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IN BRIEF

8-year-old boy drowns in pond

Hyderabad: A third class student allegedly drowned in a pond beside a temple in Moosapet on Thursday evening. Police said Enni Naveen, 8, of Pragatinagar, went to the pond with five of his friends. "Though the others did not go deep into the pond, Naveen wandered off and allegedly drowned. As none of the kids knew to swim, they were not able to save him," said the police.

The kids rushed to Naveen's house to inform his parents. Naveen's mother rushed to the pond by which time his body had been retrieved.

HC adjourns Covid PILs to Dec. 31

Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court on Thursday adjourned to December 31, the hearing on a batch of 26 petitions filed on the state government's handling of the Covid-19 situation. Earlier, a division bench of Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijayen Reddy took on record the 279-page report filed by the state government, enumerating the steps it has taken to contain the pandemic in the state. Chief Justice Chauhan said that he cannot adjudicate the petitions at this stage in view of his transfer to the Uttarakhand High Court as its Chief Justice.

Centre to implement 8 projects in TS: Kishan

Gadkari to dedicate 6 projects in state, KCR to join fete

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

Union minister Nitin Gadkari will dedicate to the nation, six projects worth ₹3,717 crore covering a length of 370 km in the state on December 21, Union minister of state G. Kishan Reddy said on Thursday. Gadkari will perform the bhoomi puja and lay the foundation stone for eight projects costing ₹9,440 crore and covering a length of 396 km in the state, Kishan Reddy said.

Addressing a press conference at Delhi, Kishan Reddy stated that Gadkari, Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and he himself will join the programme online along with MPs, MLAs and MLAs from the state.

He explained that out of the total of 14 projects worth ₹13,157 crore, seven are being executed by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) out of which one will be dedicated to the people while bhoomi puja will be held for six.



Minister of state for home G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated the Security Leadership Summit-2020 in PHD House in Delhi on Thursday. He praised that the role of private security guards in ensuring safety and presented awards to achievers.

The minister said that the Union ministry of road transport and highways is getting the other seven projects executed through the public works department.

Kishan Reddy explained that under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, India's largest

ever infrastructure development programme, 35,000 km of National Highways are being developed across the country. Out of this, 1,400 km of National Highways are being developed as a part of Bharatmala Pariyojana first phase. Kishan Reddy stated that

the National Highway length in Telangana state had now increased to 3,910 km, from 2,511 km before May 2014. This is an impressive increase of 1,399 km in Telangana state, he pointed out. In addition, 750 km of expressways will also be developed under the Bharatmala Pariyojana second phase in the state, Kishan Reddy said.

The Union minister stated that the increase in the length of the National Highways by 55.71 per cent reflects the commitment of the Union government under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for improving the road infrastructure in the country. Before the press conference, the minister inaugurated the Security Leadership Summit-2020 at PHD House at Delhi. He praised that the role of private security guards in ensuring safety and security of society and enterprises which he said is truly appreciated. Kishan Reddy handed over awards to achievers on the occasion.

One dead as bike rams divider on JH flyover

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

A BTech final year student was killed and two others were injured when their bike crashed into a road divider on the flyover leading to the Durgam Cheruvu cable-stayed bridge early on Thursday morning.

Police said they were riding under the influence of alcohol and going to see the bridge at 3.30 am after celebrating a birthday party at Yousufguda when they met with the accident.

The victim was identified as V. Shiva, 20, and the survivors as G. Vijay and Y. Prashant. Shiva, who was riding the bike (AP15 AH 2695) at the time of the accident, did not have a driver's licence. None of them had their helmets on.

Shiva's samples have been sent to a laboratory to check his blood alcohol content (BAC). The BAC of Vijay was measured at 54 and that of Prashant, whose birthday the trio was celebrating, 80.

Shiva was a native of Sircilla and staying with Shiva and Prashant, both unemployed graduates, at



The curve on the Jubilee Hills Road No. 45 flyover where the accident occurred in Hyderabad. — By arrangement

● **SURVIVORS WERE** booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder. They might face 10 plus years of jail time.

● **RIDER DID** not have a licence, no one wore a helmet.

● **EYES OF** victim donated by family.

● **POLICE SAYS** this is the third fatal accident at the same spot.

Yousufguda, Madhapur inspector P. Ravindra Prasad said. He said the three of them sustained injuries and Shiva succumbed on the spot. Shiva's family donated his eyes after his death, the inspector said.

Following a complaint, cases were booked against Vijay and Prashant by the Madhapur police under Section 304-II (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) read with 109 (abetment to commit offence) of the IPC along with Sections 184, 185 and 188 of the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act.

"The sections booked against the boys are non-bailable offences and they might face 10-plus years of jail time," police said.

Raghunandan Rao, Madhapur assistant commissioner of police, said this was the third fatal accident reported at the same place in the last two months. He said that GHMC officials were notified to check the engineering defects.



A motorist drives past the Golconda fort which is covered by light fog on Thursday. — DEEPAK DESHPANDE

Min. temp goes up; heavy fog forecast

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

It is past the middle of December, but the wintry cold continues to elude the city. Instead, city witnessed a 2° Celsius increase in the minimum temperature on Thursday, going up to 17.3°C. The normal minimum for this time of the 15.3°C.

An official from the local Indian Meteorological Department-Hyderabad (IMD-H) said that humid winds from the eastern coast is blowing over the city. The presence of humidity would make for heavy fogging and mist and this could cause visibility issues on the highways in the morning.

Usually, it is understood that if New Delhi witnesses cold temperatures then the winter would kick in over the city as well.

"But, winds from the northern part of the country aren't reaching the state as it is predominantly receiving wind from the eastern direction, the Bay of Bengal. These winds are laced with humidity which do not let the morning heat escape," IMD-H director K. Nagarathna, told *Deccan Chronicle*.

As of 7 pm on Thursday, the coldest areas in the city were the BHEL factory in Ramachandrapuram which recorded 15.1° C and Bandlaguda 15.8°C respectively.

UoH Student Union plans 5-day agitation

HARLEEN MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The University of Hyderabad Student Union has planned a five-day agitation on the campus, ahead of the Academic Council meeting scheduled on December 22.

The union has demanded redressal of grievances of students including the issue of filling up vacant seats for post-graduate courses, admissions for which were closed on November 19 before other Central universities. Citing UGC guidelines from September 2020, the Student Union said that the last date for admission to vacant seats was November 30, whereas the UoH closed admissions, much earlier adding to the woes of students seeking admissions amidst a pandemic.

They also demanded that the University reinstate the previously followed 1:6 criteria for admission into the research programme where six students will be interviewed for one vacant seat.

Further, complaining that the non-science research departments were being devalued, the

student union has demanded that students of all departments should be called back to campus in a phased manner. They said that while the administration had called back science research students and facilitated them with quarantine facilities and a new hostel on the South campus, similar enthusiasm was not shown for students of the social sciences and other streams, hence making them lose out on crucial research opportunities.

The union added that while the Task Force has been issuing directives for an inclusive online pedagogy environment, it has done more harm to students than benefit them due to accessibility issues.

The student union demanded that an efficient health centre under Covid-19 protocols be set up urgently for the safety of students.

Abhishek Nandan, UoH Student Union president, said that two students were placed under quarantine at the guest house. Upon their discharge, the authorities did not let the students go until they paid the full amount, he said. "At

a time when students are barely making ends meet and struggling even to pay basic fees, charging extra money is nothing less than harassment," Nandan added.

UoH official spokesperson Vinod Parvala, responding to these allegations, said, "The university is treading very cautiously in view of the pandemic, especially looking at what happened at IIT-Madras. We request students to be patient in this situation. We are looking at all possibilities and prioritising needs of all research departments slowly and steadily".

Reacting to the allegations of students being harassed into paying quarantine charges, he said that no coercion was being used, and the university was not geared with Covid-19 treatment facilities. "It is not even a quarantine charge, they are in fact basic guest house charges being levied. As far as we are concerned, we are not authorised as a public higher education institution to run a quarantine facility," he said. No student was being forced to pay the charges, he said.

Etala takes stock of medical colleges in state

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

With the two new medical colleges at Nalgonda and Suryapet being allowed to increase the number of seats, and renewal of permission for the 150 MBBS seats at the Mahabubnagar Government Medical College and Hospital, health minister Etala Rajender held a review meeting with the principals of government medical colleges, doctors and superintendents of hospitals in medical colleges on Thursday.

The minister sought to ensure that facilities in the government medical colleges were in line with the latest recommendations of the Medical Council of India. He directed the superintendents of all medical college hospitals to keep the surroundings clean and ensure that sanitation problems do not arise.

He thanked the staff of medical colleges working through the Covid-19 period. "The medical health emergency

department and medical health personnel worked even during bandhs and dharnas, serving the public to the fullest during the difficult Coronavirus times," he said. The minister congratulated medical personnel for giving equal importance, without any interruption to patients with diseases like cancer and thalassaemia.

The minister added that arrangements were being made to provide treatment to patients suffering from minor ailments at primary health centres and area and district hospitals to prevent them from going to the bigger hospitals. The minister asked the district medical colleges to provide all kinds of treatment. He also discussed infrastructure, faculty, staff, and other issues.

The meeting was attended by the health secretary, family welfare commissioner, Director of Medical Education, and managing director of the TS Medical Services and Infrastructure Development Corporation.

