ■ SIRICILLA

Siricilla Assembly constituency of undivided Karimnagar district has a speciality by virtue of which, a different party gets power in the State than the party of the MLA elected from the constituency.

However, in 2014 and 2018, the constituency has the same party MLA as that of the ruling BRS. But in 2023 polls, while the Congress came to power in the State, the constituency elected KT Rama Rao as its MLA, winning the seat for the fourth time consecutively.

The reorganisation of the Assembly constituencies took place in 2009. In 2009, KTR was elected from the constituency, but the Congress came to power in the State for the second time.

However, the jinx was broken with the BRS winning the seat in the 2014 and 2018 elections. KT Rama Rao, BRS working president and IT



Minister, represented the constituency in the State Legislative Assembly.

Now the situation of Siricilla constituency is back to square one. In the 2023 elections too, KTR retained the seat, but it is the Congress that is forming the government in the State.

KTR, a four-time MLA from the constituency, focused on the development of the constituency. Since he is the son of

the CM KCR and a minister in the State Cabinet for two terms, he pumped funds into the constituency and implemented development works during the past nine-and-a-half years. He took pains to see to that Siricilla becomes a district.

He developed the constituency in all respects in education, health, rural development and other spheres and ensured that the constituency gets many awards.

Currently, KTR is in the opposition party as the Congress came to power in Telangana, wrestling power from the BRS. The residents of Siricilla constituency were discussing whether the same development trend will continue in the constituency under the Congress rule.

They appealed to the Congress government to continue the development works initiated and ensure welfare schemes reach the target groups.

7 MLAs elected first time from Adilabad dist

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In 2023, the voters of undivided Adilabad district gave different verdict this time enabling the Congress and the BJP to get four seats each and confined the BRS to just two seats. In the outgoing BRS government, nine BRS MLAs represented the undivided Adilabad district.

In Nirmal, Asifabad and Bellampalli constituencies, old horses - Maheshwar Reddy, Kova Lakshmi and Gaddam Vinod were elected.

It is pertinent to note that out of 10 MLAs elected to the Assembly from the undivided Adilabad district, seven persons are first time entrants. Some of them have become MLAs in the very first attempt. Some others have tasted success after a series of defeats.

Postal ballots: Congress gets 62.64% votes

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALAPALLI

Besides the employees, the aged and physically challenged have exercised their right to vote from the comfort of their homes through the postal ballot.

In the undivided Warangal district, the Congress got a majority in postal ballots in all 12 Assembly seats. In Janagoan and Station Ghanpur Assembly seats won by the BRS, the Congress got a majority in postal ballots.

Dissatisfaction among government employees with regard to award of promotions, transfers, GO 317 implementation, transfers across the zones, delay in advancing GPF loans worked in favour of the Congress.

Besides this, the aged and physically challenged voted



for change. Out of the 23,856 postal ballots polled, the Congress got 14,945, while the BRS and the BJP were polled 4,276 and 2,476 respectively.

The Congress polled 62.64% of the postal ballots, whereas the BRS polled 17% of the highest number of invalid postal ballots - 278. Not voting properly and not affixing the signatures were found to be the reasons for invalidation of the votes.

Warangal West Congress nominee Nayini Rajender Reddy was polled the maximum of 3,031 postal ballots,

followed by Congress nominee for Vardhannapeta KR Nagaraju (1,979) and Congress candidate for Mulugu Sitakka (1,358).

Out of the total postal ballots, 1,445 were declared invalid with Narsampeta constituency accounting for the highest number of invalid postal ballots - 278. Not voting properly and not affixing the signatures were found to be the reasons for invalidation of the votes.

Kodandaram alleges BRS govt took away rights of employees

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TJS president Prof Kodandaram alleged that the previous BRS government took away the rights of the employees by using employees' union leaders.

Kodandaram said that a democratic rule would be there in the new government. He assured the employees that he will stand as a bridge between the government and employees and strives hard to solve their problems.

Speaking to the media after a meeting with the Secretariat employees on Wednesday, Kodandaram said that one can clearly understand the anger of the employees and the reason behind it as by gauging the suppression they faced for the past 10 years. The reason for the anger is the autocratic rule, continuous surveillance and the dictatorial attitude of the BRS government.



The people of Telangana got united and defeated KCR due to the suppression, he said. This is the feeling of the people from Adilabad to Hyderabad.

Kodandaram opined that the employees' unions have to be there to protect the rights of the employees, but not to dictate them.

Two central jails in Hyd create history of sorts

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad central jails at Cherlapally and Chanchalguda have created a record by giving two Chief Ministers for Telugu states. These two central jails will remain in the history of Telugu politics.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy was in Chanchalguda central jail for nearly 16 months. A Revanth Reddy who is becoming the second Chief Minister of Telangana was in Cherlapally central jail for more than six months. When Jagan went to jail he was an MP and when Revanth Reddy went to jail he was an MLA. Jagan was arrested and sent to jail in disproportionate assets case. Revanth Reddy was arrested and sent to jail in cash for vote case. Both Jagan and Revanth Reddy came out from jail on bail. After

coming out from jail Jagan became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Now Revanth Reddy is also becoming the Chief Minister of Telangana.

Revanth Reddy was in jail for more than six months before he was granted bail. In October 2017, Revanth Reddy resigned as an MLA and also quit the TDP and vowed to fight for the liberation of Telangana from KCR's "autocratic" rule and later joined the Congress.

Jagan was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Revanth Reddy was arrested by Telangana police. Now Revanth Reddy has become "big boss," to the same Telangana police.

Meanwhile, the TDP is in a happy mood after Revanth Reddy becomes the Chief Minister of Telangana. The TDP feels that it has come to power in Telangana. All these

days the TDP was criticising Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy who went to jail and came out on bail. Now, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy also came out from jail on bail.

The TDP, which owning Revanth Reddy as their party product cannot criticise AP CM Jagan because both the Chief Ministers of Telugu states are in the same position. Moreover, 'TDP' supremo N Chandrababu Naidu also went to jail in skill development scam and came out on bail. The TDP may criticise AP CM Jagan that he sent Chandrababu to jail in a political vendetta. The YSR Congress also counters the same allegation on the TDP because along with the Congress the TDP was also involved in sending Jagan to jail.

Cong govt will fall within one year in the process of clearing debts: Raja Singh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP MLA-elect from Goshamahall constituency T Raja Singh alleged that the Congress government will fall within one year in the process of clearing debts done by the previous BRS government. Raja Singh commented that it is possible for the BJP only to run Telangana and make it clear that BJP will come to power in Telangana.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday after paying tributes to Dr BR Ambedkar's portrait on the occasion of death anniversary on Wednesday at the party office, Raja Singh said that it is not possible for the Congress to implement the six guarantees. The previous government made the State so as it is not in a position to pay the interest to the loans it took. How will the coming government bring the money for its

announced schemes? he asked. Raja Singh stated that the people changed KCR, who stated that he will change the Constitution. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the person who spread the greatness of Ambedkar to the world.

Raja Singh said that all sections of the people remember Ambedkar. The Ravan Raj ended in the State. KCR had deceived Dalits and erected Ambedkar's statue with the pressure from BJP, he said.

Recalling that CM-designate Revanth Reddy stated that he will implement all the schemes implemented by KCR, Raja Singh said that the BJP activists will not leave Revanth Reddy if he deceives Dalits. He alleged that the Congress party never honoured Ambedkar and slammed the Congress that it gave deceiving assurances in the name of six guarantees.

KCR meets Chintamadaka villagers at Erravelli

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

People from Chintamadaka village met BRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao at his Erravelli residence on Wednesday.

Fans and common people came in large numbers to see KCR after he faced defeat in Telangana Assembly elections. In all, 540 people in nine buses reached Erravelli. On this occasion, KCR greeted the villagers of Chintamadaka, his native village. For the past three days, party leaders, people and other dignitaries have been reaching the Erravelli residence in large numbers to meet KCR.

On Wednesday, thousands of people from Chintamadaka village reached Erravelli residence and they raised slogans "CM KCR" "You have to be CM again", "Jai Telangana" and "Jai KCR". Harish Rao and other leaders were present.

TBGKS to give priority to youth in Singareni elections

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Boggu Gannula Karmika Sangam (TBGKS) honorary president and BRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha clarified that jobs have been provided to youth on a large scale in the Singareni organisation and with the same spirit, youth will be given top priority in leadership.

In the wake of the Singareni elections, TBGKS president B Venkata Rao, general secretary Miryala Rajireddy and working president Kingarla Mallaiiah held discussions about the strategies and preparations to be followed by Kavitha in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Kavitha said that since 50 per cent of Singareni workers and employees are there. Priority will be given to young leadership in their union and opportunities will be provided up to



66 per cent in leadership responsibilities.

It is stated that KCR has revived the appointments on compassionate grounds which were stopped in 1998 but they appointed thousands of people in 2018. She said that until 1998 compassionate appointments were hampered due to national associations. It was clarified that KCR deserves the credit of providing job opportunities to women in Singareni through compassionate appointments, which was not

even in Coal India.

She emphasised that the responsibility of saving Singareni rests with the youth. She said that KCR has done immeasurable efforts to make the organisation profitable, for the growth of the organisation and for the welfare of the workers, and called on TBGKS, the affiliated association of BRS, which saved Singareni from hardships, to win the elections with a huge majority. She concluded that only if TBGKS wins, the work-

Tension as woman dies in private hospital

PNS ■ MANCHERIAL

Tension gripped Mancherial on Wednesday following the death of a woman at a private hospital. The incident occurred at a private hospital at IB Chowrasta. She was admitted to hospital for surgery.

The deceased was identified as 23-year-old Ramya. She hailed from Tikenpalli village under Hajipur mandal. The woman's parents and relatives staged a protest in front of the hospital, alleging negligence of the doctor that led to the death of the woman.

They demanded action against the doctors who performed the surgery. They later withdrew their protest when the police assured them that they would investigate into the incident.

The agitating family members alleged that Ramya was admitted to the hospital when



she complained of stomach pain on Sunday.

They said that she suffered heavy bleeding after surgery and died after a cardiac arrest. Doctors said that they had followed the proper procedure to perform the surgery.

No case was registered against the hospital though the police assured of action against the hospital.

Independents galore in Nalgonda district

PNS ■ MIRYALAGUDA

Besides the candidates of major political outfits, 87 candidates belonging to minor political outfits tried their luck at the hustings in all 12 constituencies of Nalgonda district. Together, they were polled 65,360 votes.

A maximum of 12 candidates from minor political parties contested from Munugode seat and received total number of 5,106 votes, while Devarakonda figured at the other end of the spectrum with contestants from minor parties contesting the elections. They received a total of 528 votes.

These minor political outfits include All-India Forward Block, Dharma Samaj Party, MCP, Telangana Republican Party, Alliance of Democratic Reforms, Telangana Sakala Janula Party, Pyramid Party of India, Bahujana Mukti Party, Yuga Tulasī Party, Telangana

Rashtra Punar Nirmana Samiti, Indian Praja Congress, Vidyardhula Rajakeeya Party, Praja Ekta Party, Dalit Bahujana Party, All-India Hindustan Congress, Bharatiya Swadeshi Congress, Social Justice Party of India, Bharata Chaitanya Yuvaajana party, PrajaVaani party, Blue India Party, Vidyavantula Rajakeeya Party, Jana Sankharavam Party, Navarang Congress, Bahujana Left Party, Bahujana Socialist Republic Party, Telangana Rajya Samiti, Jai Mahabharat Party, Praja Santi Party, Mana Telangana Rashtra Samaikya Party, Janata Congress and Republic Sena Party.

Pilli Ramaraju Yadav who represented the All-India Forward Block and contested from Nalgonda was polled 27,096 votes. In Huzurnagar, Pillutla Raghu contesting from the same party was polled 8,280 votes. Other candidates of various minor outfits were



polled ranging between 1,000 and 2,000 in various constituencies of the district. After these two constituencies, candidates of minor parties got 5,106 votes in Munugode and 4,416 in Tungaturti.

Besides these candidates, 136 independents contested from 12 Assembly seats. They did not matter the victory or defeat of the main contestants, but secured votes ranging

between 2,000 and 7,000 in each constituency. In all, all contestants in 12 seats were together polled a total of 60,969 votes.

