

The BJP is doing lip service in the case of the Dharani Portal. Gully BJP leaders say one thing, Delhi leaders say another. Nadda said the BJP will scrap Dharani, but state leaders said they will not do that. This is another proof of the BJP's two-tongued attitude.

- T. Harish Rao, Health Minister

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Important milestone in India's diplomacy



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Nikhila Vimal: Few directors are tenacious about giving us roles of a love INTEREST



DON'T MISS...

Food intake impacts tribal ...

A new research study conducted by the Indian School of Business has revealed that wild food consumption plays a significant role in Adivasi women's diet, particularly during the months of June and July. It also contributes to women's higher dietary diversity in India and constitutes a substantial contribution to food and nutrition security. Titled 'Wild Foods Contribute to Women's Higher Dietary Diversity in India,' the study has been featured as the cover story in the June issue ...

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Two persons killed, three ...

Two persons, including a woman, of a family were killed and three others were injured in a clash between two families over a land dispute at Jakkulapalle village under Rebena mandal in Kurnool district on Monday. The members of the two families, armed with deadly weapons, fought a pitched battle. The condition of one of the two, who was injured in the clash, was stated to be ...

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At 13 days and 3 hours, Biparjoy...

Cyclone Biparjoy, which wreaked havoc in Gujarat earlier this month, was the longest duration cyclonic storm in the northern Indian Ocean since 1977, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Monday. Biparjoy, the first cyclonic storm over the Arabian Sea this year, originated over the southeast Arabian Sea on June 6 and had landfall over Saurashtra and Kutch on June 15 before weakening into a depression on June 18...

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Flexible batteries among top-10...

A new type of AI capable of generating new and original content, designer pages, flexible batteries and sustainable aviation fuel are among the technologies poised to have the most positive impact on the world in the next 3-5 years, the WEF said on Monday. Listing the top ten such emerging technologies, the WEF said the list also includes wearable plant sensors, metaverse for mental health, spatial omics, flexible neural electronics, sustainable computing and AI-facilitated healthcare. The WEF's Top...

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With a cavalcade of 600 cars

KCR rides into Maha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS President Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao intensified his political moves to unveil 'Mahojwala Bharat' (Bright India). As part of this, KCR is undertaking a tour of Maharashtra. On the first of his two-day tour, the CM visited the Dharashiv and Solapur districts of Maharashtra on Monday.

KCR embarked on his Maharashtra tour by road. Home Minister Mahmood Ali tied 'Imam-e-Zaman' on KCR and congratulated him before he started his trip from Pragathi Bhavan.

A convoy of around 600 vehicles

carrying state ministers, MPs, MLCs, MLAs other public representatives and BRS leaders escorted KCR. The 6 km convoy followed the CM continuously and the roads on the way wore a festive look. The convoy will reach its destination, the Shri Vitthal Rukmini Temple in Pandharpur, at 8 am on Tuesday. There they will have darshan and conduct special pujas.

At 11:30 am, the convoy will arrive at Sarkoli village in Pandharpur mandal. At Sarkoli, NCP leader Bhagirath Bhalke, among others, will join the BRS delegation. KCR will address a public gathering in the village to commemorate the event. After lunch, the convoy will proceed towards

Hyderabad at 1.30 pm. BRS leaders and KCR's fans accorded a warm welcome to the CM's convoy which it passed through the Mumbai highway. Leaders threw flower petals and pink paper on the convoy all along the road and chanted 'Jai Telangana, Jai KCR, Jai Bharat'. Maharashtra BRS leaders displayed flexies with the slogans 'Desh Ki Neta Kaisa Ho - KCR Jai Sa Ho' (Leader should be like KCR).

After the convoy reached Dharashiv, local women leaders welcomed the BRS chief by offering him a special 'Arthi' in a traditional way.

2

Congress gets big push

Ponguleti, Jupally join the party after meeting Rahul

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Suspended BRS leaders Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao announced that they are joining the Congress. Ponguleti and Jupally met Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjuna Kharge at the AICC office on Monday along with 33 other leaders and had discussions for half an hour. Ponguleti once again held talks personally with Rahul going



Aim is to defeat KCR



HYDERABAD: Suspended BRS leader Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy said that he is joining the Congress only to defeat BRS President Chief Minister K.

Chandrasekhar Rao in the upcoming TS elections and made it clear that he is not expecting any posts or business favours in return. Addressing the media after meeting Rahul Gandhi on Monday in New Delhi, Ponguleti said that people elected KCR by not voting for the Congress which gave Telangana state. But KCR did not fulfil the people's aspirations, he said.

2

inside the AICC office. Ponguleti and Jupally invited Rahul to attend the public meetings being held at Khammam and Mahbubnagar on July 2 and July 14 or 16 respectively. Ponguleti and Khammam leaders Payam Venkateshwarlu, Koram Kanakaiah, Vijaya Baby, Tellam Venkata Rao, Pidmarthi Ravi and others will join the Congress during the Khammam public meeting.

Jupally Krishna Rao, Gurnath Reddy, K. Rajesh Reddy, Megha Reddy and others will join the Congress at the Mahbubnagar public meeting.

Telangana Congress leaders Revanth Reddy, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, K. Jana Reddy, Madhu Yashki Goud, G. Chinna Reddy, Baram Naik, Renuka Choudhary, SA Sampath Kumar, B. Mahesh Kumar Goud,

Corruption rampant in TS



HYDERABAD: Suspended BRS leader Jupally Krishna Rao said after meeting Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjuna Kharge

that he is re-joining the Congress to clear the debt owed to Sonia Gandhi who gave a separate Telangana state. He said that even God will not forgive if we did not clear the debt owed to Sonia this time. He said that democracy has been buried deep in Telangana and corruption had zoomed in the last nine years. KCR is running the administration as he likes and is deceiving the people 100 per cent.

2

'Baseless allegations'

KTR slams Nadda over his statements on KCR



PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BRS leader Industries Minister KT Rama Rao (KTR) took strong exception to BJP President JP Nadda's allegations of corruption against Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao.

KTR, the son of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao, also attacked top Congress leader Sonia Gandhi alleging that her delay in granting statehood to Telangana when UPA was in power led to many youths committing suicide.

"Is there anything useful (for people) coming out of the mouths of opposition leaders? On Sunday BJP President came. Did JP Nadda say anything useful? What did he say? All improper things," he said.

"They won't say when asked why you are not able to build this flyover at Uppal. They won't talk when Kishan (Union Minister) is asked why the flyover at Amberpet is not getting completed. But they say we will send KCR to jail. Why would you be sent to jail?" he said.

He asked whether KCR would be

sent to jail for implementing schemes like 'KCR Kit' or for improving the supply of electricity, drinking water and for building double-bedroom houses for the poor.

KT Rama Rao was speaking after inaugurating a skywalk in Uppal in the city on Monday. While the BRS government in Telangana ensured the construction of 35 flyovers and underpasses, the Centre that took up the construction of two flyovers at Uppal and Amberpet has not been able to complete them on time, he said.

The snail's pace of progress of the two flyovers shows the speed at which Modi government works, he said.

The BRS leader also attacked TS Congress President A. Revanth Reddy, without taking his name, for "abusing" KCR. He asked people not to take these "3 feet" leaders seriously.

He said whether BJP's Nadda or someone else, no leader who took on KCR in the last 23 years could progress, he said.

KCR is getting people's blessings during elections as the poor are happy with him, Rama Rao said.

He reacted strongly to Congress criticising the BRS government as the party allegedly failed to deliver good governance during its long rule of 50 years in the country.

Referring to Congress talking about the Telangana 'martyrs memorial' (memorial for those who sacrificed their lives for the cause of TS statehood) in Hyderabad, he asked as to who is responsible for the deaths of the 'martyrs'.

'We will do away with Dharani portal'
BJP president clears the air

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



After drawing flak regarding the differing statements of BJP President JP Nadda and Telangana BJP President Sanjay regarding the Dharani Portal, the BJP has clarified its stand through Twitter. "Unnecessary criticism regarding Dharani is inappropriate. It is nothing but a part of the drama played by the opposition to divert public attention, who could not stomach the large number of people who came to the BJP's Nagar Kurnool public meeting," the BJP said.

"The BJP thought that it will correct the errors in Dharani Portal after coming to power. However, after listening to the requests and opinions of a majority of farmers and the public, the BJP leadership decided to scrap the Dharani Portal. The Telangana BJP leadership brought this to the notice of the BJP's leadership. The national leadership accepted it and Nadda announced it at the Nagar Kurnool Nava Sankalpa Sabha. The Telangana BJP said that there is no need of any unnecessary criticism regarding that. This criticism is part of the opposition ploy to divert public attention for the huge crowd that attended the Nagar Kurnool meeting," the BJP added in its Twitter post.

All eyes on Eatala and Rajgopal now?

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

All eyes now on Eatala and Kall eyes are now on BJP leaders Eatala Rajender and Komatireddy Rajgopal Reddy after suspended BRS leaders Ponguleti and Jupally joined the Congress.

In addition to political observers, the people are also looking at Eatala and Rajgopal to find out whether they will quit the BJP and join the Congress or not.

Sources said that Rajgopal almost



took the decision to join the Congress as there was no response from the BJP to their demands placed before JP Nadda and Amit Shah. But Eatala is in confusion on taking a final decision, it is learnt.

However, one Congress leader on

NADDA OR BANDI
Cong questions conflicting stand

HYDERABAD: The Congress has posed a question to the BJP regarding its stand on the Dharani Portal as the stand of BJP President JP Nadda and that of its Telangana unit president Sanjay are totally different. Sanjay had said that they will not scrap the Dharani Portal but will correct the errors in it after coming to power, but Nadda said at the Nagar Kurnool public meeting that the BJP will scrap the Dharani Portal immediately after coming to power. Regarding this Senior TPCC Vice-President Mallu Ravi asked whether there is any difference of opinion between Nadda and Sanjay. Speaking to the media in New Delhi on



Monday, Mallu Ravi said that Prime Minister Modi and Union Minister Amit Shah had accused KCR of embezzling funds through the Kaleshwaram Project.

2

Centre clears Rs 56,415 cr to 16 states for capital investment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Finance has approved capital investment proposals of Rs 56,415 crore for 16 states in the current financial year under a special assistance scheme announced in the budget.

In order to boost capital spending by states, the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme was announced in the Union Budget 2023-24. Under the scheme, special assistance is being provided to the states in the form of a 50-year interest-free loan up to an overall sum of Rs 1.3 lakh crore during the financial year 2023-24.

The Department of Expenditure has approved capital investment proposals of Rs 56,415 crore to 16 states in the current financial year under the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme, a finance ministry statement said.

Capital investment projects in diverse sectors have been approved, including health, education, irrigation, water supply, power, roads, bridges, and railways.

Funds for meeting the state share of Jal Jeevan Mission and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana have also been provided to the states under this scheme to enhance the pace of the projects in these sectors.

A similar scheme titled 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment for 2022-23' was also executed by the finance ministry in the last financial year.

'Cong will win 75 to 80 seats'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bhongir Congress MP Komatireddy Venkat Reddy said the Congress would come to power by winning 75 to 80 seats in Telangana. He said that KCR is going to Maharashtra frequently only to criticise the Congress.

Speaking to the media in New Delhi after meeting Rahul Gandhi on Monday, Venkat said that the BRS and the BJP are one. He said that KCR has been criticising the Congress in Maharashtra after ignoring the BJP-Shiv Sena (Shinde) combine which is in power in Maharashtra.

Venkat said that BJP leaders had filed complaints stating that BRS MLC Kavitha had a hand in the Delhi liquor scam. "What happened to that case now," he asked.

Asaduddin hints at supporting Cong



HYDERABAD: AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi has hinted that his party will join hands with the Congress. He said that they had distanced themselves

from UPA due to former Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy and that they are ready to support the Congress if the need arises.

Addressing the media after meeting Bodhan MIM leaders in Nizamabad district jail on Monday, Asaduddin said their aim is to defeat Bodhan BRS MLA Mohd. Shakil.

Continued... 2

TS has least number of toilets in govt schools

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

For all the hype around the 'Mana Ooru Mana Badi' initiative of the BRS government to renovate schools, Telangana has the least number of toilets in government schools. This has become an election point now.

As per the rules of the Election Commission, there must be one toilet for men and one for women in all government buildings declared as polling stations.

Sources said that there are around 4,000 schools which don't have toilets or a proper toilet facility which was raised by the EC during its three-day visit.

"The Election Commission emphasised that polling booths should be provided only in government buildings. Earlier, some private colleges and schools were used for

"The Election Commission emphasised that polling booths should be provided only in government buildings. Earlier, some private colleges and schools were used for polling. Then EC officials found that the institutions lacked toilet facilities," sources said.



The electricity bills of many of the buildings were not paid. Sources said that EC raised this point as any interruption in the polling process will hit the election process.

On behalf of the government, the

Chief Secretary assured EC that toilets will be provided and the issue of pending electricity bills will also be addressed.

Finance Secretary Rama Krishnarao also promised to release funds for buildings which don't have the facilities and also clear dues. As per data tabled in the Rajya

No leader can match Modi in charisma and statesmanship

The overwhelming reception accorded to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his state visit to the US is a matter of pride for all Indians across the globe, not just those in America. For, there is no doubt that today there is no leader who is greater than Modi in terms of charisma and statesmanship. Lakhs of people in the US waited eagerly to have a glimpse of Modi. Indians had tied banners across the US to welcome him.

A US woman told TV channels that she had seen several heads of state visiting the USA but had never come across such a large number of people waiting on the streets playing musical instruments, showering petals, waving Indian and US flags, and singing Hindi songs expressing their joy to welcome Modi. What is the reason for all this? People have

unbounded love and affection for Modi.

Upon taking the reins of the Union government, all of Modi's words and deeds have reflected patriotism. He introduced the concept of 'India first'. At all the places he visited in the USA, he highlighted the greatness of India. He hailed the efforts made by every NRI for development of India. The NRIs present at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington DC, International Trade Center felt jubilant on seeing Modi and raised slogans like 'Vande Mataram' and 'Bharat mata ki jai'. During the speech he delivered at the American Congress, Congress members gave standing ovation to him 15 times. Hundreds of elected people's representatives lined up to get Modi's autograph and got selfies clicked with Modi. As part of the International Yoga Day, representatives of 139 countries par-

Has there been a precedent of any Prime Minister, prior to Modi, receiving such a huge response? As for the treaties signed with the US, Modi prioritized his government's Make in India policy. There have been no precedents of the USA transferring technology on such a large scale to India.

participated in a yoga session led by Modi at the UNO headquarters in New York. Hundreds of US industrialists and CEOs evinced interest to invest in India.

Has there been a precedent of any Prime Minister, prior to Modi, receiving such a huge response? As for the treaties signed with the US, Modi prioritized his government's Make in India policy. There have

been no precedents of the USA transferring technology on such a large scale to India. The General Electric of the US has agreed to transfer jet engine technology relating to the MK-2 war planes to be made by the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL). Accordingly, HAL will acquire the capabilities of developing jet engines in India. In space technology too, NASA



Y SATYA KUMAR
BJP National Secretary

has agreed to cooperate with ISRO completely to help put Indians in space station. In the semi-conductor sector, several US companies evinced interest to invest in India. Modi's tour of the US paved the way for cooperation in transfer of modern technology in joint research by Indian and US start-ups in the defence sector.

In sum, the US tour of Modi will enhance the image of India among global nations. The USA and many other nations have recognised India's potential to give a tough competition to China, which has been expanding rapidly and creating financial and security problems to India and other nations. The more empowered India is militarily and financially, the greater would be the resistance offered by the country to the China's hegemonic advancements in the Indo-Pacific region.

Several nations have realised the importance of democratic India, which is an amalgamation of various culture, emerging as a global power to herald peace everywhere. They believe that India can take initiative in resolving several interna-

national problems, including the Ukraine war. These countries have recognised the role of India in checking global terrorism. The US, in a joint statement issued with India, supported permanent membership of India in the UN Security Council.

In stark contrast, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, while touring the US 10 days prior to Modi's visit, lambasted Modi, and the Union Government. Rahul Gandhi is not able to realise that it is indecorous to speak ill about India and its leaders on foreign soil. Sam Pitroda, who had arranged Rahul's tour of the US, passed abusive remarks against Lord Sri Ram and other Indian deities. The Jamat-e-Islami, terrorist

organisations of Pak origin, organisations that fuel separatism in Kashmir and other organisations that debase India's image on the pretext of human rights and religious freedom tried to mobilise people for Rahul Gandhi's event and provided funds.

The US tours of Modi and Rahul Gandhi reflect two different perspectives of diverse forces that are going to lock horns for power in the forthcoming General Election in India. On the one hand, one sees a patriotic leader like Narendra Modi who yearns that his every step should strive for development of India; and, on the other hand, one comes across Rahul Gandhi, who lowers the image of the country and ignores the interests of the country. People know whom to choose among the two on the D-day.

TRULY SPEAKING



Go ahead with 'KCR ko hatao-Telangana ko bachao' slogan: Rahul

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Former AICC president Rahul Gandhi said that he is happy as leaders who had quit the Congress are coming back.

He said that 'Ghar Wapsi' is taking place in Telangana and called upon Telangana Congress leaders to move forward with the slogan 'KCR ko hatao—Telangana ko bachao'. Rahul had a half-hour meeting with suspended BRS leaders Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Jupally Krishna Rao at the AICC office in New Delhi on Monday and said that the leaders have to work hard to win the forthcoming TS elections.

Telangana Congress in-

charge Manikrao Thakre said that the BRS is the B-Team of the BJP. Thakre asked why the BRS did not attend the Patna opposition leaders' meeting if it is really fighting the BJP. Nothing will happen due to KCR's Maharashtra tour and added that KCR is just burning the money he had earned illegally in Maharashtra.

Thakre said that the people of Telangana believe in the Congress as it is the alternative to the BJP. He said that a large number of people will join the Congress in the coming days.

He said that the party is not giving any assurance to leaders who join the Congress but will give tickets on the basis of surveys.

Telangana will supply rice to K'taka, TN

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Industries Minister KT Rama Rao said that Telangana will help Tamil Nadu and Karnataka with rice. "Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are asking for rice and paddy. We will not let political differences come in the way of helping other states," KTR said. He said that Telangana produces 3.5 crore tonnes of paddy every year and that Telangana now tops the country in paddy cultivation. The Kaleshwaram Project irrigates lakhs of acres, he said.

He said that the per capita income of Telangana doubled after the formation of the state.

The Lulu Group started operations in the state in the presence of KTR at the ITC Kakatiya



Telangana produces 3.5 crore tonnes of paddy every year and now tops the country in paddy cultivation.