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Maruti Suzuki India to hike price from January.

New Delhi: Car market leader Maruti Suzuki India on Wednesday said it will increase prices of its vehicle from January to offset the adverse impact of rising input costs. Over the past year, cost of the company's vehicles has been impacted adversely due to increase in vehicle costs, Maruti Suzuki India said in a regulatory filing.

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SHORT TAKES

BALYAN: FARM LAWS WILL STOP FARMER SUICIDE

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

Union minister of state for animal husbandry Sanjeev Kumar Balyan on Thursday toured parts of the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency, where a byelection is due following the death of TRS MLA Nomula Narasimhaiah.

In Halia, Balyan spoke about the new agricultural laws that have sparked protests among farmers. Addressing the media, he hoped that the BJP would win the byelection and said that the Centre had spent thousands of crores of rupees under the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had allocated ₹1 lakh crore for agriculture welfare and farmers were very happy but some political parties were generating wrong news and provoking them. Farmers have made it clear that they can sell their crop at higher prices with the new laws, Balyan said.

Telangana state had not implemented the Fasal Bhima insurance scheme and the farmers had suffered losses.

Balyan alleged that the TRS government was not implementing Central schemes but was diverting the funds. He said the Centre had fixed the support price at ₹5,500 for cotton. The new laws would stop farmer suicides, Balyan said.

BJP ACCUSES GOVT OF 'LOOTING' SMART CITY FUNDS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The BJP alleged that the state government had "looted" funds meant for the Smart City projects, without releasing matching grants which was the state's share.

BJP spokesperson A. Rakesh Reddy speaking to the media at BJP state office alleged that if N. Chandrababu Naidu was the 'U-turn CM', K. Chandrashekar Rao was acting like the "Diversion CM". Rakesh Reddy expressed the worry that the Smart City project could be cancelled due to the negligence of Chandrashekar Rao and municipal administration minister K.T. Rama Rao.

The BJP spokesman claimed that the Centre had released ₹500 crore to Karimnagar and Warangal for development under the Smart City project. The state government did not allocate its shares as matching grant for the project.

He released letters which were purportedly written by the secretary, Union urban development department, to the Chief Secretary three times about matching grants, but the state government did not respond.

Rakesh Reddy accused the MLAs of Karimnagar and Warangal of not asking about the Smart City project funds to develop their cities. He alleged that Warangal was affected by rains and floods because the government had neglected implementing the Smart City project. He demanded that the state government release the matching grant for smart cities and develop the cities.

CHEQUES GIVEN TO BENEFICIARIES OF WEDDING SOPS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

Public representatives in the Old City distributed cheques to the beneficiaries of Kalyan Laxmi and Shadi Mubarak schemes on Thursday.

Bahadurpura MLA Moazam Khan distributed cheques worth ₹7.8 crore to 790 beneficiaries at Jugu Function Hall, Rannastpura. Speaking on the occasion, Moazam Khan said these schemes meant to provide financial aid during the wedding of girls was a boon for economically backward families.

He said the MIM always focused on benefitting deserving families. "Our workers provide help to people in getting benefits from the government schemes. During the floods, our party not only provided financial help and food but also ensured that the affected people get financial aid from the government."

Corporators Hussaini Pasha, Mohammed Saleem and Bahadurpura tahsildar D. Ramulu and others were present.

Charminar legislator Muntaz Ahmed Khan distributed cheques to 231 beneficiaries, Karwan MLA Kausar Mohiuddin distributed 58 cheques and MLC Riyaz-ul-Hasan Affendi 50.

Farmers misguided on three agriculture bills, says Laxman

Accuses Oppn of provoking farmers; says they are helping middlemen

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

BJP's OBC Mocha president Dr K. Laxman on Thursday accused Opposition parties of provoking the farmers with "wrong propaganda" against the new agricultural laws which they were projecting as being harmful to farmers.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP state office, Dr Laxman, a former president of the party state unit, alleged that some parties that were protesting against the farm laws were supporting middlemen who were cheating farmers and forcing them to sell their produce at unfair prices. Dr Laxman said that the new laws have been very helpful to farmers and they have got the minimum support price for their produce. Dr Laxman recalled that Communist parties had campaigned against the financial reforms which were undertaken by former prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao in 1991. He alleged that the Telangana Rashtra Samiti in the state was obstructing national development under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Accusing the state government of not announcing minimum support price for fine quality paddy, he added that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao had also diverted soil test funds.

He said the condition of Telangana state government employees was pathetic. He alleged that Chandrashekar Rao was playing a political gimmick before the elections to the Warangal and Khammam municipal corporations by releasing employment notifications. Dr Laxman said the state government not ruling by Dr B.R. Ambedkar's Constitution but was only implementing the "Kalvakuntla constitution" in the state. Referring to the Chief Minister's plans of leading a national front of parties, Dr Laxman said: "There is no federal front here, only the family front under the leadership of Kalvakuntla Chandrashekar Rao."



Farmers and activists protest against the Centre's three new farm bills organised by the Akhila Bharata Rythu Porata Samiti at Dharna Chowk, Indira Park, on Thursday in Hyderabad.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

Oppn worried as new bills will help farmers, says Vivek

DC CORRESPONDENT
NIZAMABAD, DEC. 17

BJP core committee member G. Vivek Venkatswamy alleged on Thursday that Opposition parties were worried about their future after the implementation of new agriculture laws enacted by the BJP-led NDA government.

"They are bluntly opposing the agriculture laws and misleading farmers," said Venkatswamy, a former MP. After industrialisation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wanted the farmers to prosper and had brought about the laws, he said.

● **VENKATSWAMY SAID** that no party would work to damage its own political prospects, and neither would the BJP. The agriculture laws would benefit the farmers and double their income, he said, and asked farmers to support the Centre.

Speaking to mediapersons at the district BJP office on Thursday, Venkatswamy said that the minimum support price (MSP) fund had increased from ₹3 lakh crore to ₹8 lakh crore under the NDA government. He pointed out that then agricul-

ture minister Sharad Pawar, the Congress and other parties had supported reforms in the agriculture sector. But, for political benefits, the Opposition parties were now demanding repeal of the agriculture laws, he said.

Venkatswamy said that no party would work to damage its own political prospects, and neither would the BJP. The agriculture laws would benefit the farmers and double their income, he said, and asked farmers to support the Centre.

BJP district president Laxminarsiah, state executive committee member Dhanpal Suryanarayana Gupta and others were present.

JAGGA REDDY SLAMS GOVT'S NEW LAND REGN POLICY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

Congress MLA T. Jayaprakash 'Jagga' Reddy slammed the state government for using the registration wing like a research centre and creating confusion over the Dharani portal and the new registration process.

Speaking to reporters here on Thursday, Jagga Reddy wanted to know why the government was seeking data of assets when the fact is that people's assets were protected right from the days of Nizam.

Reddy charged that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao took up these initiatives under the influence of biased officials. He questioned Rao's unilateral decision and wanted to know how such a major policy change was not discussed in the Legislative Assembly.

He said because of Covid-19, poor people did not get loans nor could they sell their properties because of closure of registration offices and ban on transactions.

He demanded the Chief Minister to resolve the problems immediately and issue orders to the Registration office to restore the old system for registration of properties.

In another press conference, former MP V. Hanumantha Rao questioned the Chief Minister about how he intends to curb land-grabbing and what action would be taken against encroachers as per the Dharani portal and new registration system.

9-yr-old recovers from chronic disease, parents thank Kavitha

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The parents of nine-year-old Sagar Babu met TRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha on Thursday when she was touring Jagtial and thanked her for supporting their son, who has since recovered from chronic liver disease.

Teku Anjanna, the father of Sagar Babu, recalled that local villagers had told Kavitha, then the Nizamabad MP, when she visited Maitapur in 2017 to address a meeting about the plight of Sagar and his family. Kavitha took up the case personally and got ₹26 lakh sanctioned for Sagar's treatment. Two years later, the child had recovered.

MLA Sanjay Kumar took Twitter to thank Kavitha for her initiative that saved a life. The family of Sagar accompanied by the villagers met Kavitha and thanked her for her kind gesture.

Sagar's family said that during the years of his treatment, Kavitha constantly looked after them and followed up on Sagar's progress. Kavitha assured that she would continue to help Sagar.



The parents of 9-year-old Sagar Babu meet TRS MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha to thank her for her financial support during the treatment of the boy, on Thursday in Hyderabad.

GOVT TO DISTRIBUTE 2.4L GIFT PACKETS TO CHRISTIANS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The Telangana State Christian (Minorities) Finance Corporation said it would be distributing 2.4 lakh gift packets worth ₹9.97 crore to the Christian community for Christmas. This year, the public Christmas dinner will not be arranged due to Covid-19 restrictions.

The corporation has decided to distribute gift packets to 500 Christian families in each GHMC division and 1,000 in each Assembly constituency. Officials said that in the GHMC limits, out of 200 public representatives, 157 had taken their quota of gift packets for distribution so far.

The distribution work started on Monday and will be completed on Friday. Officials said gift parcels had been sent to the districts.

Tribal school is now a Sainik Gurukul

DC CORRESPONDENT
WARANGAL, DEC. 17

The state government has converted the tribal welfare school in Ashoknagar of Warangal Rural district into a gurukul sainik school to prepare tribal students for a career in the armed forces.