In Suryapeta constituency, the majority secured by the BRS candidate G Jagadish Reddy is more than the total votes polled to the independents in the constituency.

In Huzurnagar constituency, the independents received the

maximum of 7,120 votes, while the independents contesting from Bhongir figured at the other end of the spectrum polling only 2,357 votes.

In Munugode constituency, a majority of 23 independents contested the elections. They received a total of 4,325 votes. In Tungaturti constituency, only four independent candidates contested the elections. They received a total of 5,615 votes.

Among the independent candidates, two candidates in Nagarjunasagar constituency and two in Tungaturti seat got more than 2,000 votes each. Another 12 independents got over 1,000 votes each. Three independents in Huzurnagar constituency, two each in Devarakonda, Alair and Miryalaguda constituency, one each in Kodada, Nagarjunasagar and Suryapeta constituencies secured votes more than 1,000.

Hyd tops in credit card/debit card cyber frauds

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad is in first place in credit card and debit card frauds with 415 out of 1,117 incidents across other cities of the country. According to the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) 2022 data, State-wise, Telangana is in the top place with 795 incidents out of 3,357 across the country, followed by Bihar and Maharashtra.

The city is on top with 381 out of 1,070 incidents in 2021 also. Rupesh Mittal from Cyber Jagrithi Foundation said, "Most of the IT employees are from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Delhi, but somehow Bengaluru is better than other cities."

"Hyderabad is in the top place that does not mean



other cities are in a better condition. I think many people do not know how to file a case. Though police and other organisations are campaigning on cyber crimes, people still somehow fall a prey. Most people do not take our campaigning seriously," he added.

Many states have not been implementing the 1930 portal. Gujarat, Delhi and

Hyderabad have started this portal, which is also one of the reasons for more crimes being reported in these cities.

"Now the payment system is being replaced by UPI instead of debit cards and debit cards, but the data is not available in the NCRB report. Many people do not know that if any customer has been scammed by the debit card, they may get the insurance, but based on the type of the card", he mentioned.

"My suggestion is that Police is a state subject. But what happens is sometimes the fraudster is from other states. So this police does not have the authority to take action in other states. An umbrella system should be brought by the union government to curb more cases", he added.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

INDIA hits roadblock

With certain satraps demanding their pound of flesh, Congress forced to be on the defensive

The Congress seems to be spiralling down the goodwill and credibility meter. After the drubbing it received in three recent Assembly elections, its partners in the INDIA bloc are also not extending it the courtesy it has grown accustomed to. After burning most bridges with its co-parties on account of its preoccupation with the State elections, where it miserably failed to score a point, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge had convened a meeting of the INDIA bloc on December 6, but key alliance partners cocked a snook at the abrupt invite and expressed unavailability to attend, forcing Congress to reschedule the gathering. The absence of prominent figures, including TMC chief Mamata Banerjee, JD(U)'s Nitish Kumar, SP's Akhilesh Yadav and DMK's MK Stalin underlined the growing discontent within the alliance. Mamata cited commitments, Nitish is reportedly down with viral fever, and Stalin is engaged in relief efforts after cyclone Michaung. The unexpected nature of these absences left the Congress in an awkward position.



The lack of communication and coordination reflected poorly on the Congress's ability to manage the alliance. To address the discontent, the Congress scaled down the meeting to include only floor leaders, rescheduling the heads of parties' meeting to the third week of December. This move aims to accommodate the busy schedules of alliance leaders and foster better participation, which should have been the priority right from the start. However, the rescheduling indicates the need for Congress to reassess its approach to alliance management and communication.

These are difficult times for the Congress. The decimation of the party must have had a demoralising effect on the INDIA alliance as well, which was keenly watching the elections and hoping for a turnaround in the northern region. The development also indicates that though Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra created good impact, it failed to translate into votes. The fissures in the alliance were actually visible even before the elections. Several bloc parties, including the TMC, AAP, SP and JD(U), expressed frustration with the Congress for stalling alliance activities, such as seat-sharing talks, citing Assembly polls. The delay raises concerns about the cohesion and effectiveness of the alliance, with some members believing that the political momentum gained after previous meetings has been lost. The Congress must address the issues of perceived dissension, EVM tampering controversy in Assembly elections and work towards restoring the alliance's stability, effectiveness and cohesion for the political battle ahead. The rescheduled meeting presents an opportunity for the Congress to regroup, re-establish communication with alliance partners and chart a course that strengthens the unity and purpose of the coalition. It will also be the litmus test of the INDIA bloc's ability to survive together.

PICTALK



Eminent dancer Dona Ganguly's troupe performs on 29th Kolkata International Film Festival, in Kolkata

PTI

Insurtech is the next big thing after FinTech

By merging insurance with technology, this burgeoning sector promises to revitalise the traditional insurance sector

In the past decade, FinTech's revolutionary impact has been marked by the integration of cutting-edge technologies across various sectors. Thriving on innovation, these FinTech companies have disrupted traditional processes, raising billions in the process. Even with a funding slowdown, the sector managed to secure \$1.3 billion in FI 2023. Building on this momentum, Insurtech emerges as India's new digital frontier. Merging insurance with technology, this burgeoning sector promises to revitalise the traditional insurance. Its innovative solutions aim to enhance customer experiences, streamline operations, and increase insurance accessibility. Currently valued at US\$ 20,667.5 million, Insurtech is projected to surge to an estimated 210,664.3 million by 2033, growing at a CAGR of over 26%. This remarkable growth trajectory positions Insurtech not just as a trend, but as a transformative force in India's digital economy.

Insurtech and its scope
Insurtech (made of two words: Insurance and



Technology) refers to the use of technological innovations designed to squeeze out savings and efficiency from the current insurance industry model. It is not just limited to digitising the existing insurance framework; rather, it's a reimagining of insurance operations using cutting-edge technologies like AI, blockchain, and IoT to create more personalised, automated, and customer-centric services. Insurtech in India represents a transformative force within the traditionally manual and paperwork-heavy insurance sector. Leveraging technological innovations, Indian Insurtech start-ups are streamlining policy management, claims processing, and risk assessment. This simplification makes insurance more accessible and user-friendly. There is still a large proportion of the population uninsured, for instance around 40 crore individuals

do not have access to any health insurance. This significant presence of an uninsured population, coupled with growing digital adoption, positions Insurtech for substantial growth. **Success of the Fintech**
The success of fintech companies and the rapid adoption of the services offered by these enterprises have laid the groundwork for the emergence and growth of Insurtech. The current trajectory of Insurtech which promises high growth rates and is also characterised by disruptive innovation and swift market penetration, is quite similar to how the Fintech sector has evolved in the past decade. **Investors are for Insurtech**
Even though the comparison of numbers with the fintech sector would not be fair, it is critical to mention that Insurtech enterprises have raised more than \$2.6 billion in the past five years. With exciting forecasts, it is rather a surety that VCs and investors would be more than happy to pour more money into a sector that has a forecasted CAGR of more than 25%. Here are some of the

most critical reasons, besides the growth trends, that have enhanced investors' interest in the sector: **Filling gaps in insurance**
Traditional insurance models are often hindered by inefficiencies like lengthy claim processes and limited customer interaction. Insurtech addresses these gaps through technological solutions that streamline operations and enhance customer engagement. This ability to solve longstanding problems in insurance makes Insurtech a particularly attractive investment for those looking to fund ventures that combine innovation with practical, market-driven solutions. **Data-Driven Insights**
The fundamental appeal of the sector is based on data analytics and AI. These technologies enable more accurate risk assessment, personalised policy offerings, and predictive analytics to anticipate future trends and customer needs. For VCs and investors, the efficiency and customer-centric nature of these data-driven solutions presents a compelling investment case. *(The writer is the founder, of Alwritr; views are personal)*



ADITYA DADIA

The significance of Sam Bahadur

The biopic on Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw depicts him as a fearless man of honour and integrity but skips the scruffy treatment he got in his twilight years

Undoubtedly, many parents will be writing about Sam Bahadur, the biopic on Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw. It not only shines a light on the life and times of a genuine military hero but also on what it means to be an officer and a gentleman. Whatever one's views about the movie or its shortcomings, of which there are a few, it is undeniable that the director, Meghna Gulzar, has brilliantly caught the very essence of the Field Marshal, both as a human being and a military leader nonpareil. For that, she and the cast certainly deserve ample praise and accolades. For unknown reasons, the biopic has skirted the issue of the horrendous treatment meted out to the Field Marshal in his twilight years by our political establishment and the bureaucracy. That is rather unfortunate. For instance, though appointed Field Marshal in January 1973, he only received the arrears of his pay and allowances in 2007, a full thirty-four years later, and that too because of the personal intervention of President Abdul Kalam. Interestingly, in 1972, when Mrs Gandhi first proposed to promote him to the rank of Field Marshal, she also wanted him appointed Chief of Defence Staff. A proposal vigorously opposed by bureaucrats not unexpectedly, but also by the other two Services as well. Unfortunately, we are still paying a very high price for the short-sightedness of our military hierarchy to this day. On his demise in June 2008, while the Government did honour him with a State Funeral, neither the President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Pratibha Patil, nor Prime Minister Manmohan Singh nor his defence minister AK Antony, could spare time to attend. Instead, the Government was represented at the funeral of India's greatest military icon since Independence, by the Minister of State for Defence, Mr. Pallam Raju. What it says about our politicians needs no elaboration! Indeed, one would not be surprised if the unflattering depiction of politicians and bureaucrats in the movie was deliberate and not



miscasting as many suggest. The unkindest cut of all though, was the absence from the funeral of the Naval and Air Force Chiefs, Admiral Suresh Mehta and Air Chief Marshal Fali Homi Major. As per newspaper reports, this was supposedly because of the short notice and their inability to organise appropriate transportation. In fairness to them, they were represented, but if the reasons for their absence were true, it was certainly a grievous error of judgement on their part and reflected very poorly on them. Coincidentally, the Army Chief, General Deepak Kapoor, was also absent, but on an official visit to Russia, and was represented as per protocol, by the Vice Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Naidu. The significance of their absence was not lost on the serving and veteran community, as it clearly reflected the direction the military was heading, where displaying fealty to political masters overrode the necessity to live up to the traditions and ethos of the military. A trend, that has only taken deeper roots over time, as increasing politicisation within the military has started taking its toll. Today, interference in purely military mat-



MANY AMONGST OUR TOP MILITARY HIERARCHY ARE COMPROMISED AS THEY OWE THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS MORE TO POLITICAL MUNIFICENCE, THAN THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL ABILITIES

ters by politicians and bureaucrats, who have neither military experience nor domain knowledge, and will never be held accountable is clearly visible. The unviable Agnipath Scheme that is causing grave damage to our military ethos and capability is just one example. That there has been no opposition from within the military to all of this can be attributed to the sad fact that many amongst our top military hierarchy are compromised as they owe their present positions more to the political munificence, than their own professional abilities. Moreover, reputations, standing and self-respect were greatly damaged by the unwillingness of the Service Chiefs to speak up when military veterans and families were illegally and mercilessly beaten up by the Delhi Police as they sat in peaceful protest at the Jantar Mantar against the Government's failure to grant OROP, a promise that incidentally it has yet to honour in full. Indeed, those unwilling to defend their own will never garner any respect. Ironically, the situation our military is in presently has created a fundamental problem for the political leadership,

though it appears they may have failed to comprehend this as yet. One aspect that stands out in the movie is the fact that the Field Marshal endeared himself to Mrs Gandhi not by submitting to her every whim or a flagrant display of personal loyalty, but by giving her straightforward professional advice, regardless of consequences. Thus, despite all her inherent fears regarding the Field Marshal's likely motives or ambitions, she came to place implicit trust in his professional judgement and abilities. The results were there for all to see. Unfortunately, Prime Minister Modi does not have that luxury, which probably explains our weak-kneed response to Chinese provocations. As Napoleon so aptly put it, "If you build an army of 100 lions and their leader is a dog, in any fight, the lions will die like a dog. But if you build an army of 100 dogs and their leader is a lion, all dogs will fight as a lion". *(The writer is a military veteran and a Visiting Fellow with the Observer Research Foundation and a Senior Visiting Fellow with the Peninsula Foundation, Chennai. Views are personal)*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IMRAN KHAN CRIES OVER HIS DOINGS

Sir — On the face of it, predicaments for cricketer-turned-politician and former Pak Prime Minister Imran Khan are turning from bad to worse with each day passing and seeming far from over given that Mr Khan has been on the tenterhooks since he put in his papers as Prime Minister following a no-confidence motion passed against him in the National Assembly with 174 votes on April 10 in 2022. Mr Khan and his close aide and ex-foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi are already behind bars in Rawalpindi's Adiala jail, a special court judge on Monday ruled that Mr Khan and Mr Qureshi would be again indicted in the cypher case on December 12 for allegedly leaking state secrets in violation of the country's laws. Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqernain heard the case in the Rawalpindi prison where the duo is incarcerated.