Hotel in Begumpet, Hyderabad. He said that tourism is expected to increase after Lulu's investment in the state. He said that the cotton grown in Telangana is of the highest quality in the country. KTR also spoke about the "five revolutions" that the government has brought about in Telangana.

He highlighted the success story of Telangana and how it embarked upon the five revolutions of green (agriculture), pink (meat and poultry), blue (fisheries), yellow (oil palm cultivation), and white (milk and milk products). He urged the Lulu group to set up processing plants for fish and meat in Telangana to which the company agreed.

BJP's hypocrisy exposed, says Harish

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Health Minister Harish Rao came down heavily on the BJP over its change in stance on the Dharani Portal.

"In the case of the Dharani Portal, the BJP is doing only lip service. Gully BJP leaders say one thing, Delhi leaders say another. Nadda said on Sunday that the BJP will scrap Dharani, but state BJP leaders said that they will not scrap Dharani. This is another proof of the BJP's two-tongued attitude," Harish said. He said that in the BJP there is friction among leaders and they do not listen to each other. "The leaders of the Congress, without any understanding of Dharani criticise it blindly."

He said the BJP and the Congress are engaged in mindless politics.

Congress has already selected 60 candidates, says Jeevan

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress has already finalised candidates in 60 Assembly constituencies, the lone Congress MLC, T. Jeevan Reddy said and added that the candidates have already started their campaign.

He said that the party will announce their names soon and that purchasing Congress MLAs is history.

The Congress has been doing its job of selecting candidates meticulously away from public eyes after conducting a series of surveys. The party is also trying openly to attract leaders from other

political parties apart from the 'Ghar Wapsi' campaign to bring back leaders who left it.

The party has been implementing the strategies it implemented in Karnataka.

Speaking to the media on Monday, Jeevan said that the BRS is now a sinking ship and that BRS leaders who kept Prime Minister Modi away when he came to Hyderabad fell at the feet of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

He said that the BRS and the BJP were playing a hide-and-seek game all these days but now their dramas have come out after the Delhi trip of BRS leaders.

KCR rides into...

Continued from Page 1

KCR had lunch along with public representatives and BRS leaders. After that, KCR left for Solapur. Despite heavy rain, the CM's convoy moved forward.

Local BRS leaders and sympathisers welcomed the BRS Chief by showering rose petals and flowers in Solapur. People gathered in large numbers to have a glimpse of the BRS Chief and rushed to shake hands with him. The entire area reverberated with the drum beats to welcome KCR. Locals competed with each other to take selfies with KCR.

The gathering raised the slogan 'Desh Ki Neta KCR' and 'Ab ki baar kisan sarkar'. After the rousing welcome at Solapur, KCR went to Balaji Sarovar Hotel and rested for a while.

After that, KCR went to the house of BRS leader Dharmanna Mundaya Sadul. The BRS Chief was received warmly at Sadul's house in Bhavanarushi Pet in Solapur. Dharmanna Sadul served as Mayor for a term and was elected the Congress MP of Solapur Lok Sabha constituency for two terms.

He introduced his family to KCR and discussed the current

political situation. Later, KCR returned to Balaji Sarovar Hotel for staying overnight.

Telangana settled in Solapur greeted the Chief Minister speaking in Telugu and expressed their joy to see the BRS Chief in the house of Dharmanna Sadul. BRS leader Dharmanna Sadul is staying in the area in Solapur where Padmashalis have also settled.

Dharmanna Sadul was born in a poor Padmasali family from Telangana. His ancestors belonged to the Kannapur village in Karimnagar district. Sadul scaled heights as a public leader in Solapur. Getting attracted to the ideals of the BRS, Dharmanna joined the BRS in the presence of KCR recently.

Ministers T. Harish Rao, Jagadishwar Reddy, Niranjan Reddy, Vemula Prashant Reddy, Koppula Eshwar, Allola Indrakaran Reddy, Talasani Srinivas Yadav, Errabelli Dayakar Rao, V. Srinivas Goud, Sabita Indra Reddy, Satyavathi Rathore, Gangula Kamalakar, BRS Secretary General, Rajya Sabha members K. Keshava Rao, MPs Nama Nageshwar Rao, J. Santhosh Kumar and MPs, MLCs, MLAs and others were also present.

Rs 60,000 cr needed for 5 Cong poll 'guarantees'

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said a total of Rs 59,000 crore to Rs 60,000 crore is required annually, for the implementation of Congress' five poll 'guarantees'.

He said, the fresh budget of the new Congress government, which he will be presenting on July 7, is likely to be of the size

Rs 3,35,000 crore.

The Chief Minister, who also holds the finance portfolio, was speaking after inaugurating the training camp organised for the newly elected MLAs of the 16th Legislative Assembly.

"The first budget after independence was twenty one crore three lakh rupees, today it is about three lakh nine thousand crore rupees. I will be present-

ing a new budget on July 7 it may be (of the size) three lakh thirty to thirty five thousand crore rupees," Siddaramaiah said.

Addressing the newly elected legislators, he said, "the present budget is around three lakh nine thousand eight hundred and ninety six crore rupees, as I'm implementing five guarantees, I will have to provide rupees forty thousand

crore for it, for the remaining period. A total of fifty nine thousand to sixty thousand crore rupees is required for five guarantees."

Noting that the previous BJP government had presented a budget in February by taking a vote on account for four months, the CM said, the budget he will be presenting on July 7 will come into force from August 1.

Corruption rampant in TS

Continued from Page 1

Jupally said that he will join the Congress formally at the meeting being held in Mahbubnagar on July 14 or 16. He said that hundreds of youth had sacrificed their lives for Telangana state. "We participated in the Telangana movement after quitting our posts. But our hopes came to nought after Telangana's formation of Telangana. KCR is ruling with gimmicks and bogus schemes. He plays gimmicks with new schemes always. He thinks

that no one will question him. KCR's attitude is insulting the Constitution's architect Ambedkar. He is spending money for publicity like no party has done so far in India," he said.

Jupally said that KCR's dictatorship has reached its peak and that he does not even consider his ministers as human beings.

"We decided to join the Congress as it gave us the Telangana state knowing fully well that it suffer politically," he said.

Continued from Page 1

Aim is to defeat KCR

Ponguleti said that KCR is an expert in juggling words and so he had decided to join a strong party like the Congress to defeat KCR. He said that KCR has been duping the public with his cleverly conceived schemes.

He said that people have seen how KCR has been behaving after coming to power. The BRS government failed to fulfil the assurances it had given regarding water, funds and jobs. Posts are not important for leaders but self-respect is important. The self-respect of the Telangana people was destroyed by the BRS after it came to

power, Ponguleti said.

"Jupally and I organised Atmeeya Sammelans in the past few months at many places. I conducted surveys on the state's political conditions and I found that the anti-government vote is one-sided. We thought of floating a new political party. But we realised that anti-government votes would split if a new party is floated and so we did not float a new party. We discussed our future course of action with intellectuals. They said that we must join an existing party instead of

floating a new political party. So we decided to join the Congress," he said.

Ponguleti said that the political graph of the Congress rose after Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra and that it jumped again after the Congress victory in Karnataka. The BJP is losing ground by the day, he said.

"After checking all equations we decided to meet Rahul Gandhi. I know that I will face trouble if I join the Congress as it is not in power in the State or at the Centre. In fact, problems have already started for

me," he said. Ponguleti said that Sonia Gandhi gave the Telangana state knowing fully well that the Congress will lose Andhra Pradesh. The Congress would have come to power in Telangana in 2014 if they had told people some magic words. But KCR came to power a second time saying magic words. So, the people of Telangana are still indebted to Sonia, he said.

He said that he will join the Congress on July 2 at the huge public meeting being held in Khammam. The public meeting will be bigger than the BRS' Formation Day meeting, he said.

Asaduddin hints...

Continued from Page 1

He made it clear that they will field a MIM candidate in Bodhan and that they will soon announce the constituencies where they will contest.

Asaduddin said that it is shocking on the part of the BRS to file cases against AIMIM leaders. He said that AIMIM leaders who were in jail had worked hard day and night for Kavitha. He demanded that the BRS government launch a Muslim Bandhu scheme for the Muslims of Telangana and that he had brought the issue to the attention of KCR but there was no response.

He said the BRS government had constructed the new secretariat after demolishing mosques and he asked KCR to rebuild the mosques immediately.

Congress questions conflicting ..

Continued from Page 1

Sanjay also said earlier that KCR will be sent to jail but what has happened now?

Mallu Ravi said that Sanjay had said that Kavitha will be arrested but what happened after that.

Congress Kisan Cell Vice-President M. Kodanda Reddy said that the BJP has no clarity on the Dharani Portal. He said that the BJP has been encouraging landlords.

He said that JP Nadda had stated that they will abolish Dharani Portal due to the fear that people may oppose them if they do not take such a stand.

Congress gets big push

Continued from Page 1

Mallu Ravi, Sudarshan Reddy, T. Jeevan Reddy, Podem Veeraiah, Seethakka, Shabbir Ali, and AICC General Secretary in-charge Manikrao Thakre, AICC Secretary in-charges Rohith Choudhary, Mansoor Ali Khan and PC Vishnunadh were also present.

Ponguleti and Jupally Krishna Rao and 33 others had a photo session with Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjuna Kharge. Rahul and Kharge patiently posed for photos with the newly inducted leaders.

India summons senior Pak diplomat over attacks on Sikh community

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has summoned a senior diplomat of the Pakistan High Commission and lodged a strong protest over recent incidents of attacks on Sikh community members in the neighbouring country, sources said on Monday.

Four such incidents have taken place between April and June and India has taken serious note of

these attacks, they said. "India has demanded that Pakistani authorities investigate these violent attacks on the Sikh community with sincerity and share the investigation reports," said a source.

"It has also been conveyed that Pakistan should ensure the safety and security of its minorities, who live in constant fear of religious persecution," the source added.

Cooperation between countries should not undermine regional peace

PNS ■ BEIJING

China on Monday said cooperation between countries should not undermine regional peace and stability and target any third party, as it reacted to a host of defence and commercial pacts recently signed between India and the US including joint production of jet engines in India to power military aircraft and a deal on armed drones.

"It has been China's longstanding position that military cooperation between states should not undermine regional peace and stability, target any third party, or even harm the interests of any third party," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told media briefing here.

She was responding to a question by a Russian state-run news agency seeking her reac-

tion about a host of defence and commercial agreements during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington last week.

"We hope relevant countries will act in ways conducive to mutual trust between regional countries in the field of security and stability in the region," she said.

General Electric Aerospace has announced that it has inked a pact with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to jointly produce fighter jet engines for the Indian Air Force's Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-MK-II Tejas.

India announced its intention to procure armed MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones from General Atomics. This advanced technology will increase India's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

Improving amenities in schools should be a priority: Governor

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a conference of Vice-Chancellors of Telangana universities, Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan highlighted the need for improved amenities in the state's educational institutions. While acknowledging Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swachh Bharat initiative, which emphasises cleanliness, the Governor said that the focus should now shift towards providing adequate washroom facilities to students.

During the conference, Governor Soundararajan inaugurated a digital library that houses a wide range of books, including those related to SCERT, Telangana, IIT-JEE, NEET, Computer Science, Engineering, Medical Science, Healthcare, Career Development, and Recruitment (UPSC, RRB, SSC, IBPS).

The Governor also unveiled the souvenir of Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University, highlighting the importance of agricultural education and research.



Dr Avichal Kapoor, Joint Secretary of the UGC, presented various initiatives undertaken by the UGC. He mentioned that the UGC also has plans to establish a digital library. Dr Kapoor stressed the significance of complying with the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020) and outlined five key pillars for achieving quality improvement in education, including online courses.

The Vice-Chancellors presented detailed progress reports on academics, NRIF and NAAC, G-20, Y-20, Youth Red Cross, academic social

responsibility, university engagement with tribal villages and the introduction of innovative courses to meet market demands and enhance placement opportunities.

Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan stressed on the need to prioritise infrastructure development such as classrooms and laboratories to enhance the overall quality of higher education. She said that the state's development cannot be considered fully achieved without a strong emphasis on basic and higher education. She also mentioned her recom-

mendation to the President on the establishment of a common recruitment board. She expressed concern over a university that is currently facing court cases and urged the government to address the matter.

The Governor stressed the importance of practical-based education and called for aligning the curriculum with students' expectations. She proposed the establishment of skill training centres, placement cells, career guidance and counselling services, job fairs and coaching for competitive examinations.

The Governor further emphasised the need to foster alumni connections to encourage contributions from former students. She proposed the creation of an online platform for students, the uploading of student certificates on the National Digi Locker, and participation in national rankings and NAAC accreditation.

The Governor expressed her commitment to promoting the National Education Policy 2020 and serving as a catalyst for educational development in the state.

Importance of bees in ecosystem stressed

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A state-level seminar on scientific bee-keeping was organised by the Integrated Bee-keeping Development Centre (IBDC) at the Forest College and Research Institute on Monday. More than 250 people participated in the seminar.

The seminar aimed to promote the adoption of scientific practices in bee-keeping and create awareness about the importance of bees in the ecosystem. The seminar provided a platform for bringing together experts, progressive beekeepers, farmers and students.

The speakers at the seminar emphasised the importance of scientific bee-keeping in enhancing the income of stakeholders and the crucial role of honeybees in providing pollination to improve both the quality and quantity of crop production.



GMR introduces self-baggage drop facility at gate 9

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

GMR Hyderabad International Airport has taken a significant step towards enhancing efficiency and streamlining the travel experience for passengers by introducing a self-baggage drop facility near entry gate number 9. The airport has installed eight fully-automated baggage machines equipped with advanced scanners, scales, and sensors to expedite the check-in process.

Initially, this convenience is specifically targeted at Indigo passengers travelling to Bengaluru and Chennai. With the introduction of these state-of-the-art machines, passengers can now complete their baggage check-in within an impressive time frame of 45 to 60 seconds, according to a release by the airport authorities.

Passengers can approach a self-check-in kiosk to print their boarding pass. At the kiosk, they can select the baggage option, provide all the details and print the bag tag. After tagging their baggage, passengers can proceed to the self-bag drop unit, where they place their bags on the conveyor belt and scan the barcode on



With the introduction of these state-of-the-art machines, passengers can now complete their baggage check-in within an impressive time frame of 45 to 60 seconds

their boarding pass to initiate the process. The unit conducts a thorough check on the baggage, and if everything meets the required criteria, it processes the bag and sends a confirmation to the airline.

In case the baggage does not meet the necessary criteria, the unit rejects it, and a check-in agent steps in to assist the passenger. For excess baggage, passengers will need to approach the baggage counter

of the respective airline. Pradeep Panicker, CEO of GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited, said, "We are happy to add another convenience of the new self-baggage facility for passengers transiting through the Hyderabad airport. This will further ease and enhance their travel experience. The technology integration of the self-bag drop and check-in process makes travel faster and simpler."

Cyberabad police arrest 18 for various bank frauds

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Cyberabad police on Monday arrested 18 persons involved in various bank frauds.

In the first case, 10 persons were arrested by the cyber crime branch for targeting labourers and defrauding them by accessing their KYC details and promising loans from the HDFC Bank. A complaint was received from HDFC Bank wherein they state that some borrowers had applied for personal loans digitally through online.

The borrowers had claimed to be employed with companies namely Both tree Consulting Limited, Kapston Services Limited and Adecco India Pvt. Ltd, Scotline. On that basis, they have availed personal loans from HDFC Bank.

Post disbursement of the loans, the entire amount was withdrawn by the borrowers. Later, they started defaulting the repayments and they had vacated from the addresses mentioned in their loan application which had been

verified before granting the loans.

In all the cases, the loan amounts were disbursed between Rs 38 lakh to Rs 49.50 lakh. Hence, the complainant lodged a complaint against the fraudsters who cheated the bank by fraudulently availing loans by mis-representation and swindled an amount of Rs 4,38,17,597.70.

In a similar case, three persons were arrested for breaching bank customer data as they targeted Axis Bank credit card users. The accused were Bhupendra, Himanshu, Sonu, all of Delhi.

In a case related to SBI bank Credit Card fraud, the Cyberabad police arrested five persons.

The accused were identified as Aman Parvej Khan, Ashik Ali and Ashraf Jawed, Shubham Kumar along with Abhishek Bharadwaj. They accessed the credit card details of various customers, contacted them on the pretext of redeeming reward points.

KTR inaugurates Uppal skywalk

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Municipal Administration KT Rama Rao inaugurated Uppal skywalk on Monday, which was constructed at a cost of Rs 25 crore.

Speaking on this occasion, Minister KTR said that Uppal has connectivity for five other roads from Nagole, Warangal, Osmania University and Habsiguda. There was a fear for children, elderly and other pedestrians to cross the road and also to reduce accidents we constructed this skywalk. There are lifts, escalators and six entry levels with a total length of 660m."

He said that Telangana has achieved complete development in nine years. In the previous joint regime, old age pension was Rs 200 while under the BRS government it has come to Rs 2,000 and Rs 500 for disability has now been enhanced to Rs 4,000. Ration rice is being distributed from 25 kg to 6 kg per person. In Uppal constituency drinking water tanks and pipelines have



been laid at a cost of Rs 453 crore and the remaining 5 per cent will be completed soon. He said that the 70-km Metro Rail line to Shamshabad and another 31-km line will be completed in two-and-a-half years. Till now 12 lakh families have been given Shaadi Mubarak and Kalyana Lakshmi. He said that KCR kits have been distributed to 13 lakh people and so far 2,084 people have been allotted double bedroom houses in Uppal constituency.

The Minister said that the

land acquisition work was undertaken with Rs 350 crore. He said that flyovers and underpasses have been constructed to go from Uppal to Nagole, Bairamalguda, Kukatpally, Serilingampally and Rajendranagar areas. He said that till now 35 flyovers, underpasses, ROBs, RUBs and link roads have been constructed for traffic control. He said that the work of the Uppal-Amberpet flyover project is going on at a slow pace as the Central government has not taken action in the matter.



Haj pilgrim from TS dies while undergoing dialysis

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

An elderly Haj pilgrim from Telangana died on June 25 while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Mecca.

The deceased was identified as Mohammed Shamsheer Pasha, a native of Mahabubnagar. He was a heart patient and bore ID number TSF-1586-2-0. Pasha was under treatment at the King Faisal Hospital after both his kidneys failed. Following the demise, Telangana State Haj Committee Chairman Mohammed Saleem expressed condolence to the family of the deceased. Pasha's funeral was held at the Shariya graveyard in Mecca.

Parts of TS receive showers; rains to continue till July 29

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Development and Planning Society on Monday predicted light to moderate rains in isolated places in Telangana and Hyderabad till July 29.

As per the report, in Telangana, the maximum temperature is expected to remain between 34-37 degrees Celsius while the minimum temperature is expected to remain between 22-25 degrees Celsius. Hyderabad is expected to receive light to moderate rains till July 29. The maximum temperature in the area under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation will likely remain between 32-34 degrees while the minimum temperature expected to remain between 22-25 degrees Celsius.