Inaugurating the country's first Tribal Gurukul Sainik School on Thursday, tribal welfare minister Satyavathi Rathod said that the school would provide a huge platform for Adivasi students to excel.

She said that the school would have horse riding facility.

Telangana has more gurukul schools than other States in the country.

The government is spending ₹1.25 lakh on each student per annum, the minister said.

Even though the Covid-19 pandemic had hit the economy, the government had continued funding the education sector, she said. Referring to the success of 40 girl

students from the SC community who secured admission in MBBS, she commended R.S. Praveen Kumar, Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society secretary.

Mahbubabad MP Maloth Kavitha said that she would strive to set up a sports complex by securing funds from the Centre.

Warangal Rural collector M. Haritha said the sainik preparatory school would enable students from the marginalised sections to have better representation in the armed forces. She expressed the hope that tribal students who are physically well built would perform exceptionally well in the armed forces.

"There is a scope to avoid child marriages in the Adivasi community if more educational facilities are provided," the collector said. Narsampet MLA Peddi Sudarshan Reddy urged the authorities to give preference to the locals in admissions.

Borrower ends life by suicide; lender blamed

Hyderabad, Dec. 17: A 25-year-old woman allegedly died by suicide in Siddipet district after an app-based lender from whom she had taken a loan sent messages to all the contacts in her phone alleging that she had defaulted on the repayment. Police said the woman had

borrowed about ₹3 lakh over time from the online firm.

According to her woman, she took the loan as they were facing financial problems. Being listed as a defaulter was the cause for her suicide, a relative claimed. A case was registered, police added. —PTI

For if we live, we live to the lord and if we die, we die to the lord. So whether we live or whether we die, we are the lord's Romans 14:8

18th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

SANGRAM VIDYASAGAR
MRO, Mominpet, R.R. Dist.
(D.O.E.: 18-12-2002)

You will remain in our hearts forever

Inserted by: Mrs Meena Sangram - Wife
Mr & Mrs Avinash & Cynthia Sangram - Son, Daughter-In-Law & Grand Sons Aiden & Aaron
Mr & Mrs Philip & Archana Acosta - Son-In-Law, Daughter, Grand Daughter's Anchal & Ava,
Mr & Mrs Ashwin & Sonam Sangram - Son, Daughter-In-Law & Grand Son

1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Dr. Emmanuel M.Sc PhD
Founder, Principal of St.Alphonsa's Educational Development Society.

Loving father and counsellor to many, whose lives have been impacted by his sincere service and relentless commitment.

Deeply missed by
Family & Staff of
St.Alphonsa's Educational Development Society.

23rd ANNIVERSARY

Sri T.S. JAMBU LINGAM
(Ex-Army & Aerodrome ATC)
DOB: 19.09.1919 DOD: 18.12.1997
Great Grandson of T. Muniswami Pillai
(Ex-Army, Subedar)
Address: Bungalow 207/A, Tadband, Secunderabad.
Inserted by: T. J. Lalitha Bai
T.J. Gyneshwar, T.J. Gopinath- Sons
(S/2021/D00964)

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Late GANDIBOYNA SAMUEL KRUPAVARAM
Always on our minds
Forever in our hearts
Your guiding hand on our shoulders
will remain with us forever.
Inserted by: M. Purushotham,
M. Anagad, Smt. M.Yashnavi Sagar,
Smt. S.Uma Devi and P. Rohit
Advocates
(S/2021/D00962)

TEJ KARAN
S/o Late Raja Dharam Karan
Passed away on December 14th 2020.
Survived by: Smt. Neena Karan (Wife)
Sanjeev Karan (Son)
Shafali Karan (Daughter-in-law)
Neha Karan (Grand Daughter)
(A/2021/D00032)

6th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
The memory of the righteous is a blessing. Prov. 10:7

Mrs. T. MARTHA
Your memories are cherished
your presence is missed
your legacy lives on your love remains
Inserted by:
FAMILY MEMBERS
Ph: 9440809072 / 8008041951

Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet and
Light Unto My Path; Psalm 119:105

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

Mrs. MERUGU DEVAMANI
DOB: 18-12-1921 DOD: 13-2-1998
"REACHES OUT HER HANDS TO THE NEEDY"
Children, Grand Children,
Great Grand Children,
Near & Dear

Praise the Lord
BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE
For whether we live, we live unto the Lord;
and whether we die, we die unto the Lord;
whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.
Romans 14: 8

PULLELA MURALI MOHAN
IPS (ADGP)
Love you & miss you Anna...

8th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Late Sri. T. GOPAL Garu
Former Indian Volleyball Captain,
Retd. Addl. Superintendent of Police
D.O.B.: 20-8-1941 D.O.D.: 18-12-2012
"Tu pyaar ka sagar hai..."
Inserted By: Wife: T. Devaki Gopal &
Family Members.

9th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Sri. T. RAJENDER YADAV (BABLU)
D.O.D.: 18.12.2011
Today we remember with deep respect in our hearts, who built our past, Nourished our present, Blessed our future. You are remembered every moment in our lives.
Inserted by: R. Shanti Bai - Wife
Shreya Yadav (Reshma) (Daughter) -
Vikas Yadav (Son-in-law)
Saavni Yadav, Rishi Yadav, Ridhi Yadav & Shivam Yadav (Grand Children)
Patel Satyanarayan Yadav (Brother-in-law)
Papa Ram Yadav (Son-in-law) Eashwar Yadav (Son-in-law) & Devratna Family
Mrs. Sri Balaji Mathura Mithal Bhandar
(S/2021/D00965)

14th ANNIVERSARY

C. Balakrishna Nair
Inserted by
Karoor Family

11th ANNIVERSARY

MEGJI NEHRU
D.O.B.: 23-02-1948 - D.O.E.: 18-12-2009
There are no words to express the loss of our beloved. We hope & pray for his soul to rest in peace.
MISS YOU!!!!
From Wife: **MEGJI JAYASHREE**
Sons: **MEGJI SUNIL, MEGJI VIJAY**

"Rejoicing in hope, patient in affliction, Faithful in prayer"
Romans 12:12 (Holy Bible)

15th ANNIVERSARY
IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Mrs. KRUPAKARA BUNYAN
(Wife Late Vasa John Bunyan)
Her devoted service to education was an inspiration, her love a blessing.
Inserted By:
CHILDREN & GRAND CHILDREN
(S/2021/D00930)

SHORT TAKES

GHMC COMMITTEE APPROVES DRAFT BUDGET

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) standing committee, which met here on Thursday, approved the draft budget of ₹5,600 crore for the financial year 2021-22.

As per the draft budget, 32 per cent of the revenue, ₹1,850 crore, is expected through property tax, followed by ₹1,224.51 crore through loans, ₹1,022.70 crore through fees and user charges.

The GHMC will also earn revenue through grants (₹770.51 crore), assigned revenue (₹652.10 crore), regularisation charges (₹189.69 crore) and other sources.

After the standing committee's approval, the draft budget will be placed before the GHMC's general body for debate and reviewed again before January 10, 2021. After the general body's ratification, the draft budget would be forwarded to the state government before March 7, 2021, for final approval.

EXCISE SUBMITS 2017 DRUG CASES PROBE REPORT

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The excise department on Thursday submitted a report to the High Court stating that its investigation into 12 drug cases registered in 2017 had been completed.

Eleven chargesheets have been filed and another will be filed soon. There is no need to hand the cases over to central agencies as the investigation was complete, counsel for the excise department told the court.

A Telangana High Court division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijayeswari Reddy was dealing with a plea of Congress leader A. Revanth Reddy, who urged the court to order a probe by either the Central Bureau of Investigation or any other central investigation agency into the drugs case as they involved celebrities and film stars.

On the other side, Enforcement Directorate (ED) told the High Court that the excise department was not providing details of the drugs case. Additional Solicitor General Rajeshwar Rao on behalf of the ED sought orders to the excise department to release the chargesheets and statements. The High Court adjourned the hearing of the case for two weeks.

Ayesha's kin to move HC to speed up probe

Say case has been dragging on for 12 yrs, wait is traumatic

NAYEEN KUMAR | DC
HYDERABAD DEC. 17

More than a year after the exhumation and re-post-mortem, family members of Ayesha Meera, the 17-year-old B Pharmacy student who was raped and murdered in her hostel, are still waiting for the findings of the report with the case making no headway. Ayesha's mother was informed earlier this week that the case was handed over to Vizag CBI.

The family is now preparing to file a petition before the High Court for directions to expedite the investigation as the case has been dragged for close to 12 years. "We need them to fix a time-frame and to monitor the progress of investigation," said, Srinivas Rao, the lawyer fighting the case on behalf

of the family.

"The investigators keep changing, reasons for the delay are varied and all this is happening because there is no pressure on them. We have no other option but approach the court to speed up matters. The re-post mortem examination was conducted on December 14 of last year and its report is yet to see light of the day. We are given reasons like the report has not arrived from Gandhi Hospital or that students are busy with their PG exams and now it is the pandemic. When the aggrieved mother approached the authorities, she was told about the case being handed over to Vizag CBI. The lackadaisical approach is because of lack of pressure," said Srinivas Rao.

The latest official update

has been in February wherein the head injury was established on the body before her death, according to a DNA report.