To remind you, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) filed the chargesheet against the PTI leaders duo on September 30 under sections 5 and 9 of the Official Secrets Acts which entails a death sentence or up to 14 years in jail in case of conviction. Given that the Army in Pakistan has largely been in the driver's seat since the creation of the country in 1948, Pakistanis have taken the army rule in their country in their stride.

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

COP28 CONTINUES TILL NEXT WEEK

Sir — The COP28 global climate conference will continue for another week. That means its formal completion will be announced on the 12th of December. But this meeting held in Dubai, in many cases, seems to be entangled in a web of controversies even before it has started. First, there was controversy over the name of its chairman, Sultan al-Jaber, who is himself the head of an oil company. Secondly, that document became public, which also includes the draft which states that the UAE is going to use this platform to increase the sales of its oil. Second, con-

Opposition parties must introspect



It is indeed a pity that opposition parties are still not sensitised on the need to exhibit unity among themselves to bring about the much-

needed change in the political course of the country. People seem to have acted in desperation and kept the non-BJP parties at a distance. Telangana stands apart as the leader of the Congress party in the state and could successfully take all the factions with him.

In Rajasthan, at least, Congress has only two major factions whereas in Telangana the party has too many leaders and each leader leads a faction. But they all acted under a single command in exposing the misrule of BRS and emerged successful. But, at least, now the party should act with more sense of responsibility and spirit of nationalism as advised by the Prime Minister, though his utterance was more sarcastic. A bigger task is before them and let us hope better counsel will prevail in their mind.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

sensus was not seen on an agreement that pledged to triple installed renewable energy capacity by 2030. Only 118 out of 200 countries signed it. China, the world's second-largest country in terms of emissions, and India, the third-largest, did not sign. This historic decision was discussed at that time only. India, as G20 chairmanship, had also given its consent to this drafting. No one can understand India's sudden rejection of it. Anyway, all the COP series meetings are also held, and so far, we have seen only a boom in tourism. No concrete achievement from this is visible in any part of the earth. The temperature is increasing exponentially. Forests are being reduced to ashes by wildfires. With the expansion of the sea coast, cities and towns are coming under submergence. The world is becoming plagued by floods, storms and extreme heat. The countries of the world are still looking at every agreement from the perspective of their profit and loss.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshepur

COUGH SYRUP IS SWEET POISON

Sir — As per a report more than 40 companies manufacturing cough syrups in the

country have failed quality tests, a Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) report said, citing lab tests conducted in different states in the aftermath of reports potentially linking India-made cough syrups to 141 child fatalities globally. As per the CDSCO report, of the 1,105 samples tested, 59 were declared "not of standard quality". The report was released by CDSCO in November under a list of drugs, medical devices and cosmetics declared as "not of standard quality", "spurious", "adulterated", or "misbranded". The move came after several deaths were reported among children globally after consuming India-made cough syrups. Concerns surrounding these cough syrups were raised after the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that about 70 children in Gambia had died from acute kidney injury potentially linked to cough and cold syrups produced by Indian manufacturer Maiden Pharmaceuticals Ltd. With this, the image and credibility of India have fallen in the world.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

DISCIPLINE YOUR SENSES

Our senses would always seek their objects but we must keep them on a leash



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

We have six senses, which are actively looking for gratification by contact with their objects. For example, our tongues look for tasty foods except when we are full. There is nothing wrong with it if these pleasures are within 'dharma'/'maryada' (within allowable limits). God has allowed it, as stated by Lord Krishna in verse # 7.11 of the Bhagavad-Geeta, in which He stated, "I am passion in beings, according to religious principles." He emphasised this point further in verse # 6.17, when He counselled, "One whose eating and recreation are appropriate; of one who strives appropriately in activities; of one who sleeps and stays awake, as required; his sufferings are less. Because sufferings there will be in this material world, described by the Lord as a place of miseries." (8.15) But despite such warnings, we are forever ready to transgress allowable limits hoping to escape punishment. What happens will be clear as we go through the activities of these six active senses. Beginning with our tongue, all of us are guilty of indiscretions sometimes or other. Picture yourself invited to a very rich buffet dinner. You survey what is on offer, which will be a lot unless you are on a restricted diet. What should I eat? People load their plates as if they are starving. This explains our control over our senses. Shouldn't we consider what is best for us to eat? Is it on offer? Then, why think so much? Just eat enough because more food will be available in a few hours for breakfast.



Let us go to our eyes next. It used to be okay till multiple channels came and now smartphones. There is so much to see, especially now one can watch with no one watching. Unfortunately, we are being watched all the time because 'karmaphalas' are being made by our acts. Wise people restrict themselves to what is useful and at worst, what is harmless like a sports programme. The pleasure of speaking occupies a very high place in modern man's desires. Everyone is an expert on everything with Google playing its role. Doctors get frustrated when patients begin telling them what they should know. One doesn't want to consider that if one was so wise why should he or she be in so much trouble? The fourth sense, which is also very active is our ears. What do we want to hear most? Our appreciation, which is how good we are compared to everyone around us. Again, like question begs an answer: why aren't we satisfied with our lives then? Our skin occupies an important position in how we think. We place comfort in all considerations. Air conditioners, heaters, etc are all fine, but how about a little sweating it out with walks, yoga exercises, etc? What does a modern person value the most? Muscles of course to show off. People spend hours in gyms to build what is not needed which gives them trouble as they age. I have saved the next sense for the last, which gives us the maximum trouble. Yes, you have guessed it right. The sex pleasure is considered the topmost pleasure of all by almost everyone. Our thinking is normally defined by it. Lord Krishna has warned us about it in verse # 18.39, when He cautioned about 'pramad'. The conclusion is obvious. We have senses and they would always seek contact with their objects. This is normal, but what is not normal is not restricting oneself to what is allowable. God would not have made such a system if it was not workable. It is very much so; only we have to be highly disciplined in thinking and acting, and we can live a satisfactory life.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher, views are personal)

Artificial Intelligence is transforming the steel industry

A step-by-step approach is the best to implement artificial intelligence. Scores of AI models are available for use in the steel units which can be tried without much hassle



ALOK SAHAY

Technology is ever-evolving. While it becomes difficult to keep pace with rapid technological advancements in all expanses of life, it is equally difficult to discount them because these are highly value-accretive. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one such technology. The manufacturing sector, in general, and the steel sector, in particular, are integrating AI into their daily operations to improve productivity, health and safety, reduce operational costs and reap countless other operational and functional benefits. Survival will be at stake for those who will not. In a developing nation or the Global South, cheaper availability of steel is a prequel to ensure sustainable development. Since raw materials for

Is India losing sheen for investors?

The slowdown in foreign direct investment in India is a cause for concern, as multinational corporations are finding other competitors more attractive

India's GDP grew by 7.6% in the second quarter (July-September) of the year, a positive sign of economic growth. However, the steepest declines in foreign direct investment (FDI) are a matter of concern, especially considering India's recent emergence as a promising investment destination and a viable alternative to China. This decline is particularly worrying as it is happening despite positive projections of India's growth by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and The World Bank. According to the latest report by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), FDI inflows have slowed down drastically. The decline in FDI inflows has been steep, and the situation has only worsened, with a further decline of -24% in April-September 2023. The current FDI inflows stand at \$20.48 billion, down from \$26.91 billion over the same period last year. Even the overall FDI inflows in 2022-23 witnessed a 16% decline, standing at \$71.3 billion from \$84.8 billion in 2021-22. The steepest declines in FDI have been in crucial sectors such as computer software and hardware, automobile, infrastructure construction activities, and metallurgical industries. For instance, inflows in computer software and hardware fell from \$14.4 billion in 2021-22 to \$9.3 billion in 2022-23, in the automobile industry from \$6.9 billion to \$1.9 billion, in infrastructure construction activities from \$3.2 billion to \$1.7 billion, and in metallurgical industries from \$2.2 billion to \$219 million. The slowdown in foreign direct investment (FDI) in India is a cause for concern, as multinational corporations (MNCs) are finding Vietnam, Indonesia, and other competitors more attractive. This is a clear indication that the "China plus one" strategy of MNCs is not working for India. During January-September of this year, FDI in Vietnam increased by approximately 8% compared to the same period last year, reaching about \$18 billion. In the case of Indonesia, FDI flows stood at around \$10 billion during January-September of this year, similar to the levels seen last year. The factors that influence capital flows into countries include the global and domestic macroeconomic environment, the domestic policy and regulatory environment, and political stability. Since India is expected to benefit greatly from the "China plus one" strategy, policymakers must pay closer attention to these FDI trends. It is well known that FDI flows are more likely to gravitate towards countries with broader and deeper trade agreements. Lower tariffs and other benefits negotiated through free trade agreements (FTAs) incentivise foreign investment. Therefore, the decline in FDI flows to India may reflect this. A deeper assessment of the country's prospects is needed to address this issue. India is genuinely the alternative to China for companies looking to diversify if it is the "one" in China plus one strategy if the Government's PLI scheme is a powerful enough incentive to draw in investments, and if the solid foundations of India's growth forecasts are taken into account, then MNC investor should be long on India. Any concerns regarding an uncertain business environment, an uneven playing field, or the fear of arbitrary



THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CAPITAL FLOWS INTO COUNTRIES INCLUDE THE GLOBAL AND DOMESTIC MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT, THE DOMESTIC POLICY AND POLITICAL STABILITY

changes to the rules of the game must not deter investors from investing in India. More states should be in the ambit of FDI: The scope of FDI must be expanded to more Indian states. FDI has been concentrated in only a few states due to their location and favourable business environment. Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat have together attracted a staggering 69% of the FDI inflows into the country, with Maharashtra being the top recipient. However, it is disappointing to note that Punjab ranks a lowly 12th in attracting FDI, with a cumulative investment of a meagre Rs. 7693 crore in the past four years, which is a paltry 0.49% of the total inflows of Rs. 15.08 lakh crore from October 2019 to September 2023. In contrast, the neighbouring state of Haryana has been more successful, ranking sixth with FDI equity inflows of Rs. 67,502 crore, accounting for a substantial 4.17% of the total inflows during the same period. Punjab's successive governments have been striving to attract investments, particularly from foreign investors, but they have been facing major hurdles such as location disadvantage, poor connectivity, and frequent protests. The existing industry in Punjab has also been complaining about disruptions in their operations and movements due to the aforementioned issues. Haryana is way ahead in this regard with a significant advantage due to its proximity to Delhi NCR and superior connectivity. It is high time that Punjab takes firm steps to improve its position in attracting FDI, as its highest ranking was only ninth in 2020-21, when it attracted FDI equity investment of Rs. 4,719.45 crore, primarily in food processing, auto components, engineering goods, and textiles. The declining trend in FDI inflows to Punjab since then is a cause for concern. Therefore, the state must create a more conducive environment for businesses and investors, and promote its potential in various sectors, to attract more FDI and boost its economy. Disadvantage: Despite signing and negotiating bilateral free trade agreements, India has failed to secure a trade agreement with the European Union or become part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) countries including China, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea for free trade agreements. The trade agreement between the 10 member states of ASEAN and their free trade agreement partners - Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and Korea - has deepened economic integration between these countries, which are at the heart of manufacturing supply chains. As a result, India's exclusion from such agreements and the supply chains that run through these regions puts it at a significant disadvantage in this manufacturing ecosystem. The Way Forward: Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) have a far greater potential to facilitate the growth of the Indian economy than Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI). However, India needs to take swift and assertive action to speed up structural reforms, root out corruption, and reduce red tape in bureaucracy to strengthen its position as the most attractive investment destination for FDI. India has adopted a negative list approach in its FDI policy, which outlines only those sectors and activities where foreign investment is regulated. Sectors not mentioned in the document are open to obtaining 100% FDI under the automatic method. The liberal and attractive policy regime for investors, combined with a favourable business climate and reduced regulatory framework, have resulted in higher FDI inflows. But this alone is not enough. India needs to complement this with a sound trade policy that boosts exports, encourages inclusive development, and incentivises R&D to make our manufacturing ecosystem globally competitive, thereby fetching FDI at a large scale. *(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, and Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are strictly personal)*