Weather expert T Balaji took to Twitter predicting rains in various parts of Telangana. "Good rains ahead in Adilabad and Asifabad districts in next two hours. Passing rains ahead in Medak, Siddipet, Sangareddy,

Vikarabad and Nizamabad districts. Parts of Hyderabad too can have passing rains by evening or night."

He further said, "Last day of proper rains today. Mod-Heavy rains ahead in North TS & scattered rains in other parts. From tomorrow break spell ahead, rise in temperature. Break spell doesn't mean complete dry weather; there will be rains, but only scattered, not widespread like last few days. This break spell may last till July 2. Thereafter a fresh LPA can activate monsoon with widespread rains in Telangana."

The Indian Meteorological Department also predicted light to moderate rains in parts of Telangana on Monday. Districts including Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherial, Karimnagar, Peddapally, Jayashankar Bhupalpally and Mulugu are likely to receive heavy rains on Tuesday. Similarly, Karimnagar, Rajanna Sircilla, Nizamabad, Nirmal and Jagtial are likely to experience thunderstorms and lightning.

Four held for robbery, kidnap

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Ghatkesar police have apprehended a group of four individuals who were involved in a robbery and an attempted kidnapping.

The incident came to light when K Avinash Reddy, a resident of Medipally, lodged a complaint with the police on Sunday evening that he had befriended a neighbour named Aroshika Reddy back in 2015. Over time, Aroshika borrowed a sum of Rs 30 lakh from Avinash. However, when he asked for the money to be repaid, she began avoiding his calls and messages while promising to marry him. Recently, a person identified as Chakradhar Goud (35)



approached Avinash, claiming that he would return the money on behalf of Aroshika.

On Sunday morning, the accused asked Avinash to meet him near Vandana Hotel, close to Gattu Maisamma temple in Ghatkesar. At approximately 1:30 pm, the accused arrived in a car and invited Avinash to join them. However, a few minutes later, three addition-

al individuals forcibly entered the car, attacked Avinash, and attempted to abduct him. Fortunately, Avinash managed to escape and reported the incident to the police.

During investigation, it was revealed that Chakradhar had been married to Aroshika in 2018. Prior to their marriage, Aroshika had borrowed money from Avinash but only returned Rs 9 lakh out of the total amount. In an attempt to evade their financial obligations, Aroshika and her husband hatched a plan to kidnap Avinash. Furthermore, it was discovered that Chakradhar was involved in nine cases and had been booked by various police stations in the city.

TSRTC revises reservation charges for distant areas

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) has revised the advance reservation charges to reduce the financial burden of travellers going to distant areas.

It was decided to reduce charges in express, deluxe, super luxury and AC services. In express and deluxe services, the charge has been fixed at Rs 20 for up to 350 km and Rs 30 for 350 km and beyond if advance reservation is made for super luxury and AC services.

"There is a good response for advance reservation in TSRTC buses. Passengers are



booking their tickets on an average of 15,000 per day. To reduce the financial burden on them, the advance reservation charges have been reduced. Everyone should use it and support the institution," said TSRTC Chairman Bajireddy Govardhan and MD VC Sajjanar.

Non-teaching staff at Nizam College protest over non-payment of salaries

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The non-teaching contract employees at the Nizam College have been protesting for a week over non-payment of salaries since April 2023.

The protest began on June 19. Chetan, a junior assistant said, "The issue began in February when salaries weren't credited on time. We received salaries on February 25 instead of first, which is when we expect our pay cheques. There has been no salary since April, which is affecting our daily lives since this is our only source of income and we live on pay-check to pay-check. Many of us are unable to pay children's



school fees and other bills."

At least 100 protestors gathered near the Principal's office holding placards of "We want Justice" and "We want salaries." A computer operator demanding salary said, "Let us be clear. This is not a protest against the government. Our issue is with the Vice-Chancellor, Principal and the registrar since they are the authorities responsible for

our salaries. The protests are being organised everyday for an hour before lunch."

Asked whether there is any assurance from the management, Chetan said, "The principal came out when the protest was initiated and said there is nothing the college could do regarding the issue. When this is a constituent college, this matter should be taken up by the Vice-Chancellor at the earliest. They can't deny us salaries saying there is a shortage of funds."

Addressing the issue, the college authorities said, "There is a shortage of funds since we haven't received the money for scholarships."

Man held for transporting 210 kg ganja to Maha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Medchal police and the Special Operations Team (SOT) of the Shamshabad Zone on Sunday arrested a man for transporting ganja from Odisha to Maharashtra via Hyderabad.

The accused was identified as Jarupla Thirupathi (20) a resident of Subhash Nagar Colony in LB Nagar and a native of Nalgonda. Other three accused namely, Seetha Ram of Odisha, Ramavath Mathru Nayak of Nalgonda and Shiva of Maharashtra are absconding. The police seized the dry ganja sealed in 105 packets, a car and a mobile phone from Thirupathi, all of which amounted to Rs 60 lakh. Ram and Nayak transported ganja from Behrampur in Odisha to Maharashtra through Thirupathi. Shiva

received the drug and sold it to the customers in Maharashtra.

As per the plan, Nayak contacted Ram to procure 210 kg ganja which was to be transported to Maharashtra. On June 24, Thirupathi met Ram. The latter placed the drug in the car and concealed it with tape. However, as the vehicle entered Telangana on Sunday evening, the joint team of SOT Shamshabad Zone and staff of PS Medchal Police caught Thirupathi near Srinivasa container shed, at Medchal check post. Upon interrogation the accused revealed that he was transporting the 210 kgs of ganja. Immediately the team caught the accused and seized the car along with the ganja. The accused revealed that he purchased the ganja at Rs3000 per kg and sell it to the needy customers at Rs 20,000 per kg.

Food intake impacts tribal women: Study

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A new research study conducted by the Indian School of Business has revealed that wild food consumption plays a significant role in Adivasi women's diet, particularly during the months of June and July.

It also contributes to women's higher dietary diversity in India and constitutes a substantial contribution to food and nutrition security.

Titled 'Wild Foods Contribute to Women's Higher Dietary Diversity in India', the study has been featured as the cover story in the June issue of the prestigious journal Nature Food.

The study involved the collection of monthly diet recall data from 570 households residing in two Adivasi-dominated districts with extensive forest cover in Jharkhand and West Bengal. Women who



incorporated wild foods into their meals had higher average dietary diversity scores, with a 13% and 9% increase observed in June and July, respectively. Additionally, they were more likely to consume nutrient-dense dark green leafy vegetables compared to those who did not collect wild foods.

The research study also

revealed that 40% of the women in the study group failed to meet the minimum dietary diversity requirements over the course of one year, underscoring the urgent need to address inadequate diets. It further emphasised that wild food consumption is particularly important for vulnerable women in Adivasi regions,

especially during the months of June and July when other crops are still in the growing stage.

Professor Ashwini Chhatre, co-author of the study and Executive Director of the Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the Indian School of Business (ISB), remarked, "Wild foods are often considered delicacies affordable only to the wealthy, such as truffles and morels."

However, we have limited knowledge about the extent to which poor communities depend on them and the vital role these wild foods play in ensuring the nutrition security of forest-dwelling communities. Our study has unveiled just the tip of an iceberg of a massive opportunity. When climate shocks devastate rain-fed crops in forested regions, it is wild foods that stabilise food consumption for the poorest households."

TS police team win state shooting championship

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Police shooting team out-performed others during the ninth Telangana state shooting championship.

The championship was held at the Gachibowli shooting range in Hyderabad from June 14 to 21. Following is the list of winners in various categories: A Prasanna Kumar, Inspector, IT and Communication, Rachakonda: Gold Medal in 25M centre fire pistol, Bronze Medal in 10M air pistol; B Shankar, CI, CSW, Hyd: Gold Medal in 25M standard pistol, Silver Medal in 25M centre fire pistol and G Saidulu, RI, DAR, Jagtial: Gold Medal in 10M air pistol.

K Raj Kumar, PC, DAR, Kamareddy: Gold Medal in 50M ppen sight rifle; P Srinivas, HC, 13th BN, TSSP, Mancherial: Silver Medal in 25M standard pistol, Bronze Medal in 25M centre fire pistol; B Sravanthi, WPC, Asifabad, Silver Medal in 10M air pistol; E Raj Kumar, PC, Kondapur: Silver Medal in 50M 3P event and CH Madhavi, WPC, Silver Medal in 50M rifle prone.



Rs645crore disbursed on Day1 of Rythu Bandhu

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Rythu Bandhu investment support to the tune of Rs 642.52 crore was deposited on Day1 of the season. Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy said, "On the very first day, June 26, 2023, as many as of 22,55,081 farmers holding under one acre land got the investment support.

Funds are deposited in the accounts of farmers every day, acre-wise. Farmers should follow the instructions given by the Agriculture Department". Minister T Harish Rao said, "Rythu Bandhu Festival begins". Lakhs of farmers in Telangana will receive investment support under RythuBandhu scheme starting today. Rs645.52 crore was credited to Farmers whose development and well being is the top priority for CM KCR Garu."



SUPPRESSION OF RIGHTS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE
KCR government will pay price, says Bhatti Vikramarka

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday condemned Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for not implementing the Forest Rights Act brought by the Congress-led UPA government to protect the rights of tribal people and Adivasis over the forest land.

The legislation was passed when Manmohan Singh was the Prime Minister and Sonia Gandhi was the UPA chairperson. The forest and the rights over the forests belong to the forest dwellers. But the BRS government had been systematically oppressing the rights of Adivasis and scheduled tribes and conspired to deny Adivasis rights over podu lands under their cultivation in the forest and also not allowing them to



Congress Legislature Party leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka being given a warm reception by the Congress activists in Suryapet on Monday

enjoy the forest yield.

The tribal people were being subjected to harassment and forced to live without self-respect, said Bhatti who is now at Munyanaik Tanda in Suryapet district as part of his People's March Padayatra.

Warning that the BRS government and the party would pay a price for the oppression of tribal people, the CLP leader said that Congress Party would be back in power in another four months and it would take decisions to restore rights to

Adivasis over Podu lands and forest produce. The Congress government would strictly enforce Forest Rights Act in letter and spirit, he said.

With the elections approaching, KCR, who did nothing to implement the Forest Rights Act, has been trying to deceive Adivasis and tribal people once again by stating that pattas would be given for the Podu lands.

The tribal people, who realised the deceitful mindset of KCR and his government, were now vociferous in demanding their rights over forest lands and questioning the ruling party who gave it rights to snatch their lands, Bhatti said and asserted that the Congress party soon after coming to power would solve the long pending Podu lands issue.

Two persons killed, three injured in a clash between two families

PNS ■ KUMARAM BHEEM / ASIFABAD

Two persons, including a woman, of a family were killed and three others were injured in a clash between two families over a land dispute at Jakkulapalle village under Rebbena mandal in Kumaram Bheem Asifabad district on Monday. The members of the two families, armed with deadly weapons, fought a pitched battle. The condition of one of the two, who was injured in the clash, was stated to be critical.

A land dispute had been simmering between the two families for long over the ownership of land. The two groups fought with axes, knives and sticks.

The deceased were identified as Mandal Lingaiah (35), a daily wage earner and Bathukamma (60).

On being alerted by local people, the police from Rebbena rushed to the spot and took a few persons into custody for interrogation.



Bodies of victims of a clash between two families at Jakkulapalle village in Kumaram Bheem Asifabad district on Monday

According to police, the clash erupted suddenly and caught them unawares. The dispute that had been simmering between two families broke into a clash on the spur of the moment, it is said.

The police registered a case. The bodies were shifted to Government Hospital for post-mortem.

Meanwhile, a clash broke out between tribal people and a group of persons, allegedly belonging to the ruling party, over a land dispute at Kommalla village under Geesugonda mandal in Warangal district.

The tribal women chased away the group of persons by waving footwear at them.

JAC of irrigation employees condemns attack on AEE

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

Nizamabad District JAC on Monday condemned the attack on Irrigation Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) Rajya Lakshmi and urged the District Collector Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanth to punish the culprits. JAC chairman Aluka

Kishan said that the woman officer was prevented from discharging her duties while she was trying to protect the government's assets.

The leaders submitted a memorandum to the District Collector during the Prajavani programme held on Monday.

The JAC would continue to protest till the action was

taken against the culprits, he said, assuring its support to the employee.

TNGO district unit secretary Netikunta Sekhar, former TNGO district secretary, Assistant Audit Officer S Amrut Kumar, Irrigation Superintending Engineer G Badrinarayana and other engineering officials were present on the occasion.

Youth urged to stay away from drugs

PNS ■ NAGARKARNOOL

District and Sessions Court judge D Rajesh Babu on Monday exhorted the youth to stay away from drugs and focus on achieving their goals.

Taking part in the International Day Against Drug Abuse, the judge expressed concern over the youth in urban as well as rural areas getting attracted to substances.

First, the youth will take



Nagarkurnool Sessions Judge D Rajesh Babu speaking at a meeting in Nagarkurnool on Monday

drugs out of fancy and later they become addicted to the drugs, he said. He regretted that the youth are leaving behind their goals and destroying their future. He advised the youth to stay away from drugs and work hard and boost their career prospects.

District Legal Services Authority Secretary Sabita asked the youth to say no to drugs. The impact of narcotics would be on the brain and it snatches away friends,

near and dear and ultimately the life of the addicted.

District SP Rameshwar said that the police would be forced to register FIRs against them if they deviated from normal behaviour and got addicted to drugs. It would destroy their future, he added.

Agricultural college principal Padmavati, senior advocates Shyam Prasad Rao, Ramchander, Madhusudhan Rao, college students, court employees and others took part in the event.

TPCC leader confident of Congress victory in TS

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALAPALLY

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) leader Gandra Satyanarayana Rao on Monday exhorted the Congress activists to strive for the party's victory in the next elections. "Victory is ours," he said while advising the party activists to create awareness among people.

Speaking at a meeting of party Bhupalapally unit leaders and activists here, he expressed confidence that the Congress party would come to power in the next elections. The Congress is the only alternative to the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) in the State. He promised to protect the interest of the party cadre and provide protection to them. The Congress party would



TPCC leader Gandra Satyanarayana Rao speaking at the party meeting in Bhupalapally on Monday

win in Bhupalapally by a huge margin.

Repeating the allegation that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's family benefited, Satyanarayana Rao said that the BRS government had reneged on its election promise. "None is happy with

the BRS government," he claimed. The government had squandered public money in the name of decennial celebrations.

NSUI district unit president Battu Karunakar, INTUC vice-president Joga Butchaiah and others were present.

Two killed in cylinder blast

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Two persons were killed when an air-conditioned refrigerant gas cylinder in a cold storage warehouse exploded on Monday. The blast happened at the New Star Fruits Company Cold Storage warehouse. The bodies of those who died in the accident were torn into pieces.

The dead were identified as Sheik Khaleem, owner of the cold storage company and an employee, Sajeed.

The cylinder exploded when the workers were replacing it with a new one. Four other persons, who were in the cold storage warehouse at the time of the blast escaped unhurt.

Nalgonda Additional Superintendent of Police



Hanumantha Rao and Deputy Superintendent of Police Narasimha Reddy visited the spot.

'Say no to drugs,' awareness campaign held

PNS ■ YADADRI BHONGIR

Bhongir Deputy Police Commissioner Rajesh Chandra has called upon the youth to stay away from drugs and other narcotic substances. He was addressing students to educate them on the adverse impact of the use of drugs. He was speaking at a programme titled Parivartaha, aimed at making Telangana free from drugs here on Monday.

The sale and use of narcotic substances and drugs are punishable under the law.

District Excise Superintendent Navin Kumar said that cultivation of narcotic substances like ganja and their smuggling is prohibited by law and maintained that those who are addicted to the substance would be punished. Drug abuse would destroy

the future of youngsters. He appealed to people to ensure that the youth

District Women and Child Welfare Officer G Annappurna said that annually June 26 is observed as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The UNO observes June 26 as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking to evolve a society that is free from substance abuse.

She administered an oath to the students and flagged off a rally.

MPP Narala Nirmala, ZPTC Beeru Mallaiah and others spoke.

Deputy DMHO Dr Yasoda said that the district hospital here counsels the people using drugs to help them kick the habit and works for bringing about change in them.



Bhongir Deputy Police Commissioner Rajesh Chandra speaking at a meeting in Bhongir on Monday

Telangana Diagnostic Hub to be inaugurated

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Health Minister T Harish Rao would inaugurate virtually the Telangana Diagnostic Hub at the Government General Hospital here on June 27, according to the hospital incharge superintendent and RMO Dr Ravi Kumar said here on Monday.

With the help of the facility, patients can access at least 134 diagnostic tests free of cost.

So far the T-hub was conducting only 57 kinds of tests. In two or three days, their number would increase to 134.

Samples from the Area Hospitals, Community Health Centres, PHCs and urban clinics are being referred to the Telangana Diagnostic Hub. The results are being sent to the mobile phones of the patients.

Dr Ravi Kumar said that Harish Rao would inaugurate the Rs 25-lak phaco machine on the same day by the minister. The machine would be useful in performing cataract surgeries.

Country safe in Modi's hands: Union Minister

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

The country is safe in the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said Union Minister for Major Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey.

As part of Mahajan Sampark held at Kodur village in the rural district on Monday, he took part as the chief guest and addressed the beneficiaries of various Union government schemes. He said Modi stood by defence services personnel by giving them modern weapons.

During the Congress regime, there were instances of Indian

soldiers being beheaded. Moreover, terrorist attacks were more in Jammu and Kashmir during the UPA regime.

However, during the BJP regime, the Indian forces carried out surgical strikes in Pakistan crossing the LoC and the government successfully brought back Indian Air Force Pilot Abhinandan carefully from the clutches of the Pakistani army, he said.

If it were to be the Congress regime, the Defence Minister would have dashed letters to his Pakistani counterparts. Nothing would have progressed more than that, he



Union Minister for Major Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey speaking at a meeting at Kodur in Mahabubnagar on Monday

felt.

Wherever Modi went, the world nations were rolling out red carpet welcome to him, he said adding that Modi's motto

is to ensure the welfare of the poor, achieve growth and end corruption.

The Centre credited Rs 5 lakh crore into the bank

accounts of the farmers under the Kisan Samman scheme. A woman living on the Indo-Sino border was jubilant to say that the people of her village now drink safe drinking water in Modi's regime.

He appealed to the people to give their support to Modi to derive benefits from the Union Government.

Former Minister P Chandrasekhar, senior leader Guraju Rajender Reddy, BJP state executive member Padakula Balaraju, SP Venkatesh, district BJP president Veera Brahmachari and others were present.