Forensic experts had collected hair, nails and bones during the re-post-mortem. Sources said that the report of the same was submitted in a sealed cover to the High Court. Meanwhile, officials from the Central Bureau of Investigation said that they would shortly be submitting their progress report.

After the acquittal of Satyam Babu in a landmark judgement in March 2017, the case has been tossed around for a lead. With the name of Koneru Satish, grandson of former deputy Chief Minister Koneru Ranga Rao popping up in the case, the investigation

took a new turn.

At the time of the incident and following the arrest of Babu, several activists alleged that police had nabbed him only to save Satish.

It was also alleged by Ayesha's parents that Koneru Satish and his friends were regular visitors to the girls hostel as it was owned by his relative, Konera Padma.

After Satish agreed for a narco analysis test during the last interrogation last December, there was no mention of it.

"The Special Investigation Team (SIT) should call for the test and take action but very little is being done as there is no accountability. We will be approaching the court praying for an early end to the case," said the advocate.

SCB meet on GHMC integration put on hold

T.S.S. SIDDHARTH | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The much awaited merger of the Secunderabad Cantonment Board with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation will have wait for a while longer.

The meeting in the SCB that was expected to see elected representatives give their approval to merge with the GHMC was not conducted on Thursday.

"We are awaiting orders from the ministry of defence (MoD). Once the orders are issued, it would

● **SCB CHIEF** Executive Officer Ajit B. Reddy said there was no declaration of such a meeting.

● **RESIDENTS OF the** cantonment board area are eagerly awaiting the merger of the SCB with the GHMC.

go to the Directorate General of Defence Estates (DGDE) and other departments. It is only after their approval that we can take the matter forward and give our opinion," said J. Maheshwar Reddy, elected representative of the SCB.

SCB Chief Executive Officer Ajit B. Reddy said there was no declaration of such a meeting. "There is nothing to be acknowledged as there is no meeting conducted till now."

Residents of the cantonment board area are eagerly awaiting the merger of the SCB with the GHMC. "The merger will be good news for the people of the Cantonment Board. If the merger were to take place, there would development work and no fund crunch," said Jeetender Surana, secretary, All India Cantonment Citizen Welfare Association.



Osmania University students stage a protest alleging attack by MP Balka Suman's supporters on Thursday. — GANDHI

OU law student alleges attack by TRS activists

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

A law student, Suresh Yadav, of Osmania University was allegedly attacked by a group of 20 men inside his hostel room late on Wednesday night. They were drunk and armed with iron rods and beer bottles, he said.

Yadav lodged a complaint with the Osmania University police alleging that the attackers were TRS activists who had been sent by TRS MLA Balka Suman to assault him. After beating him, Yadav said, the group left the premises with his mobile phone and ₹5,000 cash. The police has booked a case and started an investigation.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Yadav said that he

went to sleep around 10.30 pm in his room in the D Hostel on the campus. "They were sent by TRS MLA Balka Suman. About 20 men, including Shishupal Yadav, barged into my room around 11.30 pm and started hurling abuses at me before attacking me. It was a blowback from my speeches about employment notifications," said the student, adding that he had lodged a complaint against the men.

The Osmania University police said that they had booked cases against Sishupal and about 20 others under Section 143 (unlawful assembly), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 390 (forcefully taking money without consent), and 379 read with 149 (theft) of the IPC and an investigation was launched into the issue.

TELANGANA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

Regional Office, Warangal
H.No.1-8-269, Balasamudram, Hanamkonda, Warangal District - 506001

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION

1	Name of The Company and Address with Telephone Number	M/s. Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Limited 6-2-9/5, HMVSSB Premises, Rear Block, 4th Floor, Khairatabad, Hyderabad, Telangana, India - 500004
2	Proposed Location	Godavari River Bed, Eturnagaram Village, Eturnagaram Mandal, Mulugu District, Telangana
3	Name of the authorized person to be contacted	Smt.G.Deepthi (General Manager), M/s. Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Limited, Phone: 7693336459, 040-23323150, email: tsmdctd@gmail.com
4	Capital Cost	Rs. 35.00 Lakhs
5	Line of activity and Mining Capacity	Mining of Ordinary sand - 1,82,400m ³ in 3 years period over an extent of 9.12 Ha
6	Date/Time/Venue of Public Hearing	Date: 19.01.2021, Time: 03:00PM, Venue: Zilla Praja Parishad High School, Eturnagaram (Village & Mandal), Mulugu District, Telangana
7	Place of availability of Executive Summary (Telugu & English) & Draft EIA report in English and also in CO form of the proposed project.	1. Office of the District Collector, Mulugu District 2. Office of the Project Officer, ITDA Office, Eturnagaram. 3. Zilla Parishad Office, Mulugu 4. Office of the General Manager, District Industries Centre, Mulugu. 5. Integrated Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Govt. of India, Aranya Bhavan, Saifabad, Hyderabad. 6. Office of the T.S Pollution Control Board, Paryavaran Bhavan, A-3, Industrial Estate, Sanath Nagar, Hyderabad. 7. Office of the T.S Pollution Control Board, zonal Office. H.No.6-3-1219, 2nd Floor TS No.1, part, Block-C, Ward No.91, Begumpet Umanagar, Near Country Club, Hyderabad - 500016. 8. Office of the Environmental Engineer, TSPCB, Regional Office, Warangal. 9. Department of Environment, Forest, Science & Technology, Telangana State, Secretariat, Hyderabad. 10. Office of the Tahsildar, Eturnagaram (M), Mulugu District. 11. Gram Panchayat Office, Eturnagaram (Village & Mandal), Mulugu District, Telangana

Suggestions, views, comments and Objections of the public, if any are invited with in 30 days from the date of publication of the notification from all persons including bonafide residents, environmental groups & others located at project site/sites of displacement/sites likely to be affected. All the above persons can also submit written suggestions to the undersigned of the T.S Pollution Control Board. The interested persons can take part in the proceedings of the public hearing on the date and venue specified above. The draft EIA (in English) and Executive Summary (in English & Telugu) will be uploaded in TSPCB website.

This notice of Public Hearing is issued as per the Appendix IV of EIA Notification 2006 and its cost is borne by the project proponent.

Place: Warangal, Date: 16.12.2020
DIPR R.O. No. 1282-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/12020-21, Dt. 17.12.2020

Sd/- Environmental Engineer,
T.S Pollution Control Board, Regional Office, Warangal

Srisailem unit to run at full power in June

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The Telangana Power Generation Corporation (TS Genco) has finalised its action plan to restart all the six units of the 900 MW Srisailem Left Bank Power House to generate electricity in June next year.

The six units of the underground power plant were damaged during the fire accident at the plant in August, in which nine persons were killed.

TS Genco Chairman and Managing Director D. Prabhakar Rao inspected the revival work at the power plant and finalised

the action plan.

According to TS Genco, operations in two units have resumed and 300 MW of power was being generated. Another unit would be ready by December-end, and two more by March next.

Works on the fourth unit of the plant, which suffered the worst damage due to the fire, will be completed by June 2021.

It was said that the generator and transformers for the fourth unit were being installed. When all units are ready, the hydel power project can generate 900 MW of electricity by the reversible pumping method.

Man held for stalking, harassing woman

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

A 30-year-old man was arrested by the Rachakonda cybercrime police on Thursday for stalking and harassing women on Facebook by creating fake profiles and threatening them that he would share their private photographs.

According to the police, the accused, Varakala Ramesh, a resident of Hayathnagar, had worked as a sub-editor in a media firm and lost the his due to his behaviour. "In 2018, he created a fake Facebook profile in the name 'Padmavathi-Padmavathi' to gather information about women and blackmail them. He would search for women's profiles on Facebook and send them friend requests," said the police.

Ramesh befriended the

victim and managed to find out her mobile number and address. "He started black-mailing her by threatening that he would make public her nude pictures. When the victim realised that it was a man, she blocked his phone number but he kept contacting her from different phone numbers and WhatsApp numbers," police said.

After receiving a threat that he would upload their WhatsApp chat and her morphed photos online, the victim resumed chatting and the two eventually met. Ramesh forcibly took photographs of themselves on his mobile phone and snatched her phone, gathered her Facebook and WhatsApp credentials and logged in from his phone. "He sent messages to all her friends on Facebook and WhatsApp with an intention to defame her," the Task Force said.

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Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
Government of India

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NHAI Helpline No.: 1033

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
REVENUE (LA) DEPARTMENTFORM-C
NOTIFICATION
(Under Section-11 of the Act where 10 A
Exemption is given) (See rule 6/12)

Gazette No. HYD - 164
File No. AA/126/2020

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana/ Special Collector (Land Acquisition), & Commissioner, GHMC, Hyderabad, that a total of **614.91 Sq. Yds.** of land is required in the Amberpet Village & Mandal Hyderabad District for public purpose namely flyover from Goinaka Shaleem Church to Mukaram Hotel (Irani Hotel) via 6 No. 'X' Road & Amberpet Junction.