making steel are unlikely to be economical in the foreseeable future, adaptation of modern disruptive technologies and processes is the only way out. Estimates suggest that the proper adaptation of AI in the entire value chain of steelmaking can save between \$60 and \$100 per tonne. Apart from this, a key takeaway from the recently concluded ISA Steel InfraBuild Summit in Lucknow was that the use of AI in architecture will enable engineers and architects to design, plan, and build steel structures more efficiently, resulting in proper economics and savings in infrastructure and real estate. In the steel sector, AI can be adopted from R&D and innovation to procurement, manufacturing and back-office process digitalisation to supply-chain inventory, marketing, and whatnot. All these can lead to a 60% growth in EBDI-TA in three years. Greenhouse gas emissions can also be reduced by 5-10%. Maintenance is, as always, a difficult task. Each manufacturing unit has its maintenance plan tailored to its particularities. Proper implementation and use of AI can help predict the exact timing of maintenance, thereby reducing shutdown time, cutting maintenance costs, and enhancing the lifespan of the machinery. The Indian steel industry has been the early adopter of AI. Adaptation of AI has the highest impact on steel manufacturing in the entire value chain. In the coke oven plant, sinter plant, blast furnaces, continuous caster and rolling, among others, the implementation of AI has multiple benefits ranging from 1-2% yield improvement to a 50-80% reduction in quality losses. Energy consumption also improved by roughly 10%. Autonomous or semi-autonomous data or content examination also makes predictions and recommendations easier. Integration of sales and production data improves revenue management and customer satisfaction. With precise data, AI's ability to predict market data and price fluctuations helps manufacturers adjust production, manage inventories, and respond swiftly to changing market conditions. Enhancing safety is also another essential aspect. No wonder steel manufacturers worldwide are embracing AI to ensure faster delivery of business requirements. This is the age of intelligent manufacturing. Far from having a steel-producing smart factory, intelligent manufacturing encompasses all of it - sourcing raw materials to production to marketing products through an integrated intelligent supply chain. Steel consumption mirrors the health of an economy. Aspiring to be in the league of a developed nation, India has miles to go to catch up with the global steel consumption average. The building, construction and infrastructure sector consumes nearly 70% of all steel in India. The growth of the steel sector will largely depend on the demand emanating from the infrastructure sector. While AI adaptation will benefit the steel sector, implementing AI in the infrastructure sector will help assess the sector's specific needs - such as identifying cost-effective high-strength steel structure-based designs and offering tailor-made products. Adaptation, both in the steel and the infrastructure sector, is a challenging task. A mindset of experimentation and a determination to bring about positive changes are required. With AI, the ultimate goal is to implement an automated and unsupervised process linked with software and processes to improve performance over time. However, there is no substitute for human capital, and once integrated with AI, it will do wonders if used for the benefit of mankind and planet Earth. The apprehension that AI will displace jobs is unfounded. However, the dynamics of the job will change, requiring manpower with digital skills. It also warrants upskilling existing employees. A step-by-step approach is the best to implement AI. Building on the following line from the learnings of the first will yield the best results. Scores of AI models are in use in different steel manufacturing units in the country. The use of transformative technology will only go up in the days ahead. We need to be ready to adapt to the changes and implement it. *(The writer is the Secretary General of the Indian Steel Association (ISA), views are personal)*

MONEY MATTERS

As many as 65 illegal telecom setups unearthed

As many as 65 illegal telecom setups, that allowed international calls with spoofed Indian numbers, were busted during FY2023-24, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed the International Long Distance Operators (ILDs) to drop incoming calls with no Calling Line Identification (CLI), or improper CLI or having certain prefixes. Moreover, DoT is blocking the apps allowing the origination of spoofed calls. Such apps are also blocked at Google Play Store and iOS App Store, Minister of State for Communications, Devusinh Chauhan said in a written reply in Lok Sabha. DoT in coordination with Law Enforcement Agencies and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) is unearthing illegal telecom setups that allow international calls with spoofed Indian numbers. Such illegal setups are used to bypass the ILDOs for anti-national activities, cyber-crimes and financial frauds, Chauhan said. "So far, 65 such illegal setups during FY 2023-24, 62 in FY 2022-23 and 35 in FY 2021-2022 have been unearthed."



ABFRL forms JV with shoe designer Christian Louboutin

Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABFRL) on Wednesday announced a Rs 5 crore investment in an equal joint venture with French luxury shoe designer Christian Louboutin. Both the partners plan to invest a total of Rs 10 crore into the JV, which will be a subsidiary of ABFRL, according to a spokesperson. The 1991-founded Christian Louboutin has a presence in 30 countries, and has a portfolio consisting of men's footwear, leather accessories, beauty and kids, and is known for its red sole shoes. This joint venture envisages the transfer of the current Indian business into a newly incorporated subsidiary of ABFRL where the partners will hold an equal stake, the statement said. "We are excited to partner with ABFRL's team and look forward to working with them to manage and develop the business in India which is an extremely important market for us," Alexis Mourot, group chief executive officer of Christian Louboutin, said.



Airlines to retain US\$ 5.45 on average for every passenger

On average, airlines will retain just USD 5.45 for every passenger carried by them and the amount is just enough to buy a basic grand latte at a London Starbucks, IATA chief Willie Walsh said on Wednesday as he emphasised that the profit of airlines should be put in proper perspective. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has projected the airline industry to rake in profits of USD 25.7 billion in 2024 and USD 23.3 billion this year. Walsh, the Director General of IATA, said that considering the major losses of recent years, the USD 25.7 billion net profit expected in 2024 is a tribute to aviation's resilience and that the speed of the recovery has been extraordinary, but it also appears that the pandemic has cost aviation about four years of growth. "Industry profits must be put into proper perspective. While the recovery is impressive, a net profit margin of 2.7 per cent is far below what investors in almost any other industry would accept."



India's economy to grow at 6.8% in current fiscal: CII

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Industry chamber CII expects the country's economy to grow at 6.8 per cent in the current fiscal and accelerate to 7 per cent in 2024-25, driven by the government's continued focus on infrastructure development and promotion of ease of doing business.

In an interview with PTI, CII President R Dinesh, who is also the Executive Vice Chairman of TVS Supply Chain Solutions, said even on a conservative basis, the expected gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 6.8 per cent will be more than the 6.5-6.7 per cent estimated earlier by the industry body.

Sharing growth projections, the CII President said: "In the beginning, we had said 6.5-6.7 per cent. Now, actually, we are saying it is going to be 6.8 per cent for this year, and we are looking at 7 per cent for next year. Obviously, the first half has given the comfort for 6.8 per cent. In fact, I would say it



is a conservative number because if you look at what has happened in the first half, we are being conservative here".

On the recent state elections, he said the stock market and the industry favour continuity in policy.

During the recently held state elections, the BJP won in three major states -- Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, while the Congress won in Telangana.

"We welcome continuity in policy and making sure that

the consensus is for the growth of the country.... for us, continuity in policy is very important and that's something that whichever party be in power, we make sure that we communicate that... The stock market is cheering the fact that there is continuity from an approach".

According to him, India is in a "sweet spot", owing to various reasons, including the government's focus on infrastructure and the push for ease of doing business.

India's economy recorded a growth of 7.7 per cent in the first half of the current fiscal ended in September.

When asked about the possibility of an interest rate cut by the RBI in its upcoming bi-monthly monetary policy review, he said: "We are not asking for that (interest rate cut) at all because we don't believe that it's the right time to ask because inflation is above the benchmark (4 per cent), which they (RBI) have set for themselves".

"Today, we have 75 per cent to 95 per cent capacity utilisation cutting across many sectors, that has been there for the last 3 quarters. So, more or less, we can expect that very soon, we will have that percentage crossing, where people will continue to make capex investments. We did our membership survey and found that a majority of our members were actually looking at higher private sector investments taking place in H2 as compared with H1," Dinesh said.

Domestic electronics manufacturing up 4-fold to Rs 8.22L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic electronics manufacturing increased over 4-fold to Rs 8.22 lakh crore in the last 10 years, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar informed the Lok Sabha that India has now reached a stage where 99.2 per cent of mobile handsets being used in the country are manufactured domestically, and from being an importer in the segment, the country has now become an exporter.

"In FY 2013-14 the electronics manufacturing was Rs 1,80,454 crore (US\$ 29.8 billion) and has grown significantly to Rs 8,22,350 cr (US\$ 102 billion) in FY 2022-23, which is further expected to grow up to Rs 23,95,195 cr (US\$ 300 billion) by 2026," the minister said. He said the country exported mobile phones worth US\$ 11.1 billion in financial year 2022-23. "We have become a mobile exporting country with US\$ 11.1 billion exports in FY 2022-23 as compared to a mobile importing country in 2014-15 when almost 74 per cent of all mobile phones sold in India were imported," Chandrasekhar said.

Markets scale fresh lifetime highs; Nifty nears 21k-level

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty rallied for the seventh straight session to hit fresh lifetime highs on Wednesday, driven by gains in index majors Reliance Industries, ITC and L&T amid persistent foreign fund inflows.

Besides, receding crude oil prices in international markets also boosted sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex surged 357.59 points, or 0.52 per cent, to settle at a new record of 69,653.73. The barometer rose to 69,744.62 during intra-day.

The broader index Nifty also climbed 82.60 points, or 0.40 per cent, to hit its fresh peak of 20,937.70.

"Post-state elections, market optimism thrives, confirming policy continuity and meeting investor expectations. A robust FII reversal is fuelled by receding inflation and dropping yields in US and Indian markets. The allure of Indian market gains post-China credit rating downgrade and decline in oil prices was followed by ease



in geopolitical tensions," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

As many as 20 shares of the 30-share index closed the session with gains, while 30 stocks of the Nifty's 50 firms ended in positive territory.

Among major Sensex movers, Wipro closed with the maximum gain of 3.85 per cent, followed by ITC -- 2.51 per cent higher. L&T and TCS gained 2.31 per cent and 2.13 per cent, respectively. Tata Motors, Nestle India, Infosys and Bajaj Finance were other gainers.

On the other hand, NTPC, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement

and ICICI Bank ended the session with a loss of up to 1.58 per cent.

Analysts said the sustained equity buying by foreign institutional investors was attributed to declining US bond yields, while the domestic players were betting big on favourable macroeconomic data and expectations of longer political stability in the country.

Besides, investors are also expecting the Reserve Bank to maintain the status quo on the interest rate in its bi-monthly monetary policy decision to be announced on Friday, they added.

Adani group stocks end up to 20% higher

3 firms hit 52-week high

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Group shares extended their gains and ended up to 20 per cent higher on Wednesday after billionaire Gautam Adani-led conglomerate said it has plans to invest USD 75 billion on energy transition initiatives by 2030. Eight of the group firms ended in the green territory, and three in the red.

During the day, some of the group firms also hit their 52-week highs and locked in upper-circuit levels, with the total valuation of group companies reaching near the Rs 15 lakh crore-mark at close.

On the BSE, Adani Total Gas zoomed 19.98 per cent to close at Rs 1,053.65 apiece, Adani Green Energy rallied 16.11 per cent at Rs 1,565.10, Adani Energy Solutions bounced 7.36 per cent to Rs 1,162.30, and NDTV advanced 7.07 per cent to settle at Rs 285.40.