Stone beads of early historical era found

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Kolipaka Srinivas, a young researcher member of the New Telangana History Team, identified a granite 'Rathi Pusa' at Nangunur in Siddipet district.

The beads are found in archaeological sites made of terracotta, semi-precious stones and bone. However, this is the first time that a gem made of granite stone was found in Telangana, he said.

In the past, many artefacts like clay bull's head and terracotta beads were found on Nangunur Patigadda. Now the gem has been found. It belongs to the first historical era i.e.

Sangareddy dist annual credit plan unveiled

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

A Rs 7,800 crore district credit plan has been approved for the year 2023-24, according to Additional Collector G Veera Reddy.

He was chairing a meeting of the DCC/DLRC meeting in his chambers in the Collectorate here on Monday. He released the credit plan on the occasion.

The priority sector lending during the year, including agriculture, commerce, education, housing loans and infrastructural development, has been pegged at Rs 6,565 crore, while the non-priority sector lending has been pegged at Rs 1,235 crore.

The annual credit plan gave top priority to the farm sector,



Sangareddy Additional Collector G Veera Reddy presiding over District Bankers meeting in Sangareddy on Monday

he said, adding that the crop loans would help farmers.

In all, Rs 4,147 crore have been allocated to the allied sectors of agriculture.

A total of Rs 516.60 crore has

been allocated for extending loans to micro industries and Rs 167.40 crore to medium-scale industries. The objective of the annual credit plan is to advance Rs 1010 crore towards

loans to the MSME sector. Further, Rs 85 crore would be advanced towards educational loans, Rs 1,270 crore would be lent under housing loans and Rs 46 crore for the development of basic amenities in society, Rs 7 crore would be lent for the development of renewable sources of energy and Rs 1235 crore towards crop loans.

He appealed to the bankers to cooperate with the district administration by reaching the targets to implement the credit plan. He appealed to them to work in coordination with district officials, especially agricultural and extension officers.

District Lead Bank Manager Gopal Reddy and others were present.

PNS ■ KAMAREDDY

Mudiraj Advocates Association has warned that the Mudiraj community will not spare anyone who tries to harm the community.

The Association leaders, Gajjala Bhikshapathi, Devuni Suryaprasad, Chintala Gopi Mudiraj, Nanda Ramesh Mudiraj, Bargav Bhupal, Pilla Yadagiri, told the media that BRS MLC Padi Kaushik Reddy had kidnapped a journalist, who belonging to the Mudiraj community, and subjected him to torture. The MLC also heaped insults on the community, they alleged.

The advocates appealed to the BRS leaders to expel Kaushik Reddy from the party and ensure that he is disqualified from the Legislative Council. They demanded that the police register case of



Mudiraj Association activists burning MLC Padi Kaushik Reddy effigy in Kamareddy on Monday

kidnap and attempt to murder on the MLC.

Meanwhile, State Mudiraj Association activists took out a procession with the effigy of Kaushik Reddy in the town. The activists demanded that the BRS expel the MLC from the party immediately. They raised slogans against the MLC. The

activists burnt the effigy.

Mudiraj Association district unit president Ramesh warned that the Mudiraj community would teach a lesson to the ruling party if the party leadership failed to take action against the MLC. They also demanded that the MLC tender an unconditional apology.

INDIA CORNER

Domestic helps loot jewellery, valuables after drugging family

Two domestic helps allegedly decamped with gold ornaments and other valuables from a house in the Civil Lines area here after drugging an elderly woman, his son and two other servants, police said on Monday. The incident took place in the late evening on June 22 when the duo -- Anita and Jagat -- served tea laced with sedatives to the complainant Navin Pal Singh Yadav, his mother and two other servants of the house around 9 pm, they added. Once the four persons started feeling dizzy, the accused broke open an almirah and began looting the jewellery and other valuables. Yadav went to his room upstairs around 9.40 pm after giving medicine to one of the servants who was feeling unwell after having the tea, the complaint said. Yadav spotted the accused duo in his room but could not catch them as he was feeling dizzy, the police said, adding that the entire incident was captured in the CCTV cameras installed in the house.



I-T dept tweaks disclosure norms for charitable institutions

The income tax department has tweaked disclosure norms for charitable institutions claiming I-T exemption by seeking additional details. As per amendments to the Income Tax Rules, which will come into effect from October 1, charitable institutions will have to now disclose whether the activities undertaken by them are charitable, religious or religious cum charitable. The amendment also includes a declaration under which the charitable institution will have to give details of donations received from a person in excess of Rs 2 lakh in a single day. The details to be furnished include the name of the payer, address, amount of payment and PAN (if available). Nangia Andersen LLP Partner Vishwas Panjari said the government had recently revamped the registration requirement applicable for charitable organisations for claiming tax exemption or obtaining an 80G certificate under the Act.



Ahmedabad to host U20 mayoral summit on July 7-8

Ahmedabad will host a two-day Urban20 mayoral summit from July 7 that is expected to bring together several city leaders and mayors from across G20 nations, the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry said on Monday. The ministry said that U20 is an engagement group under India's G20 presidency. It is a city diplomacy initiative, comprising cities from G20 countries, emphasising the role of cities in taking forward the global agenda for sustainable development through collaboration among cities. According to a statement, more than 20 mayors from across the world and about 25 mayors from Indian cities will share their experiences of their respective city-level actions and initiatives. Ahmedabad is the U20 Chair for the current sixth cycle and is supported by the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) as the Technical Secretariat, and MoHUA as the nodal ministry, it said.



AIR FRANCE CANCELS CONNECTING FLIGHT TO TORONTO

Many Indian passengers stranded at Paris airport

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Air France has said its flight from Paris to Toronto was cancelled due to a technical problem and unavailability of a new aircraft, amid many passengers, including those who travelled from India to take the connecting flight, getting stranded at Paris airport. In a tweet, Air France said it sincerely regrets the inconvenience caused by this situation and is doing its utmost to get customers to their final destination as quickly as possible. The airline's response was to a series of tweets by a Twitter user highlighting the issues being faced by the stranded Indian passengers at Paris airport. "We confirm that flight AF356 on June 24, 2023, from Paris Charles de Gaulle to Toronto had to be cancelled due to a technical problem and the unavailability of a new aircraft. Some customers without Schengen visas and therefore not allowed to leave the terminal building were taken care of and assisted by Air France



teams, and accommodated in a dedicated area of the airport. Air France sincerely regrets the inconvenience caused by this situation and is doing its utmost to get customers to their final destination as quickly as possible, the airline said. In a series of tweets, Paris-based journalist Noopur Tiwari said that for the record, passengers arrived in Paris on June 23 from Bombay on flight AF 217 and were to board AF 356 to Toronto, and the latter flight was cancelled. She also tweeted a statement quoting Indian Embassy in Paris as saying, "Embassy officials are on way to the airport to negotiate with Air France and airport authorities to arrive at an amicable settlement".

Armed forces being equipped with latest weaponry: Rajnath

PNS ■ JAMMU

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said the armed forces of the country are being equipped with latest weaponry, asserting that national security is the government's topmost priority and it is committed to protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of the country. Singh also said the country does not want to depend on imported weapons. The government's aim is to "Make in India, Make for the world", he said addressing a National Security Conclave here. "No stone is being left unturned to equip the military with latest weaponry and modern technology," he said, assuring the nation that the armed forces are fully capable of protecting the borders and the seas. "Our goal is to bring our armed forces in the frontline of modern militaries," he said. Elaborating on the blueprint on national security, Singh said Prime Minister



Narendra Modi-led government has been working on four directive principles which include enabling the country to deal with threats to its security and sovereignty and to take every action to protect national interests. To create safe conditions within the country to facilitate progress, improve the lives of the people and fulfil their aspirations and to build an environment with friendly countries to tackle global challenges such as terrorism unilaterally are the other two principles, the minister said. "India does not want to depend on imported weapons. Our national security will only strengthen when we become self-reliant in defence manufacturing. Our aim is to Make in India, Make for the world. Our efforts are bearing fruit," he said. The defence minister said India is manufacturing tanks, aircraft carriers, submarines and various kinds of weapons with its defence exports crossing Rs 16,000 crore from a meagre Rs 900 crore before 2014. "The exports will touch the Rs 20,000-crore mark in the next few months," he said. Singh also enumerated the structural reforms undertaken by the government, including the appointment of Chief of Defence Staff and setting up of the Department of Military Affairs. "The government continues to move forward, and work is being done to set up theatre commands, which will be another revolutionary reform," he said.

MODI'S VISIT TO US, EGYPT

Important milestone in India's diplomacy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visits to the US and Egypt an "important milestone" in India's diplomacy, Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Monday said the grand welcome that he received in the two countries was a recognition of his efforts to take the country to a "greater height" in geopolitics. The US, which is an economic superpower and has a distinct identity in the world order, accepted India as "an equal partner" and entered into agreements under which the two countries will work together, Vaishnaw told a press conference at the BJP headquarters here. "That is a major and a very big achievement," he added. Prime Minister Modi returned to India on Sunday night after his six-day state visits to the US and Egypt. Modi's US visit was marked



by several major deals to boost cooperation in key areas such as defence, space, technology and trade. In Egypt, the prime minister held talks with President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and discussed ways to further strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries with a focus on improving trade and investments, energy ties and people-to-people cooperation. The two countries elevated their relationship to a "strategic partnership". Egyptian President El-Sisi also conferred PM Modi with the 'Order of the Nile' award, the highest state honour of Egypt. "The way our prime minister was accorded a grand welcome, his programmes were held and the bilateral decisions were taken... All that was recognition of the efforts that the prime minister has taken over the nine years of term to place India at a greater height in geopolitics," Vaishnaw said.

PREZ, PM OFFER CONDOLENCES

Rajya Sabha MP Hardwar Dubey dies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hardwar Dubey, a BJP Rajya Sabha MP from Uttar Pradesh, has died at a private hospital here, sources said on Monday. He was 74. He was admitted to Fortis Escorts Heart Institute on June 12 and breathed his last there, sources at the facility said. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled his death. "Deeply saddened by the demise of hardworking BJP MP Hardwar Dubey ji. He was such a grassroots leader, who will always be remembered for his important contribution in the development journey of Uttar Pradesh. May God give strength to his family and admirers in this hour of grief. Om Shanti," Modi said in a tweet. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also expressed grief, saying Dubey's death is very saddening. "My condolences are with the bereaved family members. May Lord Shri Ram grant the departed soul a place at his holy feet and give strength to the bereaved family members to bear this immense sorrow. Om Shanti," Adityanath said in a tweet in Hindi.



12 wedding guests killed in bus accident in Odisha

PNS ■ BHERAMPUR (ODISHA)

Twelve members of a marriage party were killed and seven others injured as two buses collided head-on in Odisha's Ganjam district, police said on Monday. The accident occurred late Sunday night near Digapahandi area on Berhampur-Taptapani road, around 35 km from here, when the private bus with the wedding guests on board collided with a state-run OSRTC (Odisha State Road Transport Corporation) bus, Berhampur Superintendent of Police Saravana Vivek M said. After attending a wedding ceremony at Berhampur, they were returning to Khandadeuli near Digapahandi when the two buses crashed. President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed grief over the death of people in the accident and wished for the speedy recovery of those injured. PM Modi and the chief minister announced ex gratia to the next of kin of each deceased. "Pained by the bus accident in Ganjam district, Odisha. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs 50,000," the Prime Minister's Office tweeted. Patnaik also announced an ex gratia of Rs 3 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased and free treatment of injured persons. He also asked state Finance Minister B K Arukha to rush to the accident site. Eleven of the 12 deceased in the tragic bus accident were relatives of former MP Renubala Pradhan who rushed to the accident site.

Wife entitled for equal share in property: Madras HC

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The Madras High Court has ruled that a wife is entitled to equal share in the property bought by her husband and said the many roles played by her cannot be less equated with the 8-hour job of the husband. Justice Krishnan Ramasamy gave the order recently over a property dispute involving a couple, with the original appellant, since deceased. He claimed ownership for the property, while alleging she was also involved in an extramarital affair. His children were later impleaded in the case following his death. The judge said the defendant woman being a homemaker, though she did not make any direct financial contribution, she played a vital role in managing the household chores by looking after the children, cooking, cleaning and managing day-to-day affairs of the family without giving any inconvenience to the plaintiff who had gone abroad for work. "And moreover, she sacrificed her dreams and spent her entire life towards the family and children," the court noted. "In generality of marriages, the wife bears and rears children and minds the home. She thereby frees her husband for his economic activities. Since it is her performance of her function which enables the husband to perform his, she is in justice, entitled to share in its fruits," the judge observed. A wife, being a homemaker performs many tasks -- a Manager, Chef, "Home Doctor" and also "Home Economist" with financial skills, the judge

said. "Therefore, by performing these skills, a wife makes the home as a comfortable environment and her contribution towards the family, and certainly it is not a valueless job, but it is a job doing for 24 hours without holidays, which cannot be less equated with that of the job of an earning husband who works only for 8 hours," he said. When the husband and wife are treated as two wheels of a family cart, then the contribution made either by the husband by earning or the wife by serving and looking after the family and children, would be for the welfare of the family and both are entitled equally to whatever they earned by their joint effort, the court added. "The proper presumption is that the beneficial interest belongs to them jointly. The property may be purchased either in the name of husband or wife alone, but nevertheless, it is purchased with the monies saved by their joint efforts," the judge said. In the present case, if the first defendant/wife was not there, certainly, the plaintiff (deceased man) would not have gone abroad and earned all the money, the court said and ordered equal share for either in certain immovable property.



Wrestlers move court against Brij

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The female wrestlers, who have accused outgoing WFI chief Brij Bhusan Sharan Singh of sexual harassment, moved a Delhi court on Monday seeking copy of the charge sheet filed against him. The city police had filed a charge sheet against Singh, also a BJP MP, under sections 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 354A (sexual harassment), 354-D (stalking) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC on June 15. Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) Harjeet



Singh Jaspal, who is scheduled to take up the charge sheet for consideration tomorrow, directed the lawyer for the complainants to apply for a certified copy at the court's copying agency. The charge sheet also named Vinod Tomar, the suspended

alleged instances of sexual harassment like inappropriate touching, groping, stalking and intimidation by Singh at different times and places over a decade. In the minor's case, the Delhi Police had on June 15 filed a final report seeking cancellation of the FIR. A cancellation report is filed in cases where police fail to find corroborative evidence after due investigation. In a startling revelation, the father of the minor wrestler had told PTI that he and his daughter had filed a "false" police complaint of sexual harassment against Singh because they wanted to get back at him for perceived injustice against the girl. Both the FIRs narrate several

Nagpur prof loses more than Rs 37 lakh to 'task fraud'

PNS ■ NAGPUR

A professor at an engineering college in Maharashtra's Nagpur allegedly lost Rs 37.48 lakh to cyber fraudsters in a "task scam", police said on Monday. Based on a complaint lodged by the woman, the Mankapur police have registered a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and Information Technology (IT) Act, an official said. The fraud took place between May 8 and June 22, he said.

Biparjoy longest duration cyclone since 1977

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cyclone Biparjoy, which wreaked havoc in Gujarat earlier this month, was the longest duration cyclonic storm in the northern Indian Ocean since 1977, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Monday. Biparjoy, the first cyclonic storm over the Arabian Sea this year, originated over the southeast Arabian Sea on June 6 and had landfall over Saurashtra and Kutch on June 15 before weakening into a depression on

AT 13 DAYS AND 3 HOURS

June 18. The cyclonic storm had a total life of 13 days and three hours (depression to depression), more than double the average life of severe cyclonic storms of six days and three hours over the Arabian Sea, the IMD said in a report on Monday. The longest duration cyclone over the north Indian Ocean had developed over the Bay of Bengal and weakened over the Arabian Sea between November 8-23, 1977 with a life period of 14 days and six hours. In recent years, extremely severe cyclonic storm Kyarr (October, 2019) over Arabian Sea had a life period of nine days and 15 hours, while very severe cyclonic storm Gaja (November, 2018) over Bay of Bengal had a life period of nine days and 15 hours. Biparjoy also changed tracks nine times in its 2,525-km run making it difficult for meteorologists to predict the path of the cyclone. It had also intensified into an extremely severe cyclonic storm on June 11, but weakened to a very severe cyclonic storm (VSCS) by landfall four days later. The weather office said Biparjoy moved very slowly during its lifetime with an average 12 hourly translation-



al speed of 7.7 km per hour against the average speed for VSCS category during monsoon season over the Arabian Sea of about 15 km per hour based on data during 1990-2013. The weather system intensified rapidly in the genesis and growing stage on June 6-7, but later fluctuated diurnally. "The convective clouds associated with the system showed large diurnal variations, picking up intensity twice in the afternoon and early hours," the IMD said.

Fadnavis dares Uddhav to release details of family properties

PNS ■ CHANDRAPUR

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has dared Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray to put details of his family's properties in the public domain. Fadnavis and Thackeray have been trading barbs after the BJP leader termed the meeting held in Patna last week as the gathering of parties with an agenda to save their "families and dynasties". Speaking in Chandrapur on Sunday night, Fadnavis reiterated that the work done by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last nine years forced the "family-centric" parties to come under one roof to save their political heirs. He was addressing BJP leaders and others at an event to mark the Modi government's completion of nine years in power. A book titled 'Architect of New India' (Marathi version), written by BJP leader and state

minister Sudhir Mungantiwar was released on the occasion. "The work of PM Modi has forced the family-dominated parties to gather under one roof to save their dynasties at Patna. The meeting's agenda was not to remove Modi from power but to save their families," Fadnavis claimed. He asked whether leaders like Sonia Gandhi, Sharad Pawar, and Uddhav Thackeray are more concerned about their children or about India.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Russian roulette

The coup attempt, though now neutralised, gives an idea of what is going on in Russia

The attempted coup in Russia has sent shockwaves through the international community, raising concerns about stability in the region and fate of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The attempted overthrow of President Vladimir Putin's Government holds significant implications for the dynamics of the war and poses a profound threat to his grip on power. Yevgeny Prigozhin, the architect of the coup, was once close to Putin but has a longstanding disdain for the Defence Minister who, he thinks, has misled Putin and the nation on Ukraine. Wagner, the private army of Prigozhin, was about to invade Russia but its campaign has since ended. Prigozhin, a billionaire who runs a private army business, had been contemplating a mutiny for some time. Once a confidant of Putin, he marched with his mercenaries towards Moscow but a deal seems to have halted the campaign. However, there is currently no knowledge of Prigozhin's whereabouts. It seems unlikely that he and Putin can co-exist for long, even if Prigozhin agrees to stay in Minsk. The Wagner chief has become a rival, and a possible post-Putin President. The attempt may be over for now, but Russia is entering another unpredictable phase. The coup attempt can be attributed to a deep-seated dissatisfaction among certain factions within Russia. Widespread corruption, economic stagnation and diminishing civil liberties have fuelled public anger, leading to increased opposition to Putin's regime.