Therefore it is notified that for the above said project in the Amberpet Village & Mandal Hyderabad District land measuring more or less **614.91 Sq. Yds.** of Standard measurement, whose detail description is as following, is proposed for acquisition:

S. No.	TS No.	Block	Ward	Type of Title	Type of Land	Area under acquisition in Sq. Yds.	Name & Address of person interested	Boundaries	Trees	Structure				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
1	57/2 56/2	A	162	G. Land	G. Land Police Dept.	3.66 3.66	Shanker Goud 2-3-128	Road	Owner of the Land	East Neighbours	West R. Galsiah	+	+	+
2	7/13 4/5 2/4	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal) G. Land Police Department	147.77 43.27 234.39	Saba Quadri 2-3-433	Road	Owner of the Land	Md. Rafeeq	Narsimha	+	+	+
3	2/3	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	8.66	Kumar 2-3-434	Road	Owner of the Land	Saba Quadri	M.A. Aziz	+	+	+
4	7/3	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	17.59	M.A. Aziz 2-3-435	Road	Saba Quadri	Kumar	Md. Hafeez	+	+	+
5	7/4	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	26.66	Md. Hafeez 2-3-436	Road	Saba Quadri	M.A. Aziz	M.A. Mannan	+	+	+
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	2-3-438	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	7/6	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	25.15	Md. Mazar Khan 2-3-439	Road	Owner of the land	Md. Rafeeq Ahmed	M.A. Mannan	+	+	+
8	7/7	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	34.66	Md. Rafeeq Ahmed 2-3-440	Road	Owner of the land	Kayaseq	Md. Mazar Khan	+	+	+
9	7/8	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	25.25	Layeeq 2-3-441	Road	Owner of the land	Atheeq	Md. Rafeeq Ahmed	+	+	+
10	7/9	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	30.00	Atheeq 2-3-442	Road	Owner of the land	Mohd. Thoufiq	Layeeq	+	+	+
11	7/10	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	29.86	Mohd. Ateeq 2-3-443	Road	Owner of the land	Mohd. Ateeq	Atheeq	+	+	+
12	7/11	B	162	G. Land	"M" (Municipal)	26.19	Mohd. Ateeq 2-3-444	Road	Owner of the land	Mohd. Ghouse	Mohd. Thoufiq	+	+	+
13	22/2	A	162	G. Land	Ashoor Khana G	149.18	Ashoor Khana -	Road	Part of the Owner land	Srinivasa Rao	Venkatesh	+	+	+
Total						614.91								

This Notification is made under the provisions of Section-11(1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act No. 30/2013), as amended by the Right to Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Telangana Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No. 21 of 2017) to all whom it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the Office of the Special Collector (Land Acquisition), & Commissioner, GHMC, Hyderabad and Special Deputy Collector, Land Acquisition, GHMC, 6th Floor, Tank Bund, Hyderabad, on any working day during the working hours. The Government of Telangana / Special Collector-cum-Appropriate Government is pleased to authorize Officer i.e., Special Deputy Collector, Land Acquisition, GHMC, Hyderabad and his staff to enter upon and survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore into the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of their work as provided and specified in Section-12 of the said Act.

Under Section 11(4) of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e. sale / purchase, etc., or create any encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of Notification without prior approval of the Special Collector.

Objections to the acquisition if any and claims from all the persons interested / affected for settlement by negotiation of the compensation, may be filed by the person interested in the land within 60 (sixty days) from the date of publication of this Notification as provided under Section 15 of the Act before Special Collector / Authorized Officer.

Sd/-
Special Dy. Collector
Land Acquisition, GHMC,
Hyderabad

Sd/-
Special Collector (LA) &
Commissioner, GHMC,
Hyderabad

R.O. No. 1035/LA-PP/Advt/Pub/2020-21

SHORT TAKES

7 FEARED DROWNED IN PENNA RIVER

DC CORRESPONDENT
KADAPA, DEC. 17

Seven youngsters from Tirupati were feared drowned in the Penna River at Siddavatam on Thursday evening. The bodies of two of them were found at around 8 pm during search operations by police and swimmers, who rushed to the spot immediately after the incident was reported. The two were identified as Somasekhar and Rajesh. According to superintendent of police Karur Karunapathi Nagendra Kumar Anburajan and sub-divisional police officer, Rajampeta, G. Siva Bhaskara Reddy, Ramachandra, the father of Shiva of Siddavatam of one of those feared dead, had died 11 months ago. Shiva, who is studying in Tirupati, along with his friends, attended his father's first death anniversary on Thursday. Later, they all went for a swim in the Penna River. The seven young men were swept away by the speed of the flow.

As soon as the matter was known, Rajampet DSP Sivabaskar Reddy, Ontimitta circle inspector and the Siddhavatam sub-inspector along with mandal revenue officers and fire brigade reached the spot.

While two bodies were found, those of the five others remained untraceable. Heavy rain and wind were hampering the operations, the DSP said.

FOCUS LIGHTS FAIL AT KURNOOL HOSPITAL OT

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL DEC. 17

The delivery ward in Kurnool General Hospital is in shambles. Lives of pregnant women who visit the hospital are in peril as oxygen cannot be supplied because of shortage of regulators fixed to the central oxygen supply apparatus. Monkeys have allegedly cut off cables making ACs dysfunctional. Doctors perform operations in pitch darkness as head focus lights are not working.

There are no medicines to stop heavy bleeding, leaving the patient in further pain while life-saving drugs are in short supply.

These horrific revelations came to light when KGH Deputy Superintendent Prof Prabhakar Reddy visited the delivery ward on Thursday. He said the condition was appalling and contractors were immediately asked to supply oxygen regulators and indents were put to APMSIDC stores to make available Vitamin-K, Methergine, Anafortan and Urosac bags.

Gynaecologists have been reportedly suturing patients in darkness in the absence of lighting systems in the ward.

A Gynaecology professor said "these are minor problems and we are habituated to it. Patients are often told to get their own tablets and other medicines if they are not available in the stock room," he said.

The neonatal ward has at least 30 occupants in the ward any given day. Sometimes it could be more than 40 also, said the Deputy Superintendent. Keeping their requirement, he said, medicines have been ordered to meet requirements of at least three months, he added.

Hospital Superintendent Dr Narendranath Reddy said patients need not wait for a long time to receive blood reports. He said the labs in the hospitals were directed to send these reports by WhatsApp, SMS, and email. In this way the patients will save a lot of time, he added.

PSLV places comm satellite in orbit after perfect launch

CMS-01 to replace GSAT-12; will be directed to space home in four days

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, DEC. 17

India's 42nd communication satellite CMS-01 was placed in its designated spot in space after a flawless mission by a PSLV rocket from the spaceport in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday.

The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C50 took off from the second launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at Sriharikota range as scheduled at 3.41 pm.

After a flight of 20 minutes and 12 seconds, the rocket released the CMS-01 into its designated orbit. The solar panels of CMS-01 were automatically deployed and Isro's Master Control Facility at Hassan assumed control of the satellite.

In the next four days, the satellite will be raised to its permanent orbit about 36,000 km above the earth.

Isro Chairman Dr K. Sivan said after the mission that he was "extremely happy" with the success and appreciated the efforts of the satellite and launch vehicle teams in realising this mission amidst the pandemic.

The CMS-01 will replace the GSAT-12 that weighed 1,410-kg and was launched on July 11, 2011. According to Isro, CMS-01, which has a seven-year life span, is meant to provide services in the Extended C Band to cover the Indian mainland, Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands. The PSLV-C50 is the 52nd flight of the PSLV and 22nd of PSLV in the XL configuration with six strap-on motors. This was the 77th launch from the SDSC. No more launches are scheduled this year.

CMS-01 will be placed in its designated slot in space after a series of manoeuvres on December 21.

PSLV-C50 is the 50th launch vehicle in the 'C' series of PSLV. It was first successfully launched in October 1994

The PSLV has previously launched the Chandrayaan-1 in 2008 and Mars Orbit Spacecraft in 2013.

Isro to launch an earth observation satellite 'Anand' made by a startup through PSLV-C51 soon

(Left) The PSLV-C50 rocket flies to space with the communication satellite CMS-01 after its launch from the spaceport at Sriharikota in Nellore district on Thursday.



EXTREMELY HAPPY with the success and appreciated the efforts of the satellite and launch vehicle teams in realising this mission amidst the pandemic.

DR K. SIVAN, Isro Chairman

● IN THE next four days, the satellite will be raised to its permanent orbit about 36,000 km above the earth.

CMS-01 is the first communication satellite that Isro has launched under its new satellite naming scheme. Under the new

scheme, Isro is naming its earth observation satellites 'EOS' and communication satellites 'CMS'.

According to sources in Isro, two Indian satellites namely GISAT and Microsat-2A are ready for launch next.

The launch of the GISAT-1 satellite on

board the GSLV was scheduled for March 5 this year but it was postponed because of technical reasons a day before the launch. The GSLV was dismantled.

Now Isro is planning to launch the GISAT-1 on board a GSLV rocket which is being readied again.

Water with heavy metals used to grow vegetables

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Lack of separate irrigation and drainage canals and mixing of water from both sources and usage of such polluted water for cultivation of crops, especially in Godavari and Krishna delta areas, are said to be the major factors for the presence of residues of heavy metals and pesticides in crops like paddy and vegetables in Andhra Pradesh.

As several Central agencies including AIIMS, IIT, NIN, CCMB, NEERI, NCDC, NIN and others have come with their findings on the mystery illness, suspected to be due to presence of pesticides in samples of tomato and brinjal, mercury in raw rice and also finding presence of heavy metals like lead and nickel in the blood samples of the affected persons and nickel in milk, it is believed that contaminated water used for raising crops like paddy and vegetables, was the main culprit.