Sanghi Industries shares jumped 4.97 per cent to end at Rs 136.35, Adani Wilmar climbed 4.11 per cent to Rs 396.35, Adani Power gained 4.09 per cent to Rs 560.55, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) rose 0.67 per cent to Rs 1,018.65 apiece.

RBI unlikely to cut rates before June: Deutsche Bank

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank-led Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is unlikely to tweak repo rates till June next year, according to a foreign brokerage report. The bi-monthly MPC meeting started on Wednesday and the decision on rates will be announced on Friday.

According to the report by Deutsche Bank, the interest rate cycle appears to have peaked and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is unlikely to go for further hikes, unless absolutely necessary. The rate is likely to be cut in June, it said. The RBI hiked the repo rate last on February 23, when it was raised to 6.5 per cent.

With the RBI continuing to maintain tight liquidity, short-term rates are hovering around 6.85-6.9 per cent, which is 35-40 bps higher than the repo rate. "We see the central bank cutting the policy repo rate by 75 bps in 2024 and another 25 bps in early 2025. Earlier, we were expecting a 100 bps of repo rate cut in 2024 itself, starting from April 2024, but given that the Fed is likely to start cutting rates from June 2024, we have pushed back the start of the rate cut cycle to June 2024," the analysts said.

"We now expect 25 bps rate cuts in each of the quarters beginning from Q2 of 2024 totalling 100bps of easing in FY25, which will likely bring down the repo rate to 5.50 per



"We now expect 25 bps rate cuts in each of the quarters beginning from Q2 of 2024 totalling 100bps of easing in FY25, which will likely bring down the repo rate to 5.50 per cent by early 2025."

cent by early 2025," they said. However, the analysts said the RBI's final decision will depend on the Fed's move on rates. If Fed goes for a rate hike in early 2024, or does not go for a rate cut in the whole of next year, it could delay the RBI's rate cut cycle. The report said India's economy will double in size to US\$ 7 trillion by the end of the decade with per capita income also nearly doubling to US\$ 4,500 by 2030.

And even before the end of this decade, India is likely to become the third largest economy after the US and China, overtaking Japan and Germany, the analysts said.

Ashv Finance gets US\$ 10 mn investment from Encourage Capital

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Small businesses-focused lender Ashv Finance on Wednesday announced that Encourage Capital has invested US\$ 10 million (about Rs 83.33 cr) into the company.

The non-bank lender, which has over Rs 1,000 crore of assets under management at present, is planning to launch a rooftop solar finance facility for small and medium businesses with the capital, according to a statement.

The quantum of the acquired stake in the small businesses-focused lender was not revealed. At present, it operates at 180 locations across 15 states and the funding will also be deployed for expanding its reach, the statement said.

Surprise credits in thousands of UCO Bank accounts opened around transfer dates under CBI scanner

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI investigation into surprise credits totalling Rs 820 crore in the accounts of UCO Bank customers has brought under the agency's scanner thousands of recipient accounts which were opened around the dates the transfers took place, officials said Wednesday.

The CBI is probing a case where over 41,000 UCO Bank customers received surprise credits of varied amounts in their accounts during November 10-13 without any corresponding debits in the originating accounts, they said.

Among various leads, the agency's needle of suspicion



has also gone on "thousands of accounts" which were opened around the time the transactions started and received the transfers, the officials said.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had earlier said in a statement that several account holders allegedly

who conspired and orchestrated the massive scheme. It is an early stage of investigation, and all angles are being looked into," an official said. He added that people must beware of fraudsters who may want to exploit the situation by posing as investigators. The CBI does not make phone calls to get details in the case, hence, he said in cases of such calls, people may approach the agency directly.

The agency has noted that Rajasthan was the most affected state in the money transfer case, recording 7.50 lakh transactions in three days spread across 230 branches and 28,000 accounts in which Rs 760 crore were transferred.

ONGC to cut gas flaring, use green power at oil wells

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-controlled Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) plans to wheel green electricity to its installations in the Arabian Sea to replace natural gas it uses in operation of oil wells as part of its ambitious decarbonisation programme, its Chairman Arun Kumar Singh said.

India's top oil and gas producer has substantially cut gas flaring -- burning of methane gas is produced when oil is extracted from below surface -- and would look to bring it down to nil as part of its environmental commitments, he said while speaking at the 28th UN Climate

Change Conference in Dubai, called COP28.

Singh said ONGC uses a lot of gas to generate electricity as well as meet compression and other process needs of an oil and gas field. By 2028, this gas is intended to be replaced with green power wheeled to installations as far as 160 km from the west coast. The gas thus freed will be sold to industries like fertiliser and power plants.

Companies around the globe have pledged to slash down methane emissions by 30 per cent from 2020 levels by 2030. Methane, which is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, tends to leak into the atmosphere.



This is sometimes deliberate when companies flare the gas that comes alongside crude oil, due to lack of consumption markets. It also can leak undetected from drill sites, gas

pipelines and other oil and gas equipment.

Controlling methane, which has been rising in atmospheric concentration for decades, is seen as one of the easiest and

cheapest ways to make an immediate impact on global greenhouse gas emissions.

"We have been working very consistently on reducing methane emissions," Singh said at the session on 'Accelerating the Elimination of Methane Emissions and the Decarbonisation of Oil & Gas'.

"Because of the (Indian) geography and population, we hardly have any scope to flare," he said. However, a "very small" amount leaked unintentionally because of the "prohibitive" cost of capturing it, he said, adding that ONGC was working with technology providers to check that.

"We want to help the planet by making zero methane from

our operations," he said.

Flaring, which used to be done in the past because of lack of customers for gas, has been reduced by almost 80 per cent, he said. Crude oil pumped out of ground can easily be transported in trucks but to take gas from remote well locations to industries requires pipelines.

Sometimes, the amount of gas coming out with oil is so low that laying a pipeline becomes uneconomical.

"Earlier, we used to flare 14-15 million standard cubic meters per day, but now we are hardly flaring... now it is around 2 per cent," he said. "Still 2 per cent needs to go down."

ty, encourage investment, and reduce the regulatory burden

on operators while protecting the interests of consumers.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
TENDER NOTIFICATION
No. 31/CO/2023-24
Name of the Work: Expression of Interest (EOI) cum BID Invitation for Operation and Maintenance of Play Park of Road No. 1, Mosaic Park Circle-23, Kukatpally Zone, GHMC. Date & Time for issue of tender applications: From Dt. 07.12.2023 @ 10.30 AM onwards to Dt. 12.12.2023 Up to 04.00 PM. Last Date & Time for submission of tender applications: From Dt. 07.12.2023 10.30 AM onwards to Dt. 12.12.2023 Up to 04.30 PM. Venue of Sale and submission of tender applications: O/o Zonal Commissioner, Urban Biodiversity Wing, Kukatpally Zone, GHMC. Name & Address of the Officer: O/o Dy. Director, Urban Biodiversity, Kukatpally Zone, GHMC. Cell No. 2387923113. Sd/- Zonal Commissioner, Kukatpally Zone. R.O. No: 8454-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2023-24. Dt. 06.12.2023

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT: GOVERNMENT GENERAL HOSPITAL: SIDDIPIET
Rc. No.: AG/17/19/2023
TENDER NOTIFICATION Dt.: 06.12.2023
Sealed tenders are invited from reputed companies / firms towards supply of Drugs & Medicines including vaccines, Surgical consumables, Lab diagnostics/Reagents and Ortho implants to Government General Hospital, Siddipet for a period of TWO (02) YEARS from the date of finalization of tenders. The tender forms along with the terms and conditions will be available at the O/o. Superintendent, Government General Hospital, Siddipet on any working day between 11:30 AM to 03:30 PM on payment of Rs. 2500/- (Rupees Two Thousand Five Hundred only) through BC / D.D in favor of Superintendent, Government General Hospital, Siddipet from any Nationalized bank from 11.12.2023 to 18.12.2023. Sd/- Superintendent R.O.No: 8438-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2023-24. Dt. 06.12.2023 Government General Hospital, Siddipet

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA IRRIGATION & CAD DEPARTMENT E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tenders are invited for:
(1) e-Procurement Notice No. 11/2023-24, Dt. 06-12-2023, (2nd call): Minor Irrigation - Construction of Checkdam across Peddavagu near Chennurthy(V), Nysakh(M), Sangareddy District with ECW: Rs.87.81 Lakhs from Dt. 08-12-2023 to 15-12-2023.
(2) e-Procurement Notice No. 12/2023-24, Dt. 06-12-2023, (2nd call): Minor Irrigation - Construction of Checkdam across Peddavagu near Hurrepur(V), Nysakh(M), Sangareddy District with ECW: Rs.77.57 Lakhs from Dt. 08-12-2023 to 15-12-2023.
(3) e-Procurement Notice No. 13/2023-24, Dt. 06-12-2023, (2nd call): Minor Irrigation - Construction of Checkdam across Peddavagu near Malcherna(V), Zaherabad(M), Sangareddy District with ECW: Rs.59.88 Lakhs from Dt. 08-12-2023 to 15-12-2023.
(4) e-Procurement Notice No. 14/2023-24, Dt. 06-12-2023, (2nd call): Minor Irrigation - Construction of Checkdam across Peddavagu near Cheekurthy(V), Nysakh(M), Sangareddy District with ECW: Rs.53.23 Lakhs from Dt. 08-12-2023 to 15-12-2023.
For Details visit e-procurement market place: www.tender.telangana.gov.in from Dt. 08-12-2023. Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Circle, Sangareddy. R.O.No: 8438-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2023-24. Dt. 06.12.2023

BREAKING BARRIERS BY TRANSFORMING GENDER DYNAMICS

TEJAL SINHA

Gender equality is the most coveted state of affairs that our country has long craved. Gender equality is now a social and economic challenge as well as a moral obligation. Despite its many accomplishments, India is still underappreciated when it comes to gender equality. And then there is Seema Bhaskaran, the Lead for Gender at Transform Rural India, whose expertise in gender issues and community development makes her an invaluable resource.

Basically, her initial work with the Centre for Social Studies, where she documented the work of organisations working with women, helped her understand the importance of a multidimensional approach where the perspectives of many stakeholders can converge seamlessly. The lead begins, "My interactions with activists and academicians from the women's movement further sharpened my analytical and nuanced understanding of gender equality. Later, I worked on gender and decentralisation with Sakhi and KILA (the Kerala Institute of Local Administration). I developed modules and manuals and also trained elected representatives and Panchayat officials in areas like status studies of women, gender planning, budgeting, and auditing."

As the state project director of the Mahila Samakhyia programme under the erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), her work focused on developing federations of women working towards gender equality and gender education of teachers. The work also entailed starting help desks in all schools in Kerala and working on the educational retention of children in difficult circumstances as well as the survivors of child sexual abuse.

"In MHRD, I worked on the implementation of the Right to Education by strengthening educational systems to retain children from marginalised communities in the education stream. As a technical expert on gender and social inclusion in the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, I worked on developing curriculum, modules, manuals, protocols, and advisories for gender and social inclusion and supported all states of India in developing gender operational strategies and implementation," shares Seema, adding that the focus was on the capacity building of staff, cadres, institutional mechanisms, and strengthening institutional mechanisms for action. "Interventions on gender equality and inter-



facing with the public system were also part of the process. This journey across the country has been instrumental in shaping my insights on gender equality. Through Transform Rural India (TRI), the endeavour has been to work through a gender transformative lens and a multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral approach towards quality-of-life enhancement.

The initial eye-opener for her was when she was looking at the lives of women from Safai Sathi communities and fisherfolk communities who faced extreme forms of deprivation. This helped her understand the concept of intersectionality very early in her childhood. And so, "I witnessed inequities and discrimination experienced by women from matrilineal communities and the domestic violence they were subjected to despite having land ownership, and this led me to question, introspect, and analyse the reasons behind these paradoxical situations. Instances of child sexual abuse in matrilineal homes also led to questions regarding the safety and security within a home and the institution of the family. My early association with the women's movement and participation led to a sharper and more nuanced understanding of gender rights. My education at TISS (Tata Institute of Social Sciences) promoted an even deeper academic understanding of gender issues."

Just like many, she too wishes there were a silver bullet to fix gender inequality, but sadly, there is not. That is why the only real solution she feels is a multidimensional approach—a multiplicity of strategies. It is also important to bring equal opportunities to rural India.