The discontent within the Russian political elite has intensified as different factions vie for power and influence, seeking to capitalise on the perceived vulnerabilities of the incumbent government. The protracted conflict with Ukraine has strained Russia's resources, both financially and militarily, and further eroded public support for Putin's policies. The coup attempt adds a new layer of instability to an already volatile situation in the region. A successful coup, if and when it comes along, could prompt a change in Russia's priorities and foreign policy approach. New leadership might reassess the costs and benefits of the conflict, potentially seeking a diplomatic solution or reducing the intensity of Russia's involvement. This shift could provide an opportunity for de-escalation of the conflict. Prigozhin's attempt also exposes deep divisions within the Russian political establishment. This internal fragmentation could hinder Russia's ability to pursue a unified approach to the Ukraine conflict, potentially weakening its overall position and diminishing its influence on the international stage. If left unaddressed, these factors could eventually undermine Putin's authority and lead to further challenges to his rule. To secure his position, Putin will likely resort to tightening control, suppressing dissent and potentially adopting more hardline measures. As the situation unfolds, it is crucial for the international community to closely monitor the developments and seek opportunities for dialogue and de-escalation.

The direct consequence of the Emergency was the suspension of various democratic rights. Many draconian laws were enacted during this period, posing a serious threat to democratic values. It adversely impacted civil liberties. All the fundamental rights listed in Articles 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 42 were suspended. Fear was all-pervasive. Uncertainty had gripped us. The entire country had become a de facto prison. At that time I was working as a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Pracharak for Nizamabad and Adilabad zone, belonging to the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh, now in Telangana. I had come to know that all my colleagues had been arrested. The Lok Sangharsh Samiti had been formed to carry out the agitation against Emergency. JP Narayan was spearheading the movement. I used to wear a kurta and pyjamas but had to go to pants, a shirt, coat and tie. I did not go for any haircut. I changed my name to Dharmendra and went underground and kept mobilising people for agitation against the Emergency. At that time all newspapers were censored and only government news was published. So, we started a bulletin with facts and distributed it among the people secretly. I would like to share with readers some incidents and horrible experiences we underwent during the Emergency. We had called some people to gather at Ramalaya temple in Nizamabad for a secret meeting. It was also an occasion to celebrate the marriage of engineer Venkateshwar Reddy. Around 300 people came. I and ABVP worker Indrasen Reddy alias Jaan were getting ready for the meeting. But cops in devotees' clothes were looking for us. They inquired from the people what was going on, and were told that Satyanarayana Vratha had been organised. When we moved towards the meeting hall, they followed us. Left with no option, I and Reddy jumped off from the 20ft temple wall. Though Reddy was alright, I sustained an ankle injury.

The darkest phase of our democracy

The Emergency is etched in the memory of the nation as its darkest hour. Many individuals paid the price of upholding democracy and its values



BANDARU DATTATRAYA

In the Independent history of India, June 25, 1975, was the darkest day, which will haunt generations to come. The direct consequence of the Emergency was the suspension of various democratic rights. Many draconian laws were enacted during this period, posing a serious threat to democratic values. It adversely impacted civil liberties. All the fundamental rights listed in Articles 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, and 42 were suspended. Fear was all-pervasive. Uncertainty had gripped us. The entire country had become a de facto prison. At that time I was working as a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Pracharak for Nizamabad and Adilabad zone, belonging to the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh, now in Telangana. I had come to know that all my colleagues had been arrested. The Lok Sangharsh Samiti had been formed to carry out the agitation against Emergency. JP Narayan was spearheading the movement. I used to wear a kurta and pyjamas but had to go to pants, a shirt, coat and tie. I did not go for any haircut. I changed my name to Dharmendra and went underground and kept mobilising people for agitation against the Emergency. At that time all newspapers were censored and only government news was published. So, we started a bulletin with facts and distributed it among the people secretly. I would like to share with readers some incidents and horrible experiences we underwent during the Emergency. We had called some people to gather at Ramalaya temple in Nizamabad for a secret meeting. It was also an occasion to celebrate the marriage of engineer Venkateshwar Reddy. Around 300 people came. I and ABVP worker Indrasen Reddy alias Jaan were getting ready for the meeting. But cops in devotees' clothes were looking for us. They inquired from the people what was going on, and were told that Satyanarayana Vratha had been organised. When we moved towards the meeting hall, they followed us. Left with no option, I and Reddy jumped off from the 20ft temple wall. Though Reddy was alright, I sustained an ankle injury.



I and Indrasen Reddy ran away to a bus stop 20 km away. We reached our secret place in Hyderabad from Medak district, now in Telangana. At the temple, police arrested some people and inquired about us. Police asked them where Bandaru Dattatraya was. The situation was terrible. A large number of people had been arrested and harassed. Still, we were not demoralised. We continued with our agitation and mobilising the people. Finally, we reached the Bellampally mining area. Warangal Vibhag Pramukh Shridhar Ji was with me. We were having a meal at a small hotel when the police took us into custody. They took us to the police station and started questioning us. Within a few hours, Shridhar disclosed his identity but I did not say anything. I was quite determined not to disclose my identity. The police kept me in another room. Shridhar was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and was sent to Warangal Jail.

However, the police were not ready to give up on my case. They continued questioning and torturing me. Police wanted to know: How many more friends were in my group? Where were their hideouts? Where is your printing press? What is the source of finances? What is your communication network? For three days, I did not share anything with them. One day, Murali, a head constable from Adilabad, came to the police station. He hailed me as he knew me: "How are you, Dattatraya Garu?" Everybody in the police team was astonished. They tortured me and warned me of severe action and even electric shocks, but I did not reveal anything to them. At last, they arrested me under the MISA and sent me to Chanchalguda Central Jail, Hyderabad. In jail, I met people of different ideologies and even Naxalites, who had been arrested under MISA. Former Union Ministers Bangaru Laxman, A Narendra, N Narasimha Reddy, former Labour Minister of Telangana, Mohammad Abdul Aziz, chief of Andhra Pradesh unit of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Chera-banda Raju and Varavara Rao were also in our jail. There were others as well belonging to different ideologies and outfits, including Anand Marg, but all united in protesting against the Emergency. I discussed issues of national importance and challenges arising out of the Emergency for democracy with different people. I also studied a lot. Meanwhile, my elder brother Manik Prabhu expired due to jaundice. I was allowed to take part in his funeral under police escort. Later, I got one month's parole as well. In jail, every week my mother late Eshwaramma used to come to meet me with fruits and eatables. She used to sell onions at Osmangunj market as a small vendor. Every time her visit used to give encouragement and confidence to fight for democratic values. One day my mother's brother — my maternal uncle — came to her. He told her that if I give an undertaking not to do such things, he shall be able to get me pardoned. But my mother did not accept his condition. She said: "My son has not done anything wrong. He is fighting for a greater cause of the nation." My mother told me this during a jail visit. Even the police officer, who used to accompany her during the meeting, was surprised to hear her words. He just folded his hands in respect. Though my mother had not studied at all, she was very much influenced by the dedication and work culture of the Sangh people. (The author is the Governor of Haryana. The views are strictly personal)

I and Indrasen Reddy ran away to a bus stop 20 km away. We reached our secret place in Hyderabad from Medak district, now in Telangana. At the temple, police arrested some people and inquired about us. Police asked them where Bandaru Dattatraya was. The situation was terrible. A large number of people had been arrested and harassed. Still, we were not demoralised. We continued with our agitation and mobilising the people. Finally, we reached the Bellampally mining area. Warangal Vibhag Pramukh Shridhar Ji was with me. We were having a meal at a small hotel when the police took us into custody. They took us to the police station and started questioning us. Within a few hours, Shridhar disclosed his identity but I did not say anything. I was quite determined not to disclose my identity. The police kept me in another room. Shridhar was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and was sent to Warangal Jail.



A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAD BEEN ARRESTED AND HARASSED. BUT WE WEREN'T DEMORALISED. WE CONTINUED WITH OUR AGITATION AND MOBILISING OF THE PEOPLE

press? What is the source of finances? What is your communication network? For three days, I did not share anything with them. One day, Murali, a head constable from Adilabad, came to the police station. He hailed me as he knew me: "How are you, Dattatraya Garu?" Everybody in the police team was astonished. They tortured me and warned me of severe action and even electric shocks, but I did not reveal anything to them. At last, they arrested me under the MISA and sent me to Chanchalguda Central Jail, Hyderabad. In jail, I met people of different ideologies and even Naxalites, who had been arrested under MISA. Former Union Ministers Bangaru Laxman, A Narendra, N Narasimha Reddy, former Labour Minister of Telangana, Mohammad Abdul Aziz, chief of Andhra Pradesh unit of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Chera-banda Raju and Varavara Rao were also in our jail. There were others as well belonging to different ideologies and outfits, including Anand Marg, but all united in protesting against the Emergency. I discussed issues of national importance and challenges arising out of the Emergency for democracy with different people. I also studied a lot. Meanwhile, my elder brother Manik Prabhu expired due to jaundice. I was allowed to take part in his funeral under police escort. Later, I got one month's parole as well. In jail, every week my mother late Eshwaramma used to come to meet me with fruits and eatables. She used to sell onions at Osmangunj market as a small vendor. Every time her visit used to give encouragement and confidence to fight for democratic values. One day my mother's brother — my maternal uncle — came to her. He told her that if I give an undertaking not to do such things, he shall be able to get me pardoned. But my mother did not accept his condition. She said: "My son has not done anything wrong. He is fighting for a greater cause of the nation." My mother told me this during a jail visit. Even the police officer, who used to accompany her during the meeting, was surprised to hear her words. He just folded his hands in respect. Though my mother had not studied at all, she was very much influenced by the dedication and work culture of the Sangh people. (The author is the Governor of Haryana. The views are strictly personal)

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PICTALK



An installation depicting a sea turtle made from used plastic bottles at Edward Elliot's Beach, in Chennai

Global collaboration will revolutionise education

International collaboration in New Education Policy (NEP) may change the educational paradigm of the country

In recent years, international collaborations in education have been on the rise, and so is the case with India. Such collaborations allow teachers, students, administrators, institutions and universities to compare, exchange and collaborate on a range of emerging educational, scientific, technological and teaching issues and methodologies to create an effective and contemporary system of education to cater to the newer needs of the youth. Such collaborations don't just open up the window to the world-class education system, they also offer a better international, social, cultural, economic and geopolitical understanding to the students, besides generating a sense of empathy and new skill sets in the youth. It is encouraging that the Government of India has made a number of strides in the recent past. On the one hand, it brought into force the New Education Policy (NEP) to change the educational paradigm of the country, it goes on to collaborate with top institutions and universities of the world to make the educational system competi-



Education Minister held a meeting with the US Secretary of Commerce with a focus on forging stronger linkages in the skilling sector. The collaborations aim to strengthen institutional mechanisms for making the Indian skill ecosystem more vibrant as well as for building the workforce of the future with a focus on 3S-Skilling, Start-ups and SMEs. Just a couple of days earlier, India and Australia also signed an ambitious agreement, which will help ease the mobility of students and professionals between the two countries. They also agreed to establish a joint task force for mutual recognition of qualifications, which covers both education and skill qualifications of the two countries and will help facilitate two-way mobility of young people for education and employment purposes. Earlier, known for its best school education, Finland evinced interest to collaborate with India on the knowledge front. India can benefit from Finland's best practices in ECCE, teacher training, and digital education among others. Finnish Universities may also collaborate with Indian

Higher Education Institutions through joint, dual degrees and winning programs. Moreover, research also suggests that those having had their education from international universities are better able to adapt to changes at the fast face and adapt to the changing realities and circumstances. They find more similarities than differences with students from other parts of the world, hence working effortlessly with them. They are also better prepared to discover new career avenues and opportunities than their counterparts receiving education domestically. International collaboration can be extremely rewarding for schools, especially in less developed and developing countries. India still faces a shortage of quality teachers and teaching methodologies to rise to the occasion. Here, such relations and collaborations may prove highly fruitful, as they allow teachers to learn newer things by questioning their incumbent process, practices and notions, reinvent themselves and adopt new strategies. (The writer is a senior journalist)



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

AWAY FROM PROPAGANDA FILMS

Sir — In the unfolding tapestry of recent years, Bollywood has undergone a profound metamorphosis, evolving into a captivating platform that some discern as a vessel propelling the agenda of the ruling party. This trajectory commenced with the advent of a biopic depicting the esteemed Prime Minister, masterfully portrayed by Vivek Oberoi and, since then, this trend has shown an unwavering determination to persist. Films such as *Uri, Kashmir Files* and *Kerala Story* serve as apt examples of this shift, deftly navigating the cinematic landscape to subtly or overtly cast specific communities in the role of antagonists.

However, it is the audacious production of 'Adipurush' that has ventured even further beyond the confines of convention, transcending ordinary limits with unprecedented fervour. The fact that a Chief Minister hailing from the Bharatiya Janata Party has bestowed his blessings upon this cinematic endeavour raises inquisitive eyebrows and further kindles the swirling controversy enveloping these ventures. In stark contrast to the earlier films, which deftly balanced the dual goals of entertaining audiences while delivering profound social messages, the current panorama of Bollywood appears to be increasingly characterised by the crafting of propaganda-laden cinematic spectacles, artfully interweaving political motives with controversial narratives. Md Imdadullah | Muzaffarpur

MANIPULATING THE PREAMBLE

Sir — This refers to your report 'Maya flays Telangana CM for tampering with Preamble' (June 25). BSP honcho Mayawati's allegation that the words 'secular' and 'socialist' are deleted from the Preamble of the Constitution printed on the cover of the social science book of Class 10 published by the Telangana state education board is to be viewed seriously for substantial reasons. Overtly, this deletion is not accidental or inadvertent, but emphatically a deliberate negligence apparently to facilitate vested interests.

Letters to the Editor

Titanic adventure claims five lives



The underwater adventure which ended with the lives of five explorers while on an expedition to the Titanic shipwreck is a matter of concern and raises many questions. The remains of the Titanic, which sank on its maiden voyage in 1912, were found in 1985 and the ship remains an attraction for nautical experts and underwater tourists. The search for the missing submersible, the Titan, grew increasingly desperate since Thursday, when its estimated 96-hour air supply had been expected to run out. The outpouring of shock and grief was massive all over the world for the lives lost and the adventure gone all horribly wrong, especially in the light of reports that the company operating the submersible may have cut corners on safety. The debris was located by a remote-controlled underwater search vehicle (ROV); separate pieces were discovered that allowed authorities to confirm they came from the Titan, including a tail cone, but the bodies are yet to be recovered. Even the most reliable of technologies can fail against adverse natural circumstances and, therefore, accidents will keep happening. With the growth in deep sea tourism, we must be aware of more tragic incidents like this. A recent example is of the train accident in Odisha where 275 persons died. Even earlier, there were accidents on a ropeway in Uttarakhand, Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Here, the question arises who is liable for the disaster and while the assumption would be that OceanGate will be held responsible for whatever happened to the five passengers, legal technicalities around the Titan complicate the situation. OceanGate, a Washington-based company, routinely asked all its passengers to sign waiver forms releasing them of any responsibility, even in death, before embarking on the deep-sea expedition. Also, questions about Titan's safety were raised in 2018 during a symposium of submersible industry experts and in a lawsuit by OceanGate's former head of marine operations, which was settled later that year. Yash Pal Raihan | Jalandhar

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Her claim that the Telangana regime has tampered with the Constitution is to be considered for tangible causes. Secularism is the backbone of our democracy and the removal of the word 'secular' from the Preamble of the Constitution virtually jeopardises the secularist status of the country. The Union Government should not hesitate to initiate appropriate action against the political/bureaucratic authorities concerned. Thomas KM | Muvattupuzha

Opposition should strive for a shared vision that challenges the BJP's perspective. Anti-communal polarisation, unemployment benefits, old age pensions, women's welfare and affordable education and healthcare are components of this shared vision. Secondly, electoral understanding at the state level is vital. The Opposition must recognise the significance of strategic cooperation; state-specific alliances will be crucial for maximising their chances of success. Despite potential leadership concerns, the primary objective should be a unified message of inclusivity, secularism and national care. Vishal Mayur | Tumkur

OPPN MUST ACT RESPONSIBLY

Sir — The meeting of 17 Opposition parties on June 23 is a crucial moment in Indian politics. To succeed, they must address two crucial aspects. Firstly, national programmatic unity is crucial. The

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN CLAIM THE UNCLAIMED DEPOSITS

If you identify an account that belongs to you, you can claim the balance



S KALYANASUNDARAM

If you identify any account that belongs to you, then you can claim the balance

The Reserve Bank of India is on a mission mode to make the banks identify the beneficiaries of unclaimed deposit accounts and settle the dues. Banks classify accounts under operative, inoperative and unclaimed.

Operative and Inoperative accounts

A saving, as well as a current account, is classified as 'inoperative' or 'dormant' if there are no transactions in the account for over a period of two years. Interest credited by the bank on the balance in the account and any charges debited by the bank is not considered transactions for this purpose.

Unclaimed Deposits

Further balances in savings / current accounts which are not operated for 10 years, or term deposits not claimed within 10 years from the date of maturity are classified as "Unclaimed Deposits".

Unclaimed deposits transferred to RBI

Balances in unclaimed deposits are transferred to the "Depositor Education and Awareness" (DEA) Fund maintained by the Reserve Bank of India. Recently, the Reserve Bank has also announced the setting up of a Centralised Web portal for the public to search unclaimed deposits across multiple banks.

A new initiative by RBI

The Reserve Bank of India has announced a '100 Days 100 Pays' campaign for banks to trace and settle the top 100 unclaimed deposits of every bank in every district of the country within 100 days. This campaign will start on 1st June 2023.



Why unclaimed deposits?

There are various reasons the customers leave their deposit accounts without operating for a long time. Account holders shift their residence from one town to another town or from one place to another place within the same town or city. Sometimes fixed deposit receipts are misplaced and the depositor could have lost track of the deposit.

How to trace unclaimed deposits?

Individual banks have provided search facilities on their website. As mentioned earlier, the RBI is trying to provide a separate portal for all the banks. Until that materializes, one has to verify bank-wise. The search facility is also not uniform across banks. For example, the Indian Bank website mandates you to provide just the name of the account holder. When you search, you will get details of the address and signatory, which you can match.

The Punjab National Bank portal has made feeding address details optional. The State Bank of India portal has made it mandatory to provide the address. But even if you provide the name of the city or town, it opens and provides details. There is no need to feed the complete address. The Bank of Baroda portal allows you to search by providing your name or address or even an authorized signatory. This seems to be more user-friendly.