For want of proper maintenance of both irrigation canals and drainage canals and as they go parallel in some parts of the state, untreated industrial effluents, domestic sewage, runoff water from fields where chemicals were used for culti-

■ Scientists suggest taking up a project mode study in select places to find out the varied sources of pollutants and the manner in which they are finding their way into food crops.

■ They advocate separate maintenance of irrigation and drainage canals in order to avoid water from the two sources getting mixed up.

■ In tail-end areas, people use drainage water both for cultivation of crops and for drinking because of improper water supply.

vation of crops and sources of pollution, find their way into the drainage canals and get mixed with irrigation canals, thereby polluting them.

Scientists from Acharya NG Ranga Agriculture University and YSR Horticulture University and from other research centres opine that unlike in the earlier days when usage of fertilisers and pesticides was promoted to boost production of food grains, they are supposed to concentrate more on pollutants finding their presence in food crops.

A scientist from Acharya NG Ranga Agriculture University said, "It is time the thrust of research should be more on pollutants than on nutrients, given the situa-

tion where food crops are getting polluted from various sources and affecting the health of the consumers."

Scientists state that earlier they used to concentrate on addressing deficiency of micronutrients like iron, copper and zinc in food crops as such deficiency used to make the crops vulnerable for pests having a major impact on the quantum of yield.

Underlining the importance of industrialisation and urbanisation for development of any city or town or village, the scientists recommend paying more attention on the negative impact of such developmental activities in the backdrop of recent Eluru mystery illness so that it helps avoid recurrence of such illness in any part of the state.

FEB CONDUCTIVE FOR GP POLLS, SEC ASSURES HC

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

The State Election Commission filed a counter-affidavit asking the AP High Court to strike down the petition filed by the state government against the conduct of gram panchayat polls on the grounds that the administration would be involved in Covid-19 vaccination programme.

In the affidavit filed on Thursday, the SEC stated that it would take three to six months for Covid-19 vaccine to reach AP as the Centre would distribute the vaccine on a priority basis. It informed the court that elections in Bihar, Rajasthan and Hyderabad were held successfully.

The SEC said that it had decided to conduct gram panchayat polls in February after taking opinions of all stakeholders and added that at present, the situation in AP was suitable for conduct of gram panchayat polls as planned in February.

● SEC STATED that it would take three to six months for Covid-19 vaccine to reach AP as the Centre would distribute the vaccine on a priority basis.

BCs are backbone of society: Jagan

DC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, DEC. 17

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday said that for the first time in the social history of the country, BCs have been empowered through BC Corporations and asked their chairpersons to work as liaisons between the BCs and the government. He was addressing a gathering of the BC Sankranti Sabha at Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium in which 56 BC Corporation chairpersons took oath. Reddy declared that BCs are not 'backward classes' but 'backbone classes' of the society. He said that they had created women empowerment history by earmarking half of the posts to them.

He said that empowerment of weaker sections socially,

economically, and politically has been taken up as a movement and nowhere in the country was such emancipation reported. He cautioned the newly sworn-in persons that the position was a responsibility and not power. He sought them to uplift persons who are left out and make them part of welfare programmes.

The Chief Minister said, "Setting up 56 BC corporations and appointing 728 BC leaders, from 139 castes, in the posts of directors and chairman, is history scripted by the Andhra Pradesh government. I am happy to note that 29 of the 56 chairpersons and 336 of the 672 directors are women. We have made laws for implementing 50 percent reservation for BC, SC, ST, minorities and women in all nominated posts and contracts.

Government of Kerala
TENDER
FOREST & WILD LIFE DEPARTMENT

Window No:iprd 20/e 196 • Tender No.A2-2103/2020 • Divisional Forest Officer, Timber Sales Division, Perumbavoor, Muddikal P.O-683547, Phone-0484-2522219 • E-auction of timber on 06.14.22/01/2021 from Chalakudy, veeloor, Muddikal, Chettikulam & Varapuzha depots of Timber sales division, Perumbavoor • PAC : 1 Crore.

Window No:iprd 20/e 197 • Tender No.E-3831/2020 • Divisional Forest Officer, Sandal Division, Marayoor P.O, Edukki-685620, Phone-04865-252988 • E-auction sale of sandalwood on 20.21/01/2020 from Govt.Sandal depot, Marayoor, EMD-50,000/- • PAC : 50 Crore

Full details on Tender Advertisement appeared above are exhibited before the Office from which the tender originates. For Details on all Tenders above please visit www.kerala.gov.tender/index.htm. Please put in search the Window No for getting the advertisement of your choice. R.O. No. 109/G1/2020/PRD.

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
Department of the Rural Development O/o DRDO, Collectorate Vikarabad District.

T.No. DRDO/2/NRSY/0001/2020 **TENDER NOTICE** Date: 17.12.2020.

Name of work: DRDA-Vikarabad-MGNREGS-TelanganaKharita Grama Panchayathi Haritha Haaram Nursery in each Gram Panchayat as per the new Panchayat Raj act-Procurement of Teak stumps with Pencil size for raising of Grama Panchayathi Haritha Haaram Nursery - Calling tender from the Suppliers of teak stumps approximately qly 18.0 Lakhs Teak Stumps with Pencil size - Publishing of Tender Notice covering in Telangana (33) Districts- Request- Reg. Issue of tender schedule forms from 18.12.2020 to 24.12.2020 on all working days. The tender schedule forms can be obtained from the O/o DRDO, DRDA, Vikarabad by paying Rs. 3,000/- in shape of Demand Draft (Nationalized Bank) in favour of DRDO, DRDA, Vikarabad. The last date for submission of the sealed tenders is on 24.12.2020. The date and time of opening of sealed tenders is on 28.12.2020 at 3.00 PM. The detailed terms and conditions can be obtained in person during office hours at office of the undersigned, on the dates mentioned above. Sd/- District Rural Development Officer Collectorate, Vikarabad District.

R.O.No.:813-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21

Office of the Notified Area Committee
Hyderabad International Airport Area Shamshabad- Telangana State TELEFAX: 040 - 24008258

TENDER NOTICE Date: 18.12.2020

Tender No. 38/ NAC/2020-21

Notified Area Committee (NAC) invites e-tender from the eligible contractors having experience in similar work and appropriate class of e-registration with erstwhile Govt. of AP or Govt. of Telangana for the work of "NAC - Development of Land scape in the median approach roads leading to Hyderabad Airport at RGIA, Shamshabad, RR District

Estimated Contract Value (ECV): Rs.27,02,704/-

The availability of online application from 18.12.2020 at 10.30hrs to 04.01.2021 at 16.00hrs. Last date for online submission of tender: 04.01.2021 at 17.00 hrs. Opening of bids: 05.01.2021 at 10.30 hrs. For details please visit website: <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>

DIPR No. 1262-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 Sd/- Full Time Officer-NAC

Govt. of Bihar

Office of the joint Director
Hydrology Directorate, 3rd Floor, Block-B,
Jai Sansadhan Bhawan, Anisabad, Patna-800002

Corrigendum No-02

Due to technical Reasons ,the last date of issue/publication and submission of the BR/WRD/HYD-DIR/NHP-SW/IFB/2020-21 THROUGH PR No-008856(WRD) 2020-21 For "Conducting River cross section survey of Mahananda River and its Tributaries" is hereby extended to 21th December 2020 and 5th Febuary 2021 respectively.

Note:- Interested parties may view and download invitation for Bid containing the detailed terms and condition free of cost from the website <http://fmis.bih.in> and <http://wrdd.bih.nic.in>

Joint Director,
Hydrology Directorate, Anisabad, Patna-800002
Mob:-8292347456
Email:- jdhhydrologypatna@gmail.com

PR. No. 009676 (WRD) 2020-21

साथ सम्ग्री- नॉवेसी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सुझाव हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

TELANGANA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
REGIONAL OFFICE, Warangal
H.No. 1-8-269, Balasamudram, Hanamkonda, Warangal District - 506 001

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION

In accordance with the Notification No. S.O.1533 (E) Dated 14th September 2006 of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, it is to notify that "MIS. TELANGANA STATE MINERAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED" has proposed mining of Ordinary Sand at Godavari river bed, Eturu Village, Kannaigudem Mandal, Mulugu District, Telangana with Capacity of 1,95,400Cum of sand in 3 years over an extent of 9.77Ha to have an Environmental Public Hearing to Obtain Environmental Clearance (EC) from SEIAA, Telangana, MoEF & CC, Govt. The details of the proposed project activities as given by the proponent are as follows:

1.	Name of the Company and address with telephone number	M/s. Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Limited, 6-2/9/5, HIMVSSB Premises, Rear Block, 4 th Floor, Khairatabad, Hyderabad, Telangana, India - 500004.
2.	Proposed location	Godavari River bed, Eturu Village, Kannaigudem Mandal, Mulugu District, Telangana
3.	Name of the authorized person to be contacted	Smt. G. Deepthi (General Manager), M/s. Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Limited, Ph: 7693336459, 040-23323150, e-mail: tsmcdcl@gmail.com
4.	Capital Cost	Rs 35.00 Lakhs
5.	Line of activity and Mining Capacity	Mining of Ordinary sand -1,95,400Cu.m of sand in 3 years over an extent of 9.77Ha
6.	Date/Time/ Venue of Public Hearing	Date: 19.01.2021, Time:10:00 AM, Venue : Open grounds near the Mission Bhageeratha water tank, Eturu Village, Kannaigudem Mandal, Mulugu District, Telangana.