In rural India, the topic of domestic violence is much easier to talk about than that of sexual health. Public spaces for women to discuss gender issues are extremely limited. Gender issues ranging from menstruation, reproductive health, control over body and fertility, spacing pregnancies, use of contraception, abortions, domestic violence, and marital rape are taboo subjects. However, she shares, "Due to the growth of SHG-federations, women now have a platform to discuss aspects of financial inclusion. With attempts to integrate gender within the SHG network and develop institutional mechanisms, space has been developed for voicing issues of domestic violence too. Discussion on the Domestic Violence Act has been undertaken through campaigns by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, and women in rural areas have been informed about the One-Stop Centre where they can seek rehabilitative services. Discussions around the body and sexuality are still, however, curtailed by taboos. Efforts to introduce them into the school curriculum have failed. Patriarchy continues to decide on the age of marriage, number, and preferred gender of the child while family planning and spacing are done via the instrumentation of women's bodies."

Irrespective of Janani Janma Suraksha's aim to enhance reproductive health services, women's decision-making power regarding their bodies and fertility remained constrained within the patriarchal family structure. In such cases, "SHG networks and ASHA services have been instrumental in accessing entitlements under the National Food Security Act, the National Social Assistance

Programme, etc. ASHA's work has been critical in enabling access to reproductive health services, especially institutional delivery. Despite awareness, the fear of institutional delivery is high due to the lack of facilities in the labour room and a gender-insensitive environment. The behaviour of care providers also restricts women from accessing primary health centres in underserved areas. Social norms stemming from patriarchy have been difficult to change, and decision-making over fertility can be improved only through women's knowledge enhancement on reproductive health and sexuality. Adolescent education on sexual and reproductive health can be imparted through Anganwadis."

Children, adolescents, and youth are bombarded with distorted information, often leading to perverse notions and a debilitating escalation in sexual violence and rape. Women and children face the brunt of this and are scarred for life. And so, in such cases, "sex education would, on the other hand, provide adolescents and youth with scientific information. This would lead to enhanced control over the body and fertility and informed choices regarding marriage and contraception. It will also improve health-seeking behaviour and dispel false notions and misconceptions about masculinity and femininity. It will also enhance bodily agency and the understanding of reproductive rights. Very early on in my career, I realised that regressive ideas about women and their bodies are not just rooted in personal prejudices but stem from institutional beliefs that need to be addressed—the system needs changing if there is to be change at a macro scale. Young girls can be educated through the school curriculum. Adolescent clubs and the health and nutrition programmes in Anganwadis in rural areas can also be leveraged for sex education. The theme can also be introduced through a life-skill educational module."

CASE STUDY

The Mahila Samakhyia programme under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, which focused on the educational empowerment of women, was a good example of providing sex education. Sex education was provided through Mahila Shikshan Kendras and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas managed by Mahila Samakhyia. Sex education was undertaken in schools among girl children in rural areas as well. It was packaged as part of life skills education and led to enhanced confidence among girls. Educational mobility was enhanced. As was the awareness among women to educate children and report violations of rights.



COMMUNITY WISE

CHAMAK: Lurking beneath the Punjabi music industry's politics

TANISHA SAXENA

Chamak is an intriguing musical thriller that explores the dark underbelly of the music industry in Punjab. Although slow-paced, the screenplay keeps us interested throughout the series, shedding light on various aspects of Punjab's society, such as racism, politics, business feuds, LGBTQ issues, and possible honour killings.

The story opens with a mesmerising drone shot, offering a stunning view of Punjab's landscape in 1999, draped in the enchanting cloak of winter fog. The crowded ground, embellished with a meticulously arranged stage, eagerly anticipates the appearance of the legendary singer, Taara Singh. Yet, the narrative takes an unexpected turn when a gunshot pierces the air, abruptly concluding his performance. And the next moment, we are in Vancouver, Canada, in 2023. Kaala, a young chap who is accused of burglary, possession of illegal firearms, and other petty crimes, is presented to the officers for parole at the central prison. He says, "It is not what I did! It is the way I look. The colour my god painted clay with. I am not a criminal; I am an artist." He hints at the racism and bullying that he has been subjected to in the country. He is a rapper at heart who comes back to Punjab from Canada and unravels the death of Tara Singh.

This six-part series stands out for its genuine approach and layered storytelling. Aside from the inquiry, the series provides a glimpse into the lives of different members of society, exploring the struggles of people who want to make out in the music industry in Punjab. *Chamak* serves as a musical thriller that invites contemplation. While superficially depicting the quest of a young rapper investigating the demise of a renowned singer, the narrative unfolds layers, offering a nuanced and thought-provoking experience.

Chamak, as opposed to its literal meaning, transcends glamour; it delves into the shadows concealed behind the radiant glow of stage lights. It almost unfolds as a spiritual and cathartic journey, particularly for those intricately linked to the tapestry of the Punjab music industry. The drill to get the first break, nepotism, family dynamics, politics, and more. Each of these elements is wonderfully woven into the narrative, and



Created and directed by: Rohit Jugraj Chauhan

Produced by: Geetanjali Mehelwa Chauhan, Rohit Jugraj Chauhan, and Sumet Dubey.

Cast: Paramvir Singh Cheema, Manoj Pahwa, Gippy Grewal, Mohit Malik, Isha Talwar, Mukesh Chhabra, Prince Kanwaljit Singh, Suvinder (Vicky) Pal, and Akasa Singh.

Streaming: Sony LIV

nothing feels out of place.

Tara Singh and his wife, Navpreet, met a tragic end under the hail of AK47 gunfire. Curiously, despite both being victims, the case is singularly designated as the "Tara Singh murder case." A journalist, meticulously delving into the intricacies of the crime and subsequently aiding Kaala, raises a poignant inquiry. He astutely questions the conspicuous absence of the woman's name in the case, revealing a stark lack of reverence for women that persists even in the aftermath of death. The journalist poignantly observes the irony that, even in the solemnity of death, women seemingly contend for recognition, underscoring a disconcerting societal paradox. He questions, Even in death, women have no existence. Isn't it funny?

The cast delivers commendable performances; particularly noteworthy is Paramvir Singh Cheema's portrayal of Kaala, executed with remarkable authenticity. Kaala's character, navigating through both personal tribulations and professional struggles, emanates vulnerability juxtaposed with inherent strength. The on-screen dynamic between Cheema and Isha Talwar, essaying the role of Jasmine (Jazz), an aspiring musician, is a captivating narrative to witness. Jazz, despite defying the conventional Punjabi girl archetype, infuses each frame with her dis-

tinctive charisma. Their on-screen chemistry illuminates the nuances of the contemporary dating landscape, exploring insecurities and, most significantly, delving into the complex facets of commitment and loyalty within a relationship.

Manoj Pahwa and Mohit Malik, portraying the roles of Pratap Deol, owner of a music company, and Guru Deol, his son, form a captivating duo in the series. Their intricate father-son relationship unfolds gradually, with Guru navigating through a poignant chapter in his life. This dynamic adds a refreshing layer to the storyline, providing viewers with a compelling narrative to contemplate.

As the series progresses, the audience is treated to a wealth of relatable nuances. The musical thriller aspect shines with a stellar soundtrack featuring prominent names from the Punjabi music industry. Icons like Gippy Grewal, Mika Singh, Malkit Singh, MC Square, Afsana Khan, Asees Kaur, Sunidhi Chauhan, Kanwar Grewal, Shashwat Singh, and Harjot Kaur contribute to one of the standout albums of the year.

Melodies such as *Kargi Waya* and *Sunn Zindagi Ka Sangeet* exude a profound warmth that resonates deeply with the listener, offering a soul-stirring experience.

RATING: 3/5

A look at the changing phase of paediatric diabetes

The past generation has witnessed a surge in the number of children with diabetes. It is important to know two types of diabetes that are more common in children: type 1 diabetes (T1DM) and type 2 diabetes (T2DM). Although there are other variants, they are less common.

In T1DM, the complete deficiency of insulin is more common at an early age and carries a high genetic cause, whereas in T2DM, there is a relative insulin deficiency encountered in a child's later years due to a combination of genetic causes and obesity encountered due to poor lifestyle practices. In most cases, T2DM illness begins with excess weight gain, which can pose challenges to insulin and cholesterol metabolism. One can vary from having mild glucose elevations to severe glucose values, which are defined as impaired glucose tolerance, to true diabetes, where there are elevated levels of fasting or post-meal glucose elevations.

In T1DM, the illness is picked up very early since it is more symptomatic, like poor growth, significant weight loss, increased thirst, and passing urine more frequently since it is an autoimmune reaction where the body attacks its own cells. Concerns are with T2DM, especially in children, where alarming symptoms are not seen initially until the condition progresses to a more serious situation. Many times, it is picked up when a child presents to a doctor with some other problem and blood or urine tests show elevated glucose levels. So, it is very necessary to screen high-risk children early in life. In either case, young people who develop diabetes have a higher risk of health challenges throughout their lives.

If we focus on T2DM here, since it is a condition where reversible causes can be worked with, recent studies delineate risk factors for the development of T2DM in children and young adults. Incidence rates of T2DM increase with age, as puberty is associated with a challenge in insulin production. Emerging evidence suggests that lifestyle intervention and ideal medical intervention may reduce the rates of development of type 2 diabetes in subjects at the

highest risk, which mainly include obesity, a strong diabetes history in the family, diabetes affecting the mother during pregnancy, ethnicity, like we as Asians have increased risk, low birth weight, and most importantly, dietary factors like excess caloric intake, a low-fibre diet, high trans-fatty acids, and saturated fat, which increase risk, and reduced intake of fibre, polyunsaturated fat, and long-chain n-3 fatty acids, which may have a protective role.

The American Diabetes Association recommends risk-based screening for type 2 diabetes after the onset of puberty or age 10 years in children who are overweight or obese and have one or more additional risk factors as mentioned earlier. In high school, screening is recommended every 3 years, and if tests are normal,



recheck more frequently if BMI increases. The definitions of diabetes in children and adolescents are the same as in adults.

Screening for children with risk factors and who do not have symptoms of diabetes requires a single fasting blood test, which tests glucose levels (FBG) and average glucose over 3 months (what we call HbA1c), and if abnormal levels are found, doctors do a 2-hour glucose challenge test to confirm diabetes.

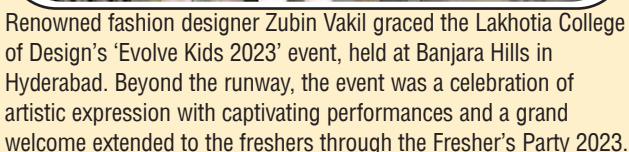
Management of diabetes varies between T1DM and T2DM. For T2DM prevention and treatment of diabetes, a structured management plan is recommended with the provision of extensive education on pro-

moting self-management skills and establishing individualised plans for self-monitoring of glucose. Lifestyle interventions aimed at achieving desired weight loss, which include improving diet standards with special importance given to nutrition and increasing physical activity, are often recommended. The role of medications in children with T2DM options is limited, which includes oral antidiabetic medication and insulin. Other injectable options aimed at weight and glucose control are being tried.

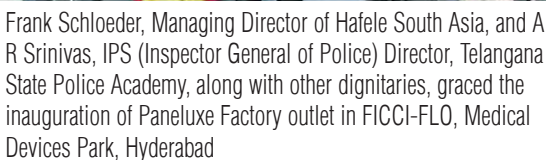
In T1DM, the answer is only insulin, since the body cannot produce it. Management is straightforward when administering insulin. Here, two types of insulin are commonly used by doctors: one type of insulin for meals, which is short-acting only for meals, and another type

of insulin as a background cover, which should last round the clock, meaning a long-acting insulin. Room for oral medications usually doesn't exist unless the child is obese, which is less common with T1DM. T2DM management can be challenging as there are limited oral medications used in children. If that fails, the only option remaining is to administer insulin. More importance is being placed on lifestyle measures like encouraging physical activity and having a well-balanced diet.

(The author, Dr. Srinath Aswathiah, is a senior consultant in diabetes and endocrinology at Gleneagles Hospital, Kengeri.)