One is also not sure whether all the banks have provided this facility as one notices that banks like UCO have not made it available on its website. Such banks just provide a PDF file containing all the names and one has to use Control-Find to search. It is time for RBI to ask banks to provide it in a user-friendly format.

(The writer is a retired banker)

Equip SMEs with a robust export policy



AS MITTAL

Educating SMEs about the global value chain and applying best practices will help them grow their business by strengthening their e-commerce platform



Cross-border trade is an area with great potential. As the fourth digital business revolution begins, e-commerce is democratizing global markets by opening the door for SMEs to do e-business wherever they are. Referring to the digital revolution AI (Artificial Intelligence) while addressing the US Congress during his recent visit to US, Prime Minister Narendra Modi defined AI as -America and India. Hope AI partnership potential rises to the next level and will also fuel the e-commerce export potential for Indian SMEs. The bone of the debate is how India can use it with its size and capabilities. India's current e-commerce exports are still well below their potential. E-commerce exports are only \$2 billion, which is less than half per cent of \$447.46 billion exports in 2022-23.

It is estimated that global e-commerce exports will reach \$2 trillion by 2025. To explore the potential of e-commerce in the range of \$200 billion to \$ 250 billion by 2030, India needs to solve the SME exporter's problems by formulating an E-Commerce Export policy.

However, the new Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 reflects India's ambition to become an export hub and provides some measures for e-commerce exports. FTP took several initiatives to increase the value limit of exports through couriers by increasing e-commerce exports from Rs 5 lakhs to Rs 10 lakhs per shipment. E-commerce through "Dak Niryat Kendra" to SMEs providing outreach services from states like Punjab and other external border regions to access international markets.

The current regulations place a heavy burden on exporters. The backbone of the Indian economy is 64 million small and medium-sized businesses, which account for 45% of Indian production and 40% of exports. But there are no relevant laws.

WHY A SEPARATE E-COMMERCE EXPORT POLICY?

Since the requirements for e-commerce exports are very different from those for general commodity exports, the e-commerce export policy should be a stand-alone document covering all aspects of legal compliance. E-commerce exporters face many challenges, from return policies to payment and compliance issues, and 90% of e-commerce exporters in India are small and medium-sized businesses. To this end, FISME (Indian Small and Medium Enterprises Federation) has conducted detailed studies on the e-commerce export policies of some major countries promoting the e-commerce export business.



AT FIRST, CHINA DOMINATED CROSS-BORDER E-TRADE, BUT NOW EVEN COUNTRIES LIKE VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA HAVE SURPASSED CHINA

(The author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika Group, Vice Chairman of Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board. Views expressed are personal)

India's SMEs are waiting for the special e-commerce export policy to be enacted as the draft was placed in the public domain in 2019. Since then, the business has grown in many ways but is looking to create a good environment to promote e-exports. The e-commerce export policies of China, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and other countries have helped many small and medium-sized businesses to sell worldwide.

At first, China dominated cross-border e-trade, but now even countries like Vietnam and Cambodia have surpassed China because their banks, customs and shipping in the middle are more synchronized for any type of fast international trade. The E-Commerce policy has to align with the amendments proposed in the Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Law of 2020 by the Department of consumer affairs. In addition to the Direct Foreign Trade Law and the Consumer Protection Law, e-commerce is also regulated by the Information Technology Act and the Competition Act.

The 25% discount limit is limited to e-commerce sales, discounts and returns. Exporters must have annual turnover and all import restrictions must be lifted. These exporters can be facilitated with separate customs clearance regimes for their goods, waive import duties on rejected goods, and treat returned goods as non-commercial goods, reducing costs and expediting the delivery of goods worldwide. It is

GREEN CHANNEL NEEDED

It is important to synchronize the entire ecosystem. The e-commerce export policy should be

jointly formulated by the customs and the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) after necessary changes in their regulations, including redefining the responsibilities of sellers and simplifying payment facilitation, accounts and procedures. National Trade Ecosystem to bring together the RBI, Customs, DGFT, GSTN, India Post, couriers, e-commerce companies and the user to form a centralized technology platform as a single green channel for e-commerce exports, simple documentation and customs clearance for shipments to ensure delivery on time. Another major issue is certificate compatibility. Anyone entering the e-commerce business should be familiar with e-commerce, e-payment, e-signature, e-shipping and other digital solutions.

SMEs rely on online platforms for value-added services such as international expansion and on-time payment guarantees. However, it is said this is against FEMA (Exchange Administration Act) regulations as the platform is responsible for collecting payments while ownership of the product remains with the seller. Refunds are a major issue for third-party e-commerce exporters, and RBI guidelines for business-to-business (B2B) exporters need to be revised accordingly.

It also needs to protect unknown small businesses from cyber scams. States can work with Districts Industries Centers (DICs) to establish Export Facilitation Cells (EFCs) to identify products and markets and meet export compliances. There is no doubt that cross-border e-trade can play a major role in helping India to achieve the one trillion US dollar export milestone. The E-commerce domestic market size of \$22 billion in 2019, grew to \$49 billion in 2022 and is expected to grow to \$60 billion in 2023.

customary and allows these exporters to refund.

India allows 100% FDI in the e-commerce model but does not allow FDI in the inventory-based model. Sometimes sellers-commerce and e-commerce platforms ignore rules that prohibit high discounts and seller privileges. They also tried to clarify the rules for foreign direct investment in e-commerce.

THE WAY FORWARD

Hope AI (America, India) mutual trust sharing has an opportunity to support our SMEs exports and level the playing field through an e-commerce export policy. Educating SMEs about the global value chain and applying best practices will help them grow their business by strengthening their e-commerce platform.

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The e-commerce domestic market performance over the past three years proves beyond any doubt that at a certain level of confidence and certainty in the robust ecosystem which builds a broader base for a good market of e-commerce, no stone to be left untouched as Indian SMEs are poised to become the global market leaders.

PM Modi makes valuable connections on his US visit

Modi's State visit has strengthened the ties between the two countries and reinforced his association with the diaspora and business leaders

The Indian Diaspora in countries like the U.S., U.K., and Australia has become a robust and influential community. Modi has been working to win over this community even as Gujarat's chief minister. He has continued to build strong relationships with them in countries like America, Great Britain, and Australia, which has proven beneficial. Prime Minister was pleased that he received top honours from Washington. It included a state dinner at the White House, prestigious guest accommodations at the Blair House, and an opportunity to address the U.S. Congress for the second time in nine years.

Modi's cooperation with the U.S. has increased despite a previous visa denial. It was



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. Views are personal)

due to India's growing economy, strong military and educated immigrant workforce. The ties have moved from a non-interference policy of PM Nehru to this more engaged approach. Over the decades, the BJP has built a powerful overseas lobby. "The Friends of BJP" is an influential organization in America. From the 60s, the Hindu Swayam Sevak Sangh had been functioning in the U.S. as the Sangh Parivar's overseas outfit.

During the earlier BJP regime, the diaspora received increased recognition. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee initiated the Pravasi Divas and conferred honours upon Indian Americans. He also appointed an NRI as a roving ambassador. Nevertheless, the U.S. gov-

ernment declined to acknowledge a second envoy. Modi pampered them by providing many facilities, like a more accessible visa regime and an Overseas Indian card. The Diaspora wants voting rights, but this will take a long time.

Throughout his speeches, including his address to the U.S. Congress, Modi expressed great admiration for Indian Americans. He presented India as a rapidly growing global power. Instilling a sense of national pride in them, he used their support to strengthen his constituency in India.

Indian Americans responded by showing up in large numbers to interact with Modi. They chanted slogans such as 'Modi Modi', 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', and 'Vande Mataram' upon his arrival in

New York. They cheered him during President Biden's welcome speech on the South Lawn of the White House.

The PM called them "the real strength" of the U.S.-India relationship. "I have come here many times, but today for the first time, the doors of the White House have been opened for the Indian American community in such large numbers," he replied.

Appraising the diaspora, Modi said they were "brilliant in every field, not just Spelling Bee," and have played a significant role in the country's relationship with America.

The diaspora reciprocated enthusiastically. In 2014, Modi's meeting at the Madison Square event impressed Americans. Later the "Howdy Modi" rally in Houston sur-

prised President Trump.

Both Biden and Modi acknowledged the political power of the four-million-strong Indian American community. They are the second-largest and fastest-growing community in the U.S. Their votes are crucial in several swing states. In the 2020 elections, 74% of Indian American voters supported Biden, highlighting their importance in the political landscape.

Modi has had the opportunity to meet and interact with three American Presidents — Obama, Trump, and Biden. All three have included more members of the Indian Diaspora in their administrations. Currently, Biden has appointed 130 Indian Americans to key positions. Vice President Kamala

Harris and presidential hopeful Nikky Halley are both trailblazers in their own right. Some business leaders are heading over two dozen American companies, including Google chief Sundar Pichai and Microsoft's Satya Nadella.

India and the United States have strengthened business and defence ties over the past decade, with India becoming a member of international groupings like Quad and G20.

However, in Washington, groups favouring and against Modi came together to either support or protest against him. Modi's human rights track record has not gone unnoticed. On June 20, 75 U.S. Senators and Members of Congress wrote a letter to President Biden, highlighting concerns over issues such as the "shrink-

ing of political space and the rise of religious intolerance." Moreover, six lawmakers boycotted Modi's address to the U.S. Congress.

Despite their differing opinions, Washington and New Delhi agree that the visit was necessary and beneficial for the two countries. Modi acknowledged the success of his visit, stating that he had participated in multiple programs and discussions to enhance the friendship between India and the USA. The South Block intends to capitalize on the visit's success and pave the way for the upcoming G20 summit in September in New Delhi. These efforts are expected to enhance the Prime Minister's reputation both nationally and internationally.

MONEY MATTERS

DIAL introduces self baggage drop facility at Delhi airport

Delhi airport operator DIAL on Monday said it has introduced Self Baggage Drop (SBD) facility at Terminal 3 that will help reduce the waiting time for passengers at the airport. SBD aims to streamline the baggage drop-off process, reduce the wait time for passengers by around 15-20 minutes and further enhance the overall airport experience. The facility can cater to up to three passengers per minute, according to the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL). Currently, domestic passengers will be able to use the facility, and it will be made available for international passengers post mandatory approvals. A total of 14 SBD machines, including 12 automated and two hybrids, have been installed. "While currently, passengers travelling IndiGo will be able to use the facility, five other airlines, including Air India, Vistara, Air France, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and British Airways, are likely to allow usage of self-baggage drop for their passengers in the near future," DIAL said in a release.



Airtel Business CEO Ajaya Chitkara quits

The Chief Executive Officer of Bharti Airtel's enterprise arm Airtel Business, Ajaya Chitkara, has resigned from the company, according to a filing. Following the resignation, Bharti Airtel has restructured leadership in the enterprise arm by dividing it into three segments: 'Ajay Chitkara, CEO Airtel Business, has decided to move on from Airtel. He will continue with the company until the third week of August 2023,' Bharti Airtel said. Airtel Business will now operate as three businesses and channel segments Global business, led by Vani Venkatesh, Domestic business, led by Ganesh Lakshminarayanan, and Nxtra Data Centers, led by Ashish Arora, the company said. "Airtel Business is a jewel in our overall portfolio and presents an exciting growth opportunity going forward. I am looking forward to working closely with Vani, Ganesh and Ashish to help scale this business. I also want to acknowledge Ajaya's contributions."



Kia India recalls over 30k units of Carens for software update

Kia India on Monday said it is recalling over 30,000 units of its model Carens for a software update. The automaker is recalling a total of 30,297 units of the model manufactured between September 2022 and February 2023. The company conducts regular checks and rigorous testing of components, governed by brand's global standard, Kia India said in a statement. The company has initiated the recall campaign for vehicle inspection and, if required, a free-of-cost software update is also provided, it added. "The recall campaign has been initiated to inspect any potential error in the cluster booting process that may cause the cluster to go blank," the automaker stated. During this campaign, the company will take utmost care to minimise inconvenience to customers, it added. The company will directly reach out to the owners of the concerned vehicles to update them about this voluntary recall campaign, it noted.



BID TO SAFEGUARD INVESTORS' MONEY

Sebi introduces ASBA-like secondary market trading

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to safeguard investors' money from misuse and default by stock brokers, Sebi on Monday introduced a supplementary process for trading in the secondary market based on blocked funds in an investor's bank account, instead of transferring them upfront to the trading member. This is similar to Application Supported by Blocked Amount (ASBA)-like facility already available for the primary market which ensures that money from an investor gets moved only when an allotment happens. The new facility will become live by January 1, 2024, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular. Under the framework, funds will remain in the account of client but will be blocked in favour of the Clearing Corporation (CC) till the expiry date of the block man-



date or till block is released by the CC, or debit of the block towards obligations arising out of the trading activity of the client, whichever is earlier. Further, settlement for funds and securities will be done by the CC without the need for handling of client funds and securities by the member. The process safeguards clients' assets from misuse, brokers' default and consequent risk to their capital.

While a UPI block upon creation would be considered towards collateral, the same would also be available for settlement purposes. For the clients who prefer to block lump sum amounts, their block can be debited multiple times, subject to available balance, for settlement obligations across days. The facility will be provided by integrating Reserve Bank of India (RBI)-approved Unified

Payments Interface (UPI) mandate service of single-block-and-multiple-debits with the secondary market trading and settlement process called 'UPI block facility'. To begin with, the facility will be made available in the equity cash segment. The CCs may extend the facility to additional segments subsequently. Explaining the features of the new framework, Sebi said that the facility would be optional for investors as well as stock brokers. Since an investor is allowed to have trading accounts across multiple stock brokers, an investor can choose to avail UPI block facility under some broker and non-UPI based trading under others. This would result in lower working capital requirements for the members. The new framework would eliminate the custody risk of client collateral, which is presently retained by the members and not transferred to the clearing corporation.

Tata Power, Le Roi partner to install EV charging

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power on Monday said it will install EV charging infrastructure at various hotel locations of Le Roi Hotels and Resorts across India. In a statement, Tata Power said it has "partnered with Le Roi Hotels and Resorts to install EV charging stations across their hotels at various locations in the country, in a collaborative effort to promote green mobility and enhance the sustainability of tourist destinations". Tata Power will install 16 chargers spread across 8 locations. There will be a balanced distribution of 8 fast DC (CCS-II) chargers and 8 AC (Type II) chargers, offering a comprehensive range of charging solutions for electric vehicle owners. The locations include Udaipur, Digha, Haridwar, Jammu, Tehri, Raipur, Corbett and Koti.

US, EU slowdown to cripple 20% of small businesses: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Small businesses, which account for almost 40 per cent of exports, will face headwinds from the imminent economic slowdown in advanced countries, particularly the US and Eurozone, according to a report. According to a Crisil analysis, one in five MSMEs will also see stretched working capital. The US and EU markets account for a third of the country's overall exports. The analysis shows a fifth of the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) sector by value is likely to witness an increase in working capital requirement this fiscal compared to the pre-pandemic levels. These MSMEs in different sectors -- dyes and pigment, gems and jewellery, and construction -- are already grappling with high working capital requirements. The analysis covers 69 sectors and 147 clusters, which constitute two-thirds of the MSME universe, logging in aggregate revenue of Rs 63 lakh



crore, representing around a quarter of the gross domestic product last fiscal. According to Pushan Sharma, a director with the agency, export-oriented MSMEs in Ahmedabad and Surat are expected to see their working capital days swell this fiscal compared to the pre-pandemic levels. The Ahmedabad cluster will see an increase of 20-25 days, driven by a rise in the working capital requirement of the dyes and pigments sector, and the Surat cluster by 35 days, driven by the higher working capital requirement of the diamond exports sector. The Ahmedabad cluster has a major presence of companies in dyes and pigments, pesti-

cides and pharmaceuticals. The working capital stretch here will be because of a rise in working capital days for the dyes and pigments sector for three reasons -- inventory pile-up following dumping by Chinese producers; the recent earthquake in Turkey, and a slowdown in the US. These three account for 20-25 per cent of the total exports of dyes and pigments, pesticides and pharmaceuticals. As much as 90 per cent of diamond exports emanate from the Surat cluster and diamonds constitute more than half of gems and jewellery exports, and a substantial decline in demand from the US -- the largest export market -- is having a major impact.

Sensex, Nifty settle on a mixed note in volatile trade



PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty closed on a mixed note in a volatile trade on Monday amid weak trends in the global markets. While auto, IT and pharma shares advanced in a restricted trade, selling in index heavyweight Reliance Industries, HDFC twins and Tata Consultancy Services capped the gains. In a lacklustre trading, the 30-share BSE Sensex dipped 9.37 points or 0.01 per cent to settle at 62,970, logging its third day of decline. During the day, it hit a high of 63,136.09 and a low of 62,853.67. The NSE Nifty edged up by 25.70 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 18,691.20. It moved between 18,722.05 points and 18,646.70 in the day trade. "The global market exhibited a negative bias as concerns regarding economic growth emerged in light of the political instability in Russia. This

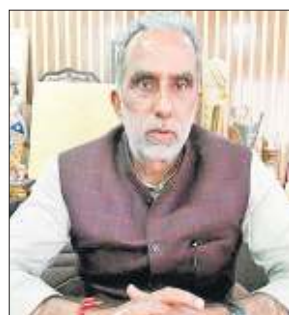
instability led to an increase in oil prices, driven by worries over potential supply disruptions, given Russia's status as one of the largest oil producers," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. On the domestic front, the market experienced limited downside as the pharma and auto sectors provided support, he added. From the Sensex pack, Tata Consultancy Services, Reliance Industries, NTPC, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, Larsen & Toubro, HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tech Mahindra and HDFC were the major laggards. On the other hand, Maruti rose the most by 1.67 per cent. Tata Motors, Titan, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India and IndusInd Bank were the top gainers. In Asian markets, Seoul ended in the green, while Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower.

Adopt advance tech to become competitive

Union Minister Krishan Gurjar urges industry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Krishan Pal Gurjar on Monday urged the industry to adopt advanced technologies for their operations in order to compete at the global level. The Minister of State (MoS) for Power was speaking at the inauguration of 'Advance Industrial Technology Demonstration Centre' at National Power Training Institute (NPTI) at Badarpur here. "Advance technology is a



must for the growth of the country. Today, if we have to compete with the world, we

will have to adopt advanced technologies," Gurjar, who is also the MoS for Heavy Industries, said. Reduced consumption of energy will bring the production cost of various industries and help them to compete in the market, he said. NPTI Director General (DG) Tripta Thakur said industries like iron and steel, cement, pulp & paper, and textile together contribute around 30 per cent to the total commercial energy consumption in India.