Place of availability of Executive Summary (Telugu & English) & Draft EIA report in English and also in CD form of the proposed project:

- Office of the District Collector, Mulugu District.
- Office of the Project Officer, ITDA Office, Eturunagararam.
- Zilla Parishad Office, Mulugu.
- Office of the General Manager, District Industries Centre, Mulugu.
- Integrated Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Govt. of India, Aranya Bhavan, Saifabad, Hyderabad.
- Office of the T.S. Pollution Control Board, Paryavaran Bhavan, A-3, Industrial Estate, Sanath Nagar, Hyderabad.
- Office of the T.S. Pollution Control Board, Zonal Office, H.No.6-3-1219, 2nd Floor TS No.1, part. Block-C, Ward No.91, Begumpet, Umanagar, Near Country Club, Hyderabad- 500 016.
- Office of the Environmental Engineer, TSPCB, Regional Office, Warangal.
- Department of Environment, Forest, Science & Technology Telangana state, Secretariat, Hyderabad.
- Office of the Tahsildar, Kannaigudem (M), Mulugu District.
- Gram Panchayat Office, Eturu (V), Kannaigudem (M), Mulugu District.

Suggestions, views, comments and Objections of the public, if any are invited with in 30days from the date of publication of the notification from all persons including bonafide residents, environmental groups & others located at project sites/sites of displacements likely to be affected. All the above persons can also submit written suggestions to the undersigned of the T.S. Pollution Control Board. The interested persons can take part in the proceedings of the public hearing on the date and venue specified above. The draft EIA(in English) and Executive Summary (in English & Telugu) will be uploaded in TSPCB website. This notice of Public Hearing is issued as per the Appendix IV of EIA Notification 2006 and its cost is borne by the project proponent.

Place: Warangal
Date: 16.12.2020
DIPR R.O. No. : 1251-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21

Sd/-ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER,
T.S. POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD,
REGIONAL OFFICE, WARANGAL

WATER | REUSE

Project cost is estimated to be around ₹14.97 cr, to be completed in 12 months

Tirupati to get biggest natural sewage plant

DC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUPATI, DEC. 17

The Municipal Corporation of Tirupati (MCT) has recently taken up an eco-friendly project - natural sewage treatment plant (STP) of five million litres per day (MLD) capacity. It is the biggest in the country after the 3 MLD natural STP in Delhi.

The civic body has proposed to recycle sewage - using natural materials and aquatic plants, and re-use it for a number of non-potable purposes.

Recycling and reuse of the treated wastewater are the suggested alternatives to bridge the gap between water demand and supply, and to reduce pressure on water resources.

According to reports, almost 80 per cent of the water supplied to a household is being discharged as wastewater and it has become a potential pollutant of groundwater because it is untreated.

In Tirupati, only 30-40 per cent of sewage is

being recycled, as of now.

Though the MCT is working on the new 25 MLD large conventional STP, the apathy with regard to this plant lies in the fact that it needs a large infrastructure network and high cost. Instead of relying only on such STPs, the civic body has now planned for the non-conventional STP, which can treat the wastewater in a natural way with less maintenance and minimum cost.

"Natural STPs have

sustainable results, as the maintenance of the plant is very easy and cost effective. The treated water would have BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand) and TSS (Total Suspended Solids) values of 10 each. We are now building a 5 MLD natural STP", MCT Commissioner P.S. Girisha told DC.

The project cost is estimated to be around ₹14.97 crore and it is expected to be completed in 12 months.

The plant will recycle sewage flowing through

drains, starting from the upstream areas and passing through areas on the north side of the city, and join the escape drain close to Vinayak Sagar lake.

The working process of natural STP is that the sedimentation tank allows the sewage to stand for a long time and the total suspended solids will settle down. Thereafter, the water is passed through chambers and compartments which have beds of pebbles of various sizes, which filters the sewage.

At least four species of fast-growing aquatic plants feed on the organic matter in the water.

"What goes into the natural STP is black and grey-coloured highly polluted sewage water. And what comes out is clean water with a reduced level of BOD. The water isn't potable, but it will be routed into the Vinayak Sagar Lake and in future, it could be routed to other water bodies, for horticulture or recharging ground water", the Commissioner said.

IN BRIEF

Rehab group for throat cancer

Hyderabad: Self-help rehabilitation groups modelled on the lines of Apollo's Laryngectomee Society for the patients of throat cancer who underwent surgical removal of larynx or voice were launched when the society celebrated its 21st anniversary. Dr Umanath Nayak, senior consultant head and neck surgical oncologist at Apollo Cancer Institute, said, "About 12 per cent of cancers are related to the throat. Approximately 1.5 lakh new throat cancers are diagnosed every year in the country. The twin cities account for 1,500 new throat cancer patients every year. Surgical removal of the voice box is the best modality of treatment in these patients."

PD Act issued on rowdy-sheeter

Hyderabad : Hyderabad Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar issued orders under the Preventive Detention Act against Mohammed Arbaaz, a rowdy-sheeter from Kalapathar in the Old City on Thursday. According to the police, Arbaaz, 21, of Owaisi Hills, was involved in several cases including murder, attempt to murder, rioting and criminal intimidation using lethal weapons. The Kalapathar police had earlier placed Arbaaz under arrest. The order was executed on him in the Chanchalguda prison, where he is lodged.

Tractor overturns, 3 killed, 2 injured

NIZAMABAD: Three persons were killed and two injured when the tractor they were travelling on overturned at Chinna Devada village of Bichkunda mandal in Kamareddy district on Thursday. The deceased were identified as Tukaram, 26, of Chinna Devada, Sailoo, 25, of Bichkunda and Shankar, 25, of Madnoor. The victims had reached Chinna Devada to attend a marriage. The injured persons have been shifted to the government area hospital in Banswada. Bichkunda circle inspector Sajid Ali visited the village. Police registered a case and are investigating. It is believed that rash and negligent driver might be the reason for the mishap.

6-yr-old dies after fall from 2nd floor

Hyderabad: A six-year-old boy succumbed to his injuries after falling from the second floor of his house in Alwal on Thursday. According to the police, the deceased, Vadla Rahul, a first standard student, was playing with his elder brother, Sree Harish, 10, when he fell from the second floor of his house located on Road No. 10, Alwal Hills. "Rahul was playing along with his brother and other kids when he slipped and fell on the stairs. He sustained serious head injuries. He was rushed to a private hospital by the family members where he succumbed while undergoing treatment," said the police. A case was booked under Section 174 (suspicious death) of the CrPC and the body was shifted for the post-mortem examination.

TWO HELD FOR CHEATING UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

NAVEEN KUMAR | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The Central Zone Task Force apprehended two men for cheating unemployed youth by posing as travel agents and promising jobs in foreign countries in exchange for money.

The accused were identified as Mohammed Haseeb Ahmed, 36, of Nampally and Mohammed Ahmed Suleman, 34, of Malleshpally. One Shah Varshal from Gujarat is absconding.

"The three men would lure unemployed youths by promising to provide job visas for Australia, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, New Zealand, and other foreign countries. So far, they have collected about ₹2.5 lakh from about 15-20 victims," the task force said. Haseeb had collected passports and other documents from the candidates along with some advance. Varshal would prepare fake visas which was sent to the applicants in exchange for money. After collecting the payments, Haseeb would block the numbers of the applicants.

Christmas in the air

A church is lit up ahead of Christmas in Hyderabad on Thursday.

— AP

HC: Do not insist on Aadhaar for slot booking

VIJINI
VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

A division bench of the Telangana High Court, comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijaysen Reddy, directed the state government that it shall not ask for the Aadhaar number under any form for the purpose of slot booking for registration of non-agriculture properties and seeking of Property Tax Index Number.

As identity proof, the

government can ask the buyer or seller any other identification issued by the government.

The court directed that all references to Aadhaar numbers should be deleted from the registration manual and from the software. The court asked the government to go ahead with the registration of the non-agriculture properties, but there should be no demand for Aadhaar details.

The bench was dealing with a batch of eight petitions related to the Dharani portal.

● **THE COURT** directed that all references to Aadhaar numbers should be deleted from the registration manual and from the software. The court asked the government to go ahead with the registration of the non-agriculture properties, but there should be no demand for Aadhaar details.

The court found fault with the affidavit of Chief Secretary, who had stated that an applicant

providing Aadhaar details is optional whereas Advocate General B.S. Prasad, on the last date of hearing, gave an undertaking that Aadhaar details will not be asked. Now, the state with a clever ploy is seeking Aadhaar details, which is a clear violation of the undertaking, observed Justice Chauhan.

Once, the government has given an undertaking to that effect it ought to have modified the manual, enabling a person seeking a slot booking and for

seeking PTIN. Further, for slot bookings also, the manual clearly says that the buyer, seller and the witnesses have to provide their Aadhaar details and this is in violation of the government's own undertaking, observed the CJ.

While adjourning the hearing on the PILs, the Chief Justice asked the government to delete all references to caste, social category and Aadhaar numbers of family members. This also applies to application forms for PTIN.

Traffic rules go for a toss

Motorists ride without number plate and helmets in violation of traffic rules on a busy road in Hyderabad on Thursday.