In a pioneering move towards fostering financial inclusion, HDFC Bank today announced its partnership with the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) to introduce i-Innovate, a nationwide initiative specifically designed to champion FinTechs focussing on differently abled persons. This initiative is singularly focussed on leveraging Assistive Technology (AT) to not only enhance, but also revolutionise the financial inclusion for differently abled persons. RBIH, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), spearheads efforts to cultivate an environment conducive to innovation across the financial sector. HDFC Bank, under its CSR brand Parivartan, supports startups working in the social space through its Parivartan StartUp Grants programme. HDFC Bank and the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub have come together to leverage social innovation and entrepreneurship to bridge existing gaps and enhance financial accessibility for differently abled persons.



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 The middle of the day
- 2 Things to play with
- 3 A wartime explosive
- 4 Birthday present

7 Opposite of dullest
9 The colour of grass
11 Make smile or laugh
12 Timid
15 This lives in soil
16 Cold winter flakes
17 He wears a crown
18 Require



Hi Nanna has helped me push my musical boundaries

PNS| HYDERABAD

Hesham Abdul Wahab, a composer from the Malayalam film industry, debuted in Tollywood with *Kushi*. *Hi Nanna* by Nani is his next album to be released. In this interview, he discusses how he approached the sentimental, gentle movie with Nani and Mrunal Thakur in the key roles. On December 7, the movie, which also stars Baby Kiara, will be released in theatres.

Hesham made his debut with the Malayalam film *Salt Mango Tree* in 2015. And since then, there has been no looking back. For him, "Every single film is a test for me. It is too early for me to feel I have achieved a lot. There is so much to learn, explore and discover."

Well, it is through his upcoming film, *Hi Nanna* that he feels has helped him push his musical boundaries. "*Hi Nanna* differs from other films belonging to the genre in the way the story is narrated. All love songs induce the same sort of emotions and romantic feelings. The difference has to be brought out through the choice of singers, for example. That's one of the ways in which you do it. The song *Ammaadi* in *Hi Nanna* is a case in point. *Samayama* in *Hi Nanna* is not the same as *Darshana* in *Kushi*. Director

Shouryaav has made this film as a soft romance, which is why the songs are not loud. I used the instruments accordingly. The songs in *Hi Nanna* have a calming influence. The hangover of working on *Hi Nanna* is yet to be finished for me. I worked on the movie till last week. The director has made use of my songs in surprising ways, especially in his non-linear approach to 'charanam' and 'pallavi'. The song 'Samayama' has a peculiar format."

For one of the songs, he has used Nadaswaram because it is associated with the Indian style of wedding. The use of the instrument underlines the marital association between the lead pair.

"*Odiyamma* took a lot of rumination involving me and the director. The song comes at a crucial point. We took some time to understand the underlying energy. *Hi Nanna* is the first Indian film to make use of Artificial Intelligence for scoring. What AI does is it makes 'sampling' easy. It presents mind-blowing possibilities. AI lets the composer do layered work. Changing the instruments also comes easy with AI. The film is way more than its music. It is going to be seen as an absolutely special film. Nani has expanded his boundaries as an actor. He deserves to be called the Natural Star."

On the other hand, he also has

Rashmika Mandanna's *The Girlfriend*, which went on the floors on Wednesday, which he feels is a new sort of genre for him. "The music I have done for *Kushi* and *Hi Nanna* is healing in nature. I don't get emotionally attached to my tunes. Once it is out there, I leave it for the listeners how they want to embrace it. I move on to the next project. I am currently doing a film starring Sharwanand in the lead (produced by People Media Factory and directed by Sriram Aditya). The musical soundscape will keep changing with time. Nothing is static. We have to keep on evolving. I myself have changed my style from *Hridayam* to *Kushi* and now *Hi Nanna*."

Recently, he has also worked with actor-producer Vikranth Reddy for Spark. "Although the film didn't work at the box office, it helped me assemble my music team, which helped me for *Hi Nanna*. Some films are like practicing in the nets."

Ending the chat on a brighter note, he signs off saying, "The music scene is growing in Hyderabad. The musicians here are so professional. Their knowledge is immense. Most of the composers are settled in Chennai and other cities. Hyderabad has had only a few musicians. As far as I am concerned, Hyderabad is my second home. If not in Kochi, I want to work in this city."



AHEAD OF *HI NANNA*'S THEATRICAL RELEASE TODAY, MUSIC COMPOSER HESHAM ABDUL WAHAB, SPEAKS TO THE HYDERABADI MEDIA, SHARING SOME INTERESTING INSIGHTS ABOUT THE FILM'S MUSIC.

tollywood

Jorugaa Husharugaa trailer out now, in theatres on Dec 15

Love, family, and career. That's what *Jorugaa Husharugaa*, starring Viraj Ashwin of *Baby* fame in the lead, is about. Starring Pujita Ponnada as the heroine, the youthful family entertainer is directed by Anu Prasad. Producer Nireesh Thiruveedula of Shikhar Arts LLP. Film to grace theatres worldwide on December 15. today got the film's trailer unveiled at the hands of *Uppena* sensation Buchi Babu Sana.

Releasing the trailer, Buchi Babu Sana appreciated its content. He also wished Viraj all the best. "Thanks to *Baby*, Viraj now enjoys a good image. I hope *Jorugaa Husharugaa* becomes a notable theatrical hit. I wish director Anu Prasad and producer Nireesh all the best. This film looks promising," Sana said.

The trailer shows Sai Kumar as the male lead's economically challenged and idealistic father. A weaver, he values relationships more than anything. In the city, Viraj's character falls in love with a beautiful colleague (Pujita). The rom-com scenes also



involve Madhunandan. Siri Hanumantu plays another urban girl who gets to play an important part. Brahmaji as a Church Father, Chammak Chandra and others have hilarious roles. The film, as the title suggests, is filled with fun. At the same time, expect some dramatic moments as well. The film is going to grace the theatres worldwide on December 15.



Rashmika Mandanna-starrer *The Girlfriend* kickstarts its shoot

Since its inception, Geetha Arts has been a production company, known for its distinctive storylines and quality production values. The production company owned by ace producer Allu Aravind has been making exceptional hits time and again. Now, recently the production announced a project in collaboration with the blockbuster production house of SKN's Mass Movie Makers in association with Dheeraj Mogilineni Entertainment banner.

With National crush and phenomenal performer Rashmika Mandanna in the lead role, talented filmmaker Rahul Ravindran helming the project. The title of the film is *The Girlfriend*. The film launched recently with a grand pooja ceremony. Now the film's regular shoot begins today. Rashmika got a grand welcome to the sets from director Rahul Ravindran, producers SKN, Dheeraj Mogilineni and Vidya Koppineedi.

Ace producer Allu Aravind garu gave his blessings to Rashmika and the whole team. The first schedule will last 20 days and will have key actors in addition to Rashmika. Already released sneak peek, promises to be a one-of-a-kind cinematic experience for audiences of all ages.

Krishnan Vasant wields the camera while musical sensation Hesham Abdul Wahab will score the music, both of which will surely be among the movie's highlights. Ace producer Allu Aravind presenting the film while Vidya Koppineedi, SKN and Dheeraj Mogilineni bankrolling the film.



'Prema Katha is different from the regular love movies'

The upcoming film *Prema Katha*, starring Kishore KSD and Diya Sathipalli, is jointly produced by Tonga Productions LLP and Cine Valley Movies. The film is bankrolled by Vijay Mattapalli, Sushil Vajpilly, and Shinganamala Kalyan. Upender Goud Erra is acting as co-producer. The film is directed by Shivashakti Reddy. The film *Prema Katha* is going release in theatres very soon.

Star hero Vijay Deverakonda released the trailer for the *Prema Katha* movie on Tuesday evening. In the press meet organized on this occasion, cinematographer Vasu Pendum thanking the producers and director said, "Our trailer is out now, and you will definitely like it. You have to decide the fate of any movie. This is a different love story. *Prema Katha* will entertain you for sure."

Debutante Diya Sathipalli, who is making her debut with the film, gleefully says, "I'm glad to get the opportunity in this film. Our team worked very

hard for this film. This is my debut movie and I've learned a lot on the sets. Our movie is different from regular love movies. We are expecting your support."

In the film, actor Vinay Mahadev, who plays the character of a guy named Yadav reveals that all the action sequences in the film were done by the actors themselves. And in fact, this fight is going to be the highlight of the film. The film also stars actor Vikram, who plays a character named Srinivas.

Prema Katha movie was made with almost all newcomers," shares producer Vijay Matta, adding, "Lot of talented actors from theater played good roles in our film. Varthan Devarakonda, Mathura Sridhar Reddy and Singanamala Kalyan supported us well. Thank you to the hero Vijay Devarakonda who released the trailer. We are thankful to hero Anand Devarakonda, directors Harish Shankar, Hanu Raghavapudi and Maruthi for supporting our movie and releasing the first look and songs. We made our *Prem Katha* movie with a genuine love story."

'TRIPTI DIMRI IS NOT A PART OF RAVITEJA AND ANIL RAVIPUDI,' REVEAL SOURCES

Ever since the film *Animal* has hit cinemas, the one big thing that is being talked about is none other than the girl who has played the role Zoya. In almost all the public talk videos from Bollywood and Tollywood, people could be seen mentioning this beautiful lady, who is none other than Tripti Dimri.

Though the actress has showcased her potential in projects like *Qala* (Netflix), she actually got a huge name for a role that is neither author-backed nor has a good arc in *Animal*. Her beautiful looks, teasing glamour and innocent expressions have really impressed the audience big time and that made her banner many rumours right now in Tollywood. Some gossip popped out that she's part of Raviteja and Anil Ravipudi's movie, and other projects as well. How much of them are actually true? Reports are coming from close sources that there is no truth in these rumours and they are just a figment of imagination. Currently, Tripti Dimri is busy with her Bollywood assignments and she's not ready to take up any special roles or songs in Tollywood, but looking forward to doing as a leading lady only in big movies which would give her a huge break as it happened in the case of Mrunal Thakur. On the other hand, Anil

Ravipudi hasn't even wrapped the script, forget about casting. One cannot ignore the buzz and the sensation the flick *Animal* has created. This is further seen in the film's box office collections as the Saturday numbers were higher than Friday numbers. Fans have loved the chemistry of Ranbir Kapoor and Tripti Dimri in this movie. They felt that Tripti has captured the spotlight. Tripti has delivered a note worthy performance. Alia Bhatt has in particular penned a lengthy note appreciating Tripti Dimri.

Tripti made her debut in the year 2017, with the comedy film *Poster Boys* and gained recognition for her performances in Anvita Dutt's supernatural drama flick 'Bulbbul' and period film *Qala*.

Dimri will soon be seeing sharing the screen with Rajkumar Rao in Raaj Shaandilyaa's next venture *Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video*. This movie will take us back to the Mystical Age of 90's. It is an illustration of a retro recall and does promise to be an out and out family entertainer. The title *Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video* makes us ponder that what the video will be all about. Let's wait and watch to discover what will the video be all about once the movie goes on the floor.

King Nagarjuna Akkineni is busy wrapping up his ongoing film *Naa Saami Ranga* which marks the directorial debut of popular choreographer Vijay Binni. Ashika Ranganath is playing the leading lady in the movie and her character was introduced as Varalakshmi. The glimpse that was released along with the first look poster presented the adorable chemistry of the lead pair.

The film's first single *Yettukelli Povalanipisthunde* will be unveiled soon. The makers announced to release of a promo of the song before launching the lyrical video. Nagarjuna looks elegant in the farmer get-up. Clad in Lungi, Nagarjuna is seen with a tractor on an agricultural

land and he smokes a beedi. MM Keeravani who enchanted us with the BGM for the glimpse scored wonderful soundtracks. Chandra Bose penned the lyrics for all the songs in the album. Billed to be a mass action entertainer, passionate producer Srinivas Chitturi of Tollywood's leading production house Srinivasaa Silver Screen is making the movie on a grand scale with a massive budget. Pavan Kumar presents the movie. The shoot of the movie is presently taking place in Hyderabad. The production works neared the final stages.