Focus on ensuring stable power grid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India should focus on ensuring a stable power transmission system and increasing renewables in the energy mix rather than on capital-intensive green hydrogen, think tank GTRI said in its report on Monday. Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that global private investments in green hydrogen are low, with rich countries providing substantial subsidies. India should carefully consider the viability and costs before subsidizing its use, GTRI co-founder Ajay Srivastava said.



The report said that green hydrogen is 6-8 times more expensive than standard energy options, making it economically challenging and the

cost of producing green steel using this hydrogen is 40-60 per cent higher compared to regular steel. "India should focus on stabilizing grid power and increasing its renewable energy share rather than investing in an expensive green hydrogen ecosystem," it said adding the transportation and storage of green hydrogen require specialized infrastructure due to its flammability and corrosiveness, increasing costs and safety concerns. It also said that India should evaluate using grey and blue hydrogen to a greater degree. Hydrogen is called grey, dark blue, light blue or green based on the intensity of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere during its production.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fortis ties up with RED.Health

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Fortis Healthcare on Monday said it has tied up with emergency response network RED.Health to offer end-to-end emergency services. The collaboration is driven by a shared vision to provide end-to-end emergency services within the minimum response time and reduce trauma and fatalities during medical emergencies, the healthcare major said in a statement. The scope of the collaboration spans across seven branches of Fortis Hospitals in



Delhi/NCR, it added. As part of the collaboration, RED.Health will deploy 10 dedicated GPS-enabled advanced life support (ALS) ambulances and also support patient logistics with an independent fleet of over 30 vehicles in NCR, ensuring that ambulances reach patients within around 10 to 30 minutes, it said.

Rupee declines 9 paise to 82.05 against dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee declined by 9 paise to close at 82.04 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid geopolitical concerns and firming crude oil prices. Volatility in equity markets and FII outflows also weighed on the market sentiment, analysts said. After opening lower, the rupee staged a recovery to hit the day's high of 81.94 in morning trade amid early gains in equities and a weaker greenback in the overseas markets.

Flexible batteries among top-10 emerging technologies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A new type of AI capable of generating new and original content, designer phages, flexible batteries and sustainable aviation fuel are among the technologies poised to have the most positive impact on the world in the next 3-5 years, the WEF said on Monday. Listing the top ten such emerging technologies, the WEF said the list also includes wearable plant sensors, meta-verse for mental health, spatial omics, flexible neural electronics, sustainable computing

and AI-facilitated healthcare. The WEF's 'Top ten emerging technologies report 2023' assessed how each technology will impact people, the planet, prosperity, industry and equity and was produced in collaboration with Frontiers, a publisher of peer-reviewed, open-access, scientific journals. The technologies analysed for the annual list were those promising major benefits to societies and economies, as also those considered to be disruptive, attractive to investors and researchers, and expected to have achieved considerable



scale within five years. Since the first edition in 2011, the report has identified

little-known technologies that went on to have a global impact. These include genom-

ic vaccines, featured in the 2016 report and later became the technology underpinning most COVID-19 vaccines, and AI-led molecular design, featured on the 2018 list, two years before the first AI-discovered drugs entered clinical trials. Talking about the selected top ten, the WEF said standard rigid batteries may soon be a thing of the past as thin, flexible batteries - made of lightweight materials that can be twisted, bent and stretched - reach the market. This new generation of battery technology expected to hit

a market value of USD 240 million by 2027 has applications across medical wearables, biomedical sensors, flexible displays and smartwatches. On generative AI, it said this new type of AI capable of generating new and original content by learning from large datasets that was catapulted into public dialogue at the end of 2022 with the public release of ChatGPT. Evolving rapidly, generative AI is set to disrupt multiple industries, with applications in education, research and beyond, the WEF said.

India appears to be 'silver lining' amid global challenges

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India appears to be the silver lining amid global headwinds and is poised to leapfrog into the future, but the country must address challenges like employment and agriculture productivity, said HUL Chairman Nitin Paranjpe. Addressing the AGM of the company on Monday, Paranjpe said India has been the fastest-growing economy in the last decade and is touted to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027, surpassing Japan and Germany. It is emerging steadily from the shadows of being a poor nation, and taking 'centre stage'. "The country's ambition of becoming a high-middle income country by 2047, when the nation celebrates 100 years



of independence, is a definite possibility," Paranjpe said in his speech titled Transforming to Win in the New India. "This would be led by factors like favourable demographics, rising consumption, enviable digital public infrastructure, investments and a culture of innovation and enterprise.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
 NIT No. 17/EE-6/CRZ/GHMC/2023-24 Dt. 26-06-2023
 Nature of the Work: Bakrid Festival Works, Estt. Cost: Rs. 7.69 Lakhs. Download Start Date : 26.06.2023 at 04.00 P.M., Last Date Receipt of Bids: 27.06.2023 at 04.00 P.M. Name & Address Officer, Cell No.: Sri. M. Peer Singh, EE, Div-6, CRZ, GHMC, Hyderabad. Phone No. 9154960551. For further details can be seen at e-procurement @ www.tender.e-procurement.gov.in. Note: 1% EMD should be obtained after the date of tender notice. Sd/- Executive Engineer, R.O.No: 2648-PP/CLADVT/1/2023-24, Dt.26.06.2023 Circle No.: 6, Charminar Zone, GHMC.

Raising a toast to the CLASSIC COCKTAILS

K. RAMYA SREE

When you go out to a restaurant or a club and come across some fancy cocktails which not only taste better but also look tempting, do you also feel like learning the art of mixology or are intrigued to learn the recipe so you mix it for your loved ones later?

Bartending and the art of mixology is one of the toughest ones as they strive to provide great experiences for their guests. Along with creativity, storytelling and mastering flavour, the act of hospitality remains the best test of a bartender's skill.

Today, we have with us the very popular Evonne Eadie, who brings with her over 20 years of bartending experience. Moreover, recently, at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival 2023, Evonne Eadie, Head of World Class, Trade, and Social Advocacy, showcased the vibrant and diverse flavours of India for the prestigious Minister's dinner. Her unique creations paid homage to the diversity of flavour and ingredients from India presented through elevated serves on the backs of the finest spirits from Diageo India, including Johnnie Walker Blue Label, Johnnie Walker Gold Label Reserve, The Singleton, Tanqueray, Don Julio, and Ciroc.

This pool of talent believes that: Those bartenders who excel in their careers have a true passion for ensuring other people have a good time when socialising in their venues. "They do this on what other people have as their spare time, weekends, Friday nights. This requires a huge amount of sacrifice, including giving up time with family and friends. It's all worth it to know that you're providing a great experience for others," shares the mixologist exclusively while in conversation with *The Pioneer*.

The WSET qualified Spirits Trainer, who is a master of converting non-whisky drinkers into whisky lovers through unique food and drink experiences, is also the national reserve brand ambassador of Diageo.

She, now as a brand ambassador, is seeing the rapidly increasing popularity of Tequila and Mezcal. Sharing the experience, she said, "As consumers come to enjoy the nuanced spirit in cocktails and see it's more than just a party shot, there is a huge rise in Tequila and Mezcal. I'm also very happily noticing consumers becoming more educated about cocktails, and, in turn, growing respect for the craft



Mixology is the art and science of creating delicious cocktails that involve an in-depth knowledge of various ingredients, techniques, and bar tools used to mix different drinks. Today, we bring to you *The Pioneer's* interaction with renowned Evonne Eadie about the art, classic cocktails, and more.

of bartending. This trend is driving a positive movement in diversity and inclusion in the industry as skilled bartenders continue to hone their craft to create memorable and inspiring experiences for a wider range of people.

As you know, World Gin Day was celebrated on June 10, and we asked which is her favourite gin-based cocktail that she loves recreating and why?

The expert revealed, "My favourite gin cocktail is called the Southside. It's a simple mix of gin, Lime, sweetener and mint, perfect-

ly balanced to create a zesty and refreshing serve. When making one with Tanqueray No. TEN I love to add some pink grapefruit zest in the shaker, which gives that burst of zest and elevates the citrus heart. It's a perfect drink for having on a warm day as it's nice, bright and zesty but also allows the gin to shine through."

Dear readers, if you are planning a house party with your friends this weekend, we got you covered. For those weekend plans with your gang, Evonne, who learned her craft in some of the best bars in

Australia and overseas, shared, "For weekends out with friends I can't go past a Johnnie Walker highball. It's tall, refreshing, lower in alcohol and perfect for a pre-sunset serve. It's a drink that has been loved by all I have introduced it to, even those who didn't think Whisky was a day time drink. The new Johnnie Walker Blonde and Lemonade is a great drink for new drinkers as it is brighter and fresher than a traditional Scotch so works beautifully with citrus flavours."

Mixology is all about creations and new innovations. We wondered if she gives more importance to: innovation of new cocktails or sticking to the basics of classic cocktails, and Evonne was quick to respond saying: "I believe classic cocktails are at the heart of any new cocktail. There's a reason that classics have stood the test of time, it is because they are perfectly balanced and enjoyed by a wide variety of people. Following the recipe ratios of classics allows for endless variations while maintaining the flavour balance. In general, any new cocktail you see is a twist or a tweak of a classic cocktail, so I think they're both hugely important. It's about knowing the foundations and then having the knowledge to tweak those to create new cocktails."

We're in the thick of World Class 2023. There is endless creativity in the hospitality industry which we get to see in full force through the World Class program. "Ingredients I haven't thought about, combinations I have never experienced—it's incredible. We saw any number of delicious creations from our Top 100 Bartenders through World Class Cocktail Week in May," she said.

Through World Class 2023, the narrative of drinking better and responsibly is coming to the limelight. She feels responsible drinking comes with an understanding of how alcohol is involved in social occasions and how it affects the body. Lastly, she shared a message that she would like to share with the enthusiastic World Class audience, and that is: "I think the one message I would have to share is to experiment and experience. In the world of cocktails, there is definitely something for everyone. You may not find it at first, but if you don't try, you could be missing out on delicious flavour experiences. Through World Class, we really strive to inspire people to taste cocktails and taste spirits in new ways and seek to bring Global trends and innovative services to our audience."

Producer Vinod Bhanushali has had his own fair share of big-ticket films and festivals. In an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, this renowned producer takes us through his formative years in the industry, stories that he looks forward to be working on, and more.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

In the years that he has been part of the entertainment industry, producer Vinod Bhanushali has had his fair share of festival films, some debuts, and big-ticket films. In conversation with *The Pioneer*, Vinod Bhanushali in spite of dealing with a hectic schedule of so many producer meetings presently, opens up about the role of a producer and showrunner for so many raving hits.

"In the initial stages of my career, I started as an assistant, closely working with the video editing teams to create content for different channels across the country. This one-of-a-kind experience took off my career at T-Series, helping me to grow my knowledge to become a co-

producer and learn the ropes of marketing while leading a specialized team that has worked on over 10,000 films and albums. Starting Bhanushali Studios was a dream of mine to tell stories that will resonate with our audience and entertain them. I have grown as a professional and learned how to blend the creative process and business but I know there are many more steps to climb."

Sirf Ek Banda Kaafi Hai was a film that was a winner right from the inception of its story for him, as a producer. The fabulous writing by Deepak Kingrani, exceptional direction by Apoorv Singh Karki, and one-of-a-kind cinematography by Arjun Kukreti added to the success of the film and special mention to Shivam Gupta for the film's powerful casting, he felt! He couldn't stress enough on Manoj Bajpayee's exceptional screen presence in his film that kept audiences hooked to their screens. Manoj seemingly brings an ordinary man's struggle to fight for truth so extraordinarily on-screen. Also, Suparn S Varma became the strong creative force and support, that led to the true success the film deserved. He tributed to the overwhelming response the film received from the cast and crew, the

agencies, and all the teams that worked hard to achieve this. He further continued, "As a producer, I have always believed in creating stories that can positively impact society. Since our audience has consistently become coherent in wanting state-of-the-art content. I truly believe in respecting their investment of time and money by either buying a ticket or a subscription by undertaking the responsibility to bring good stories to life with talented technicians and cast."

He believes the greatest risk that he has taken was to leave a well-paying and secured job to finally work toward his entrepreneurial dream of bringing forth the stories that he believes in. His production house is the ultimate chance he has taken for which he is more than content within himself. Here he along with his team are experimenting with different genres like drama, thriller, rom-com, biopics, and comedy, with the same enthusiasm and fire in them. Besides, "The driving force being *Main Atal Hoon* is the man Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji himself, his exceptional life is truly our daily dose of motivation. Atal ji was a visionary who was in a constant struggle to shape the new India that it has become today. Most importantly, Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji's in-depth knowledge, sense of humor, and poetry are what made him such an exceptional being. He is the one man who was respected even by his opposition while serving as the Prime Minister of the coun-

'I have always believed in creating stories that can positively impact society'

try. Producing *Main Atal Hoon* is our unique way to celebrate his inspiring life story.

The mantra that guides him is to be confident in the content he has created. Producing films becomes simpler and more seamless with the expertise of everyone engaged in taking that tale from the page to the screen. He believes he can experiment with many different genres if he has the right individuals by his side. Moreover, he says, "Managing the team, keeping everyone on the same page, and striving to reach our deadlines becomes an easier task with the constant assistance of outstanding joint producers, studios, technicians, and teams making the process smoother." So, the life of a filmmaker is filled with the thrills and joy of entertaining his audience. The best part of being in this creative fraternity is bringing the stories of millions of individuals to life and positively impacting society with the aim to build unconventional conversations for the producer. The divine process of filmmaking initializing from the ideation to the actual production with the support of expert individuals makes cinema his unique way to express his thoughts to the viewers.



Sitar Music for Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra is for everyone - those who have trouble letting go, experience insomnia, trauma, burnout, anxiety, or for an individual seeking a greater sense of serenity and a more meaningful reconnection with themselves. It helps us achieve a peaceful condition of being, post which we awaken to our true, happy, and eternal Self. People of all ages, and with diverse physical abilities, perform Yoga Nidra to relax their minds as well as their body. This practice entails one to first rest comfortably in Savasana and then following some basic steps, starting from relaxing your feet, knees, stomach, chest, and neck to easing your mind.

There is further a pivotal role of breathing in Yoga Nidra, wherein you focus your senses on the air you exhale and inhale. As the state of self-consciousness deepens in this 'awastha', your thoughts begin to travel unhindered, and it is the focus on the sound of your breathing that transports you to completely diverse horizons. For instance, someone in ultimate Yoga Nidra might find themselves lying on the pampering sand on a tranquil beach while the other may wonder amid the serenity of mountains and valleys. Disconnected from worldly affairs, your senses awaken to hear the voice from within while in Yoga Nidra.

Here comes a very significant role of something that is universal - music. Manisha Sharma, Yoga



Practitioner, Sitarist, and Communications Professional shares, "Technically an arrangement of sound patterns, music helps in enhancing the evolution one goes through during Yoga Nidra, while speeding the process of transportation that is integral to this age-old practice. It assumes all the more efficacy when the music in the companionship of Yoga Nidra emanates from Sitar, an instrument intrinsic to Indian classical music that has close allegiance to nature."

From Asavari and Bhaitav to Khamaj and Todi, there are myriad ragas in Indian classical music, each

corresponding to different moods, time frames, settings, etc. These ragas have in fact proven to have a positive impact on both mind as well as body. Unlike other relatively more physically-intensive asanas, the purpose of Yoga Nidra is to basically relax, refresh and re-energize every part of our body.

When one performs Yoga Nidra in the companionship of Sitar music based on Indian classical ragas, it makes the powerful meditation technique even more profound. It is the calming effect of Sitar music that enhances or maximizes that quiet and soothing inner environment

IT IS THE CALMING EFFECT OF SITAR MUSIC THAT ENHANCES OR MAXIMIZES THAT QUIET AND SOOTHING INNER ENVIRONMENT CREATED THROUGH YOGA NIDRA.

created through Yoga Nidra. Ragas on Sitar that induce an inward focus is quite beneficial for the purpose. During the calm and contemplative practice of Yoga Nidra, Sitar music has been shown to have a deeper impact on our body, brain as well as nervous systems.

Though there are some who prefer complete silence during Yoga Nidra, as they feel music might be a distraction. Most possibly, they have not experienced Yoga Nidra under the right ragas on Sitar in modest volume, which induces absolute relaxation. In fact, one can benefit greatly from the way music lowers arterial blood pressure, reduces anxiety, and create a peaceful surrounding. Studies even suggest that performing Yoga Nidra in a rightful manner may even help battle conditions like insomnia.

So next time the yogi in you seeks that divine relaxation, accompany your Yoga Nidra with nothing but Sitar Music.

Nikhila Vimal: Few directors are tenacious about giving us roles of a love interest



SHIKHA DUGGAL

With *Por Thozhil*, many intelligent characters were introduced — one of which was actress Nikhila Vimal, who was a product of smart writing setting the movie apart from other investigative thrillers that we have gotten accustomed to, especially with the fascination for this genre. Accordingly, in an exclusive conversation with us for our Tollywood bit, she partakes and says, “I really liked the way my director narrated the script to me — will you believe it, he was playing the actual background scores during the narration. It was something so new to me! The least a director that he/she can do to an extent is to act out the scenes to an actor, but playing the score was so extraordinary. The whole atmosphere became intense! The clarity that was carved out for me, encouraged me to sign *Por Thozhil*!”

Her debut film was *Bhagyadevatha* in 2009 in a supporting role. Her big screen debut in lead role happened in 2015, where she played a female lead in Sreebala K Menon's film in which she was paired with Dileep. Moving ahead in the interesting chat, “The director's artistic expressions were

very understandable to me. With every scene, he was transparent to me! He approved all the improvisations we had to provide him for more comprehensiveness. I shot for fifteen days with him, found him very serious yet curious about pulling this investigative thriller. Whenever the camera used to roll, you would see a very consequential director.”

The actress was born in Taliparamba. Her father retired from the statistical department while her mother is a dancer. The name 'Vimal' comes from the name of her mother. Nikhila learned Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Kerala Natanam, and monoact and also made her presence in youth festivals. Maybe that's where the quirk comes from. “It's still very

Actress Nikhila Vimal, who was recently seen in *Por Thozhil*, speaks to *The Pioneer* about signing the film, working with the director, working in substantial character-driven roles, and more.

rare for us to get substantial character-driven roles in the industry. No idea why, but all the directors are stuck with giving us the role of a love interest. I know some of the male actors too, it's happening with them as well! Many of my contemporaries are given those roles that hold no importance at all. All of us have something to demonstrate! You know what I mean? I really want to perform with a longer screen-space, and not with the hero! It's high time, script-writing needs to change.”

Her Tamil debut happens to be *Panjumittai*, in which she is the female lead and opposite Ma Ka Pa Anand, but where does she actually situate herself in the industries that she predominantly works for? Shall we confirm it with the actress

herself? She responded, “I am equally famous in the Malayalam film industry, my spree over there is still continuing. I am well-pleased here, also because it's my mother tongue. Though there is a streak of boredom that I feel sometimes because of the roles that don't suit me or are not worthy-enough. So there's a gradual shift and inquisitiveness towards the Tamil film industry too. I have completed almost fifteen years in films; I started as a child artist, and now OTT has entered into the scene, if we talk about 2023. We have gone past those prototypical films now. Now actors can take how many ever takes they want, which wasn't possible when I started in the industry. I wasn't even aware of the technicalities before.”

When established actors come into the space, we are always tantalized to know about their filmy struggles, and we are sure so are our readers. Hence, “I don't have a very tempting struggle story, all the actors in this industry are struggling everyday. All of us want the best characters! I know of A-listers too who are still searching for their eccentricity, the scripts that are idiosyncratic. The roles that have similar characteristics like mine work so well at the box-office, this is my personal observation. A girl-next-door role is easy to play, but I could never relate to it in my entire life span. These roles are not for me! And, the Malayalam film industry doesn't work on adulation so much.”

Pawan Kalyan-Emraan Hashmi wraps up third schedule of *OG*



Actors Pawan Kalyan and Emraan Hashmi have wrapped up shooting the third schedule of their upcoming film *OG*.

Makers of *OG* took to social media to announce the wrap up of the third schedule in Hyderabad. The film also stars Priyanka Mojan, Arjun Das, and Sriya Reddy in key roles in the

film. Sharing a picture, the producers DVV Entertainment wrote: “Action, Epicness & Drama...A very productive three Schedules Done & Dusted. #OG Completes 50% of the shoot. Exciting weeks ahead!”

The film also marks Emraan Hashmi's debut in the Telugu film industry.

Prithviraj Sukumaran injured on set, shooting on hold

Malayalam actor Prithviraj Sukumaran underwent a laparoscopy aka keyhole surgery after getting injured on the sets of his upcoming film *Vilayath Buddha*.

Prithviraj suffered the injury while shooting a stunt scene on Sunday at Idukki for the film *Vilayath Buddha*.

After preliminary first aid, the actor was shifted to a premier hospital here and after examination, the doctors decided to go forward with a keyhole

surgery. The shooting for the film has been wound up and will resume after the actor returns from injury.

According to the doctors, it will take a while for Prithviraj to return as it might take a while for him to don the grease paint again. The adept actor has several projects lined up which include Prabhas's *Salaar*, slated for release on September 28. Sukumaran also has Akshay Kumar's *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan*.



NTR Jr's *Devara* completes special night effect action sequence in Hyderabad



RR star NTR Jr recently shot an action sequence in extreme low light for his upcoming film *Devara*. The cinematographer of the film R. Rathnavelu shared a picture and informed cine-lovers about the special night effect action sequence that has been shot in Hyderabad.

The team has successfully wrapped up the schedule in Hyderabad, which featured thrilling action sequences involving the film's lead actors and stretched over 2 weeks.

In *Devara*, NTR Jr reunites with

Koratala Siva, the talented filmmaker behind the blockbuster hit *Janatha Garage*. Alongside NTR Jr, the movie also stars the versatile actors Saif Ali Khan and Jahnu Kapoor in prominent roles, further raising the anticipation among fans.

The film's makers have left no stone unturned in assembling a top-notch crew, roping in industry stalwarts for the music composition, editing, and other vital aspects.

Produced by Hari Krishna K of NTR Arts and Sudhakar Mikkilineni of Yuvasudha Arts, *Devara* is scheduled to hit the theatres on April 5, 2024.

Thalapathy Vijay lands in a legal trouble



Tamil actor Thalapathy Vijay's recent song *Naa Ready* from the upcoming film *Leo* has stirred criticism due to its promotion of cigarette consumption. In the song, the actor is seen dancing with a cigarette in his mouth. According to reports, the use or glorification of smoking has landed Vijay in a legal case, and a case has been filed against him and he has been charged under the Narcotics Control Act. This comes after his song *Naa Ready* was released in which he is seen smoking. The much-anticipated first single *Naa Ready* from *Leo* was released on the occasion of Thalapathy Vijay's birthday on June 22.

The party song was shared as a birthday gift to Vijay's fans after setting the

internet on fire with a teaser video and first look of his much-awaited film *Leo*. The peppy song is sung by Thalapathy himself and is composed by Anirudh Ravichander. The song is catchy and showcases Vijay's prowess as a dancer.

Initially, fans showered immense love on the song and especially on Vijay. Vijay can be seen matching steps with a huge dance crew behind him with a cigarette in his mouth. The song also includes BTS moments from the sets while filming the song.

Sharing the song *Naa Ready* on Twitter, Lokesh Kanagaraj, the film's director wrote, “#NaaReady is all yours now! Thank you for making today so memorable, @actorvijay.” *Leo* is billed as a gangster drama and is part of the Lokesh Cinematic Universe (LCU), the action-crime thriller universe created by filmmaker Lokesh Kanagaraj. Trisha Dutt, a prominent Bollywood actor, will make his Tamil film debut as the antagonist.

Bhaag Saale promises to be a fun-pack treat



M M Keeravani's son and Rajamouli's nephew Sri Simha Koduri is getting ready to entertain movie lovers in his upcoming film *Bhaag Saale*, directed by Pranith Bramandapally of *Mudda Pappu Avakai* web series fame. The film is releasing on 7 July and the film's first look and teaser got a good response. The Makers on Monday released the film's trailer.

Neha Solanki is the heroine in the film while Sudarshan, Harsha Chemudu, Rajiv Kanakala, Varshini Sounderajan, Nandini Rai, Rajeev Kanakala, and John Vijay are playing important roles.

Sri Simha is seen as a chef Arjun while he gets attracted to Neha playing the role of Maya. The secret of invaluable diamond ring called 'Shaali Shuka Gaja,' generates interest with John Vijay who is seen as Samuel is after it. R trailer is loaded with hilarious and fun elements.

The music is tuned by Kaala Bhairava. Vedaansh Creative Works and Cinevalley Movies in association with Big Ben Cinemas after bankrolling the project. Apart from this film, Sri Simha Koduri is also starring in an interesting film titled *Ustaad*.

MUMBAI, KOLKATA LIKELY TO HOST WC SEMIFINALS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium and the Eden Gardens in Kolkata — both iconic venues — have emerged as the frontrunners to host the two semifinals of the 2023 World Cup. This means the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai — another venue with a rich legacy — could lose out on organising one of the biggest games of the ODI showpiece.

"Mumbai's Wankhede and Kolkata's Eden Gardens are two likely venues for the World Cup semi-finals. Earlier, Chennai was also in the race but it seems Eden is slightly ahead now," a BCCI source told PTI on Monday.

"One of the reasons could be the November weather in Chennai where there is always chance of rain."

Twelve hosting associations were called in Mumbai on Monday to discuss the details and finalise the venues before Tuesday's official announcement.

If India qualify for the semifinals, they will play their last-four stage game in Mumbai.

The Wankhede Stadium hosted the final of the 2011 World Cup, in which a



Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led India beat Sri Lanka to end a 28-year-old title drought, while the Eden Gardens played host to the summit showdown between Australia and England in the 1987 edition, in which the former country prevailed.

There will be 10 teams at this year's World Cup. As hosts, India have qualified directly, as have Afghanistan,

Australia, England, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Pakistan, and South Africa through the 2020-2023 ICC Cricket World Cup Super League.

Two other teams will make it to the World Cup through the World Cup Qualifiers, which is being currently played in Zimbabwe.

Apart from former champions Sri

Lanka and the West Indies, the Qualifiers also feature Ireland, Nepal, the Netherlands, Oman, Scotland, the UAE, the USA, and hosts Zimbabwe.

At the World Cup in India, the 10 teams will play each other once in a round-robin league featuring 45 matches. These will be followed by the semifinals and the final.

ICC World Cup trophy sent to space

PTI ■ DUBAI

In a spectacular first, cricket's global governing body started the World Cup trophy tour by launching the coveted silverware into the stratosphere, 1,20,000 feet above the earth before it made a stunning landing at the Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium in Ahmedabad.

This was achieved after the trophy was attached to a bespoke stratospheric balloon, and some stunning shots were captured of the trophy sitting on the edge of the earth's atmosphere from 4k cameras.

The 2023 edition of the trophy tour will be the biggest by far, giving the fans a chance to connect with the silverware in various countries and cities around the world.

Starting on June 27, the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup trophy will travel to 18 countries, including Kuwait, Bahrain, Malaysia, USA, Nigeria, Uganda, France, Italy, the United States of America and the host country India, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said in a press release.

Through innovative activations and events in different countries, the trophy tour will provide a chance to one million fans to have their own personal interactions with the silverware.

The Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium is set to host the final of the ODI showpiece, which the country is hosting later this year.

"The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Trophy Tour is an important milestone in the countdown to what will be the biggest ICC Men's Cricket World Cup ever," ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said.

"This Tour will see the iconic silverware meet heads of states, launch community initiatives and



support cricket development programmes in addition to visiting some of the most iconic landmarks around the globe.

"Cricket has more than a billion fans and we want to give as many people as possible the opportunity to get up close to this famous trophy that has been held aloft by some of the greatest legends of our sport."

BCCI secretary Jay Shah added, "Cricket unites India like no other sport and excitement is building across the country as we prepare to host the 10 best teams in the world over six weeks of heart-stopping cricket."

"As we countdown to the World Cup, the Trophy Tour is a fantastic chance for fans to be part of the event wherever they are. The Tour will travel extensively across India and seek to inspire communities to share the excitement of cricket's greatest spectacle, while providing an opportunity to showcase iconic venues, cities and landmarks throughout the country."

The trophy tour will begin on June 27 in India, travel around the globe and then return to the host nation on September 4.

'Root Playing Bazball Is Keeping Us In Game': Labuschagne

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Marnus Labuschagne opined that Joe Root's aggressive 'Bazball' approach is keeping Australia in the game as none of England's batters reached fifty in the second innings of the opening Ashes Test at the Edgbaston.

Australia are currently one up in the Ashes 2023 five-match Test series. Australia managed to hold on to the victory as England continued to play in their style throughout the course of five days. The most visible evidence of England relinquishing control of the contest was Root's dismissal on day four. They had been barely ahead of the game since reaching almost 400 in 78 overs on the first day before declaring.

"From my perspective, him playing that method and those shots are keeping us in the game," Sydney Morning Herald quoted Labuschagne as saying after training at Lord's on Sunday before the second Test, which begins on Wednesday.

"I use that second inning as an example. He probably had an opportunity to shut us out and take the game away from us completely. But the method and the way he was playing kept us in the game and, evidently, he played an unbelievable inning, but he ended up getting 40 [46] and if he turns that 40 into 80-plus, we're chasing 300 and that's going to be a pretty big effort," Labuschagne said.

"So I think that's the benefit for us, the way they're play-



ing. They're playing aggressive cricket, and he's doing it with a different method, which is great, but it brings in other opportunities for us. Hopefully, at some point in the series, that will keep paying off," the Australia No.3 batter said.

That score was based on Root's undefeated century, and he appeared to be on track for another in the second innings until he bizarrely rushed spinner Nathan Lyon and was stumped for the first time in his long and successful career.

Ten players in England's second innings reached double digits, three reached the 40s, but none hit a half-century, leaving Australia with a winnable target

of 282. Labuschagne believes Australia were below their best but still won.

"I really enjoy the way they play, I'm not going to lie. As a cricket watcher, watching the series prior, I've loved it. I think it's exciting, it's entertaining, it's good to watch, but at the end of the day we played pretty under par to what I think the standard of our team is at," he said.

"I thought from a batting point of view Uz [Usman Khawaja] was outstanding but I think most of the other batters, we want to be better than that standard," Labuschagne said. England will play against Australia in the second Test match at the Lord's on Wednesday



Ashleigh Gardner claims 8/66 as Aus beat Eng by 89 runs

IAN S ■ NOTTINGHAM

Left-spinner Ashleigh Gardner starred with the ball, claiming a brilliant 8/66 in the second innings as England were bowled out for 178 before lunch on day five of the one-off Women's Ashes Test, handing Australia an easy 89-run victory, here on Monday.

Ashleigh's effort means she finishes the one-off Test with an astonishing 12 wickets, after previously picking four wickets in the first innings, with her haul being an Australian record. For England, debutant Danni Wyatt top-scored with 54 before she was trapped lbw by Ashleigh as Australia wrapped up the match within 21 overs on final day's play.

Ashleigh also became the

second bowler to take eight wickets in an innings in women's Tests, after India's Neetu David took 8/53 against England in 1995. Her overall match figures of 12/165 are second-best figures in women's Tests after Pakistan's Shaiza Khan took 13/226 against West Indies in 2004.

The result means Australia will need to win only two of the six white-ball matches to retain the Ashes in the multi-format, with the first of the three T20Is starting from July 1 in Birmingham. England resumed day five from 116/5, chasing a record target of 268, after losing five wickets in quick succession on day four left them requiring 152 more runs to get an improbable win.

Danni and Kate Cross

added 25 runs for the sixth wicket before the latter was caught behind for 13 off Ashleigh, who spun a vicious web around the England batters to outclass them with ridiculous ease.

Despite Danni hanging around for some resistance, she couldn't find support from the other end. Amy Jones was stumped by Alyssa Healy, Sophie Ecclestone was trapped lbw and Lauren Filer was castled for a duck, before Danni finally fell to give Australia four points.

For England, they had their moments with Tammy Beaumont scoring 208 in first innings, and Sophie Ecclestone taking a 10-wicket haul in the match, recording five wickets in both innings. But it was ultimately overshadowed by Ashleigh's stunning efforts.

Rinku set to earn India call-up

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian team will take on West Indies in all format, T20I, ODI and Test. The series will start from July 12. On Friday, the BCCI announced India's 50 over and Test squads. Young stars like Yashasvi Jaiswal and Mukesh Kumar got the national call-up.

Though the BCCI is yet to announce India's squad for the five-match T20I series, according to reports in the Times of India, Kolkata Knight Riders star Rinku Singh is set to make his India debut in the 20-over format. The 25-year-old scored 474 runs in 14 games at an average of 59.25 and a strike rate of 149.52.

Rinku became an overnight sensation when he crashed 67 runs off 33 balls and hit five consecutive sixes when they needed 28 runs to win off the final five balls. Rinku put on a power-hitting display for Yash Dyal defeated the Gujarat Titans by an incredible three wickets.

HARDIK PANDYA TO LEAD THE SIDE

India's star all-rounder Hardik Pandya will continue as the captain of the T20I side for the series against the West Indies, while the seniors will stay out of the team. Pandya has been leading Team India in the T20I format since the 2022 T20 World Cup.

According to reports in Cricbuzz, Pandya will lead the side and that there will be no



place for seniors. While the report does not mention the name of the seniors, there are few veterans who haven't played a T20I since the 2022 World Cup.

Meanwhile, India's former head coach Ravi Shastri has stated that it should be Rohit, who should lead India in the upcoming World Cup but Pandya should be passed the ODI captaincy after the tournament home.

"After the World Cup, I feel he should take over captaincy in white-ball cricket. Rohit should lead India in the World Cup, no question there," Shastri said to The Week.

Dutch stun West Indies in super over as Zimbabwe demolish USA

AFP ■ HARARE

Two-time champions West Indies face an almighty task to qualify for the Cricket World Cup after losing to the Netherlands in a thrilling final group game decided by a super over Monday.

Nicholas Pooran's second hundred of the qualifiers propelled West Indies to a commanding 374-6, but Teja Nidamanuru hit 111 in reply and the Dutch needed one from the final ball for victory.

Jason Holder took a brilliant catch to deny Logan van Beek as the scores finished tied, but Van Beek blasted Holder for 30 runs in the super over to set up a remarkable win in Harare.

Van Beek then restricted the West Indies to just eight off five balls as he removed Johnson Charles and Romario Shepherd with successive deliveries to seal an extraordinary triumph. "I cannot really explain it at the moment. We wanted to do something special," said Van Beek.

"I have been playing for a long time. The amount of games I have lost from those situations, it was just satisfying to get across the line."

"Now we have a chance to go to the World Cup in India and that is really huge," he added.

Pooran blasted an unbeaten 104 off 65 balls after openers Brandon King (76) and Charles (54) both made half-centuries as the West Indies put together an imposing total batting first.

King and Charles provided a strong platform with a 101-run opening partnership. Shai Hope added 47 in another century stand with Pooran



before Keemo Paul smacked a quick-fire 46 not out.

The Netherlands reached 76 without loss to start the chase, but it wasn't until Nidamanuru and captain Scott Edwards (67) came together that they looked in with a chance of actually succeeding. Once they fell in consecutive overs, Van Beek and Aryan Dutt took up the challenge only to falter with five runs needed off the last five balls and with the finish line seemingly in sight.

After failing to close it out off the

final delivery from Alzarri Joseph, Van Beek exploded in the super over to leave the West Indies in real danger of missing the World Cup later this year.

"We let ourselves down there," said Hope, the West Indies captain. "We know what we have to do now. It is an unfortunate situation we have put ourselves in."

The Netherlands advance as runners-up of Group A and carry over two points, but the West Indies start with zero and need to beat Scotland,

Oman and Sri Lanka with their hopes hanging by a thread.

ZIMBABWE HAMMER USA

Hosts Zimbabwe made it four wins from four as they crushed the United States by 304 runs, the second biggest winning margin in terms of runs in ODI history.

Zimbabwe's Sean Williams led his country to their highest ODI score Zimbabwe's Sean Williams led his country to their highest ODI score © WILLIAM WEST / AFP/File



Sean Williams hit 174 off 101 balls as Zimbabwe made their highest one-day total with a mammoth 408-6 and then bowled out the USA for just 104.

They narrowly missed breaking the record for the biggest margin of victory in a one-day international, set at the start of the year when India thrashed Sri Lanka by 317 runs in Thiruvananthapuram.

"It was a fantastic wicket. The way we started out there, it was a little slow, so we thought if we could pick the

intensity up against the spinners, we could see where we go from there," said Williams.

Zimbabwe advance to the Super Six stage as group winners and carry through four points, well placed to secure a spot at the October-November tournament in India.

"We have found our momentum and we are looking forward to carrying it," added Williams. Wicketkeeper Joylord Gumbie struck a steady 78 at the top of the order but Williams played the starring role as Zimbabwe

stepped on the accelerator once the stand-in captain arrived at the crease.

Williams hit 21 fours and five sixes before he was caught in the deep in the penultimate over, with Sikandar Raza scoring 48 off 27 balls and Ryan Burl hammering 47 off just 16 deliveries.

Only three USA batsmen reached double figures as Richard Ngarava and all-rounder Raza both took two wickets while three run outs compounded a dismal performance from the Americans.