— R. PAVAN

Medico-legal tangles deter hospitals from taking up cases of Jeevandan

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The fear that they will be embroiled in medico-legal cases while dealing with organ donations is one of the constraints in getting more doctors and hospitals involved in Jeevandan, the government's programme of organ donations.

While large corporate hospitals are enrolled in the programme, small hospitals and institutions shy away due to possible legal and technical issues. Dr Swaranlatha, incharge of Jeevandan, the cadaver transplant programme of the government, said, "Within the medical fraternity, the fear of legal issues is perhaps one of the reasons

● **THERE ARE** only five organ donations per million population in Telangana state. In the last seven years of the programme, there have been 800 donations.

restraining many from getting involved actively in the programme of organ donation. An overarching law to protect doctors for action taken in good faith, similar to the protection provided to judicial officers, can help."

She said that there is a need to facilitate procedures faster which requires alternative and ancillary tests to be recognised in well-equipped hospitals in small cities

from where organs can be donated.

There are only five organ donations per million population in Telangana state. In the last seven years of the programme, there have been 800 donations.

Experts believe that awareness is the key apart from dealing with the technical and legal issues that come to the fore. The green corridor system, where the police clears traffic for ambulances to rush the donated organs to recipients, is one example of local and state-level coordinations for transporting organs.

There is a need to simplify laws which will allow government institutions to coordinate better; besides, co-ordination

between private and public hospitals is required.

The definition of death in law needs to be looked at from the point of organ donation.

The registration of Birth and Death Act is being amended and there is a need felt to include brain-stem death as a form of death.

The socio-cultural preferences of Indian society have to be considered while amending the Act.

There is also a need to distinguish between brain-stem dead and comatose condition.

These differences are important as there is a fine line and experts want to evolve a clear picture without creating any confusion.

Hatim Talab area plagued by illnesses

SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

● **AMONG THE** areas affected severely is Tolichowki.

Malaria and typhoid cases are on the rise in localities surrounding Shah Hatim Talab. Doctors running clinics in the area attribute this to the mosquito menace.

Among the areas affected severely are Tolichowki, Al-Kareem Colony, Minar Colony, Mohammadi lines, Second Lancer, Naya Qila and Moti Darwaza. Medical practitioners are urging people to drink boiled water besides keeping the surroundings clean and focussing on personal hygiene.

Azmathullah Khan, a kirana merchant residing in Tolichowki, said malaria and typhoid cases are always high in these areas. The areas surrounding Hatim Talab are prone to mosquito men-

ace as a result of which many children are down with malaria.

"Sewage is released in this lake, which gets polluted and attracts mosquitoes. There has to be a permanent solution to this problem. Fogging is done only haphazardly," he said.

Dr Syed Mujahid Ahmed said "From the past few days, cases of malaria and typhoid have been on the rise. The surrounding areas suffer from this problem every winter."

Dr Ather Fatima from Sayeeda Siraj Unani Superspecialty Hospital recommended drinking of boiled water, cleaner surroundings and use of mosquito nets.

Docs caution on allergy to vaccine

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

Some people who take vaccines may suffer allergic reactions due to the vaccine antigen, animal protein, preservatives, stabilisers and other components. It is important that those who suffer from allergies must consult specialists before opting for the Covid-19 vaccine.

Mild reactions like pain in the injection area, swelling, redness and irritation are often seen. There are also severe reactions like fever, rashes, malaise, body aches, headaches, unconsciousness and seizures seen in very rare cases.

For a new vaccine, similar reactions are expected. With the healthcare industry gearing up for the Covid-19 vaccination process, those who are suffering from known allergies are asked to wait. Those who are aware that they are allergic to sulphur, penicillin, peanuts and experienced allergic reactions in the past must consult doctors before they opt for vaccination for Covid-19.

Dr Ghanshyam Jagathkar, senior consultant critical care specialist at Medico Hospitals, said, "Even if the vaccine is prepared, handled and administered correctly it has been found that the reaction is an individual response. It has been noted that those who have allergies form a sensitive group and they must inform the doctor before proceeding for vaccination."

The severe reactions are rare but experts state that they have noted them earlier in case of other vaccines.

With the population in India immune to different vaccines there is hope that there will not be too many complaints. But as the healthcare workers are the first to get the vaccine there are proactive steps being taken to caution those who are vulnerable.

TS registers 509 new cases, 3 deaths

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

The state recorded 509 new Covid-19 cases and three deaths on Wednesday, taking the overall tally to 2,79,644 and toll to 1505.

However, as against the state government's assurance to conduct 65,000 tests every day, only 48,652 samples were collected during the day. Experts pointed out that random testing of the population is important, apart from testing those who volunteer or those who report with symptoms.

The state continues to have 70 per cent asymptomatic carriers and they are being taken care of at home and institutions. There are 7,172 active cases and of these 5,063 cases are in home and institutional isolation. Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation recorded 104 cases, Medchal Malkajgiri 45 and Ranga Reddy 42 cases according to the health bulletin issued on Thursday.

It is very important that in home and institutional isolation people follow

● **THE STATE** continues to have 70 per cent asymptomatic carriers and they are being taken care of at home and institutions. There are 7,172 active cases and of these 5,063 cases are in home and institutional isolation.

the protocols of safety and do not invite guests and family members. A senior doctor of the health department on condition of anonymity said, "People are inviting friends and family over when the patient is in isolation. This practice is not safe. Since there is no indication or stamp mark on the patient, many of them are not aware till there is an untoward incident. There is a need to keep up the vigil."

It was noted that many cases are not reported as the patient never makes it to the hospital. It is only after the death that the neighbourhood, friends and family are alert which can be too late due to the spread of the infection.

DECCAN Chronicle

18 DECEMBER 2020

Covid not a good reason to scrap Winter Session

While the Opposition parties have cried foul, and complained of not being consulted by the government on the decision to not hold the Winter Session of Parliament this year, the Constitution is clear that they cannot demand discussion or consultation as a matter of right. That right belongs to the government alone, and the President summons Parliament to meet when advised to do so by the government. The Narendra Modi government is absolutely in the clear on this score.

There is only one constraint under which the government labours, constitutionally speaking. It must ask the President to summon Parliament at least once every six months. While recently announcing that there would no Winter Session in 2020, the government has hinted that the Budget Session would be commenced in January. There is nothing out of the ordinary about that.

The minister for parliamentary affairs, Pralhad Joshi, has claimed that he has consulted leaders of the leading Opposition parties on the scuttling of the Winter Session, and there was general agreement that the session be given the go-by in view of the Covid pandemic. Apparently, MPs were chary of travelling to Delhi. Jairam Ramesh of the Congress claims no consultation was held with his party. None of this matters, however, since the decision rests with the government alone.

Nevertheless, giving Covid as the reason for skipping the traditionally three-week long Winter Session is hardly a persuasive argument. The government and the BJP had seemed eager to hold the Bihar election when it was due recently,

rather than respect the sentiment of the Opposition parties to defer it by a few months. The election to the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation was also held recently. Covid-related considerations did not come in the way. The pandemic is raging in America but the US stuck to the schedule for its recently concluded election for President. The US Congress and the British Parliament have met as scheduled. The British Parliament did not skip meetings even during the Second World War. In November 1962, our Parliament was in session when the Chinese invaded in NEFA.

It is the widest impression today that the government has run away from the Winter Session because questions will be raised about the three-week old farmers' protest on Delhi's borders. Moreover, the Modi government has set a precedent in this regard. Future governments may also act similarly — skip a session whenever expedient. And this is hardly good for our democracy where important questions crop up all the time, often unexpectedly. A bloody-minded government may hold a session of Parliament only when it wishes to pass laws, not otherwise. This is the best way to avoid noisiness in Parliament and be an "orderly" country.

Even if the pandemic was seemed a matter of serious concern, the Winter Session could have been held online. This was done in Britain recently. MPs who could not be physically present attended on-line. India is technologically capable and this could have been organised if the government had the mind to make it happen.

While the Winter Session stands scuttled, the government can still attest to its bonafides by holding a brief session of two or three days to go over proposals for "reform" of the farm sector with which all may be invited to engage. Whatever the outcome, it is not unlikely that the farmers' protest may be defused through such a denouement.

Post-pandemic bonding

The choice of Boris Johnson to be the chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations is interesting, not the least because he will be the first British Prime Minister to be bestowed the honour since John Major in 1993. Much water has flowed down the Ganga and the Thames since the time India was just emerging as a fledgling player in the free markets after pathbreaking economic reforms. It might appear the UK needs its old friends as trading partners much more now as it seeks to exit the EU as soon as possible, deal no deal. The time to strike a trade deal with the UK in the form of a FTA is ripe enough.

The world has changed post-pandemic and the shared experiences of grief and economic woes should form a sombre backdrop to what should be more sober festivities in the coming R-Day. Johnson is not the dominant figure he was projected to be when he had just staged a notable coup in the Tory Party and emerged as the champion in British eyes who would steer the island on an independent course. Just as the shadow of Covid-19 on Christmas celebrations as the UK struggles to tamp down a second coronavirus surge, the Indian Prime Minister is challenged by striking farmers who expect a "fair deal" at home.

It would be presumptuous to believe mighty geopolitics is guiding the choice of guest at this time back to Britannia and the land of colonial masters. But, in a new world order shaped by the blows of the pandemic, of which BoJo has experience since he was personally pushed to the very brink, it would