The blockbuster writer Prasanna Kumar Bezawada provided the story and dialogues for the film. *Naa Saami Ranga* will have its theatrical release for Sankranti, in 2024.

Nagarjuna-MM Keeravani combo is back with another chartbuster, *Yettukelli Povalanipisthunde*



NEHA SSHETTY; NOW IN THE TOP LIST OF FILMMAKERS

Neha Sshetty, the stunning and talented actress impressing audience with her acting prowess and beauty. The actress celebrated her birthday on Wednesday. She shot to fame with *DJ Tillu* and ever since that blockbuster happened to her career, she's not looking back in Tollywood. Neha Sshetty continued the success of *DJ Tillu* with the films *Bedurulanka 2012* and *Rules Ranjann* this year. The song *Sammohanada* from *Rules Ranjann* ruled charts for weeks. The song shows Neha Sshetty's dancing talent. Neha Sshetty became the most happening heroine as three films became hits. Every director and Producer preference is Neha Shetty because of her glamor and performance. *Gangs of Godavari* movie starring Neha Sshetty with hero Vishwak Sen is getting ready for release soon. Produced by Sitara Entertainment, this movie is directed by Krishna Chaitanya. Neha Sshetty has an exciting lineup with the support she is getting from the audience and the faith of Tollywood in her.



ICC RANKINGS

Ravi becomes world number 1 T20I bowler



PTI ■ DUBAI

Young Indian leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi on Wednesday rose to the top spot in the ICC T20I bowling chart on the back of his recent player of the series-winning

performance against Australia. The 23-year-old was India's go-to bowler in the just-concluded series against Australia, taking nine wickets from five games. Bishnoi, who is on 699 rating points, has jumped five places to displace Afghanistan spinner

Rashid Khan (692) from the top slot. Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and England's Adil Rashid, who both have 679 points, are in joint third. Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana (677) completes the top

five. Bishnoi is the only Indian bowler in the top 10 in the short-format even as Axar Patel climbed nine spots to be 18th. Meanwhile, the swashbuckling Suryakumar Yadav, who captained India during their 4-1 T20I series win against Australia,

held on to the top spot among batters, while opener Ruturaj Gaikwad dropped a place to be seventh. Hardik Pandya retained the third spot in the all-rounders' list, despite missing the series against Australia due to injury.



Mushfiqur becomes first Bangladesh batter to be out for obstructing field

PTI ■ MIRPUR (BANGLADESH)

Former captain Mushfiqur Rahim on Wednesday became the first Bangladesh batter to be given out for 'obstructing the field' in a bizarre dismissal on the opening day of the second Test against New Zealand here. The 36-year-old Rahim defended a rising delivery from New Zealand quick Kyle Jamieson in the fourth ball of the 41st over and then extended his right hand to apparently keep the ball away after it bounced up wide outside off stump. The Black Caps were quick to appeal and the on-field umpires referred the matter to the TV umpire Ahsan Raza who gave Rahim out. According to Law 37.1.2, "The striker is out obstructing the field if, except in the circumstances of 37.2, in the act of

receiving a ball delivered by the bowler, he/she wilfully strikes the ball with a hand not holding the bat. This will apply whether it is the first strike or a second or subsequent strike. The act of receiving the ball shall extend both to playing at the ball and to striking the ball more than once in defence of his/her wicket." Earlier such dismissals were classified as "handled the ball" but a change in the laws in 2017 brought them under "obstructing the field" category. Former England captain Michael Vaughan was the last batter to be given out 'handling the ball' against India in 2001. Rahim was Bangladesh's top-scorer with his 35 off 83 balls as the hosts were bundled out for 172 inside 67 overs. Bangladesh won the first Test in Sylhet by 150 runs.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jacques Kallis, one of the last multi-skilled legends, says quality all-rounders have become a scarcity in modern-day cricket, especially in Test cricket, because of "too much cricket across formats". While Sir Garfield Sobers (8032 runs and 235 wickets) is considered 'greatest of 'em all' across generations, Kallis (25,000-plus runs and nearly 600 wickets in three formats) is arguably one of the legendary all-rounders the modern era has seen. In the 1980s, there were four great all-rounders in Imran Khan, Richard Hadlee, Ian Botham and Kapil Dev while the new millennium saw emergence of Kallis and Andrew Flintoff. But with advent of T20 cricket and mushrooming leagues across the globe with new rules have actually discouraged development of multi-skilled cricketers. "It is a tough question to answer, all-rounders don't come around every day. There aren't many throughout the history. Lot of things, amount of cricket that is played certainly plays a role," Kallis told PTI during an exclusive interview. The former Proteas captain is in India to play the Legends League Cricket. While he didn't name Indian

Too much cricket is affecting development of all-rounders: Kallis



Premier League but the former KKR coach isn't a great fan of 'Impact Player' rule where a team can change one player during its batting or bowling innings as per need. "A few T20 competitions have substitutes (IPL) and I am not a big fan of that as it takes away the all-rounder out of your team. The teams that do not have good all-rounders are now playing with 12 men. I am not a huge fan of that. "There are lot of little things that add up on to why there aren't too many all-rounders at the moment, as it is surprising as they add so much value to the

game. But it's a whole lot of little things coming together," Kallis said. **CENTURION WILL BE TOUGH FOR INDIA:** The Indian team would be embarking on a tough away tour of South Africa, the only major Test playing nation where it hasn't won a single Test series in 31 years. The focus will be on the two Test matches, which is a part of World Test Championship (WTC) cycle even as ODIs and T20s are part of the full tour. The stars from both sides (Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Kagiso Rabada) will

only be playing the traditional format during the series. "This is a good Indian team but South Africa is tough to beat in South Africa. Centurion will probably suit South Africa and Newlands will probably suit India. It will be a good series and it will come down to one or two sessions that one team might play better than the other. It would be a closely-fought contest," said Kallis. **TRANSITIONS ARE TOUGH, GET YOUNGSTERS READY:** The Indian team's average age is in mid-30s. Skipper Rohit is 36 and main batter Virat Kohli is 35.

Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja are 37 and 35 respectively while Mohammed Shami 33. There would be a transition sooner or later in another couple of years and Kallis feels that if talented youngsters are groomed by keeping them with senior team, the handing of baton becomes easier. "Older players obviously have got the knowledge and you would combine that with younger players. That's the job of coaches and selectors to make sure so that even if younger players might not be playing, they are in that environment where they can learn from the older players," said Kallis, who scored 45 Test hundreds in his illustrious 18-year career in which he played 166 Tests. It is imperative that youngsters are travelling to unfamiliar territories and soaking in all knowledge available watching those who have been there and done that. "(They should) travel to these parts of the world that they are probably not used to and learn from sitting on the side, try to pick up as much knowledge as



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Star Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has vowed to play in the world's biggest cricket league, the IPL "until he can't walk anymore". The 35-year-old, who played a massive role in Australia's ODI World Cup-winning campaign in India recently, will once again don the colours of Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL next year. "The IPL will probably be the last tournament I ever play, as I will play the IPL until I can't walk anymore," Maxwell was quoted as saying by Australian Associated Press (AAP) at the Melbourne Airport on Wednesday. "I was talking about how good the IPL has been to me throughout my career, the people I've

met, the coaches I have played under, the international players that you get to rub shoulders with, how beneficial to my whole career that tournament has been. "You're rubbing shoulders with AB (de Villiers) and Virat (Kohli) for two months, talking to them while watching other games. It's just the greatest learn-

ing experience that any player could ask for," he said. Maxwell feels Australian cricketers should play in the IPL for experience ahead of the T20 World Cup in the United States and the West Indies in June. "Hopefully, a lot of our Australian players can get over to the IPL and get to work in slightly similar conditions to the

Bangladesh takes control of 2nd test



After New Zealand reduced to 55-5 on eventful 1st day

AP ■ MIRPUR (BANGLADESH)

Bangladesh took full control of the final test against New Zealand after 15 wickets fell on an eventful day one Wednesday as the hosts pursue a first ever test series win against the Kiwis. The home side was all out for 172 but hit back strongly to reduce New Zealand to 55-5 in 12.4 overs before bad light forced stumps. Both teams' batters struggled on a wicket where most of the balls kept low and the bounce was uneven. The New Zealand bowling attack maintained a tight line and length to create pressure by conceding just eight runs in the first seven overs after Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto opted to bat first. Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner (3-31) and offspinner Glenn Phillips (3-65) shared six wickets to wreak havoc on the Bangladesh batting lineup. Ajaz Patel, another left-arm spinner, claimed 2-54 while skipper Tim Southee took one wicket without conceding a single run in 5.2 overs. Mushfiqur Rahim made a team-high 35 before becoming the first Bangladeshi batter to be dismissed for handling the ball. While defending a delivery from fast bowler Kyle Jamieson, the

team's most experienced batter used his right hand to push the ball away even though it wasn't close to the off-stump. After New Zealand appealed for the out, the third umpire checked and then gave him out for obstructing the field. Bangladesh's first boundary came in the eighth over when Zakir Hasan drove Patel through cover for four. The pressure eventually got the better of Zakir (8) when he played a rash shot against Santner and chipped it straight to mid-on. In the next over, Patel dismissed Mahmudul Hasan (14) after he was beaten by the drift to give a catch at short-leg. Mominul Haque (5) was the next to go when he was caught behind off Patel's bowling. But the biggest blow for Bangladesh followed in the next over when captain Najmul Hossain Shanto (9), who hit a century in the previous test, attempted a reverse sweep against Santner. The on-field Umpires turned down the appeal but New Zealand reviewed it successfully to leave Bangladesh 47-4. Mushfiqur and Shahadat Hossain, playing his only second test, shared a 57-run partnership which eventually kept Bangladesh ahead on a tricky wicket. The dismissal of Mushfiqur

triggered another collapse, which began with Shahadat (31) being caught down the leg-side off the bowling of Phillips. The onus was on Mehidy Hasan to lead a fightback with the lower order but Santer came back to dismiss him as New Zealand bowled Bangladesh out shortly after tea. However, Mehidy led Bangladesh's bowling attack with 3-17 and left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, who took 10 wickets in the first test, took 2-29. Tom Latham and Devon Conway started cautiously but Mehidy broke through with a delivery that Conway thought would turn. Instead it went straight to crash the stump as Conway was out for 11. Taijul then dealt a double blow by dismissing Latham and Henry Nicholls. New Zealand fell into deep trouble when Kane Williamson, the centurion of the previous test, ended up getting an inside edge towards short while defending a quicker delivery of Mehidy. Just a ball later, Mehidy fired another quicker one that kept extremely low to trap Tom Blundell leg-before for a duck. Daryl Mitchell (12) and Glenn Phillips (5) were batting when play came to an end because of bad light.



Du Plessis hints at return to international cricket

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Former South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis has hinted at a comeback to international cricket ahead of the upcoming T20 World Cup, saying that he has been in discussion with the Proteas' white-ball coach Rob Walter for the past couple of years. Du Plessis last featured in a T20I three years ago in 2020. While his last match for South Africa was a Test against Pakistan in February 2021. "I believe that I can return to international cricket," du Plessis told the broadcaster of Abu Dhabi T10 league. "We have been speaking about this for the last couple of years. It's just figuring out the balance of the T20 World Cup next year. It's certainly something we have spoken about with the new coach," he added. Despite not featuring for South Africa, du Plessis has been doing well in the domestic circuit as well as in T20 leagues across the world. With 730 runs from 14 games for the Royal Challengers

Bangalore, du Plessis was the second highest run getter in the IPL earlier this year. The 39-year-old led South Africa in the 2014 and 2016 T20 World Cups but wasn't considered for the last two editions of the tournament, despite never officially retiring from white-ball cricket. On Monday, South Africa white-ball coach Walter had said the likes of du Plessis, Quinton de Kock and Rilee Rossouw will be considered for the T20 World Cup, scheduled to be played in June next year in the West Indies and the USA. "Given that some of our frontline bowlers are missing out and there are guys - let me throw it out there just to create some media hype - like Faf (du Plessis) and Rilee (Rossouw) as well as Quinny (De Kock) that could well be considered for a T20 World Cup and then also the SA20 that happens next year - 80% of the side picks itself but there is definitely a space for other guys to get themselves into the conversation," Walter had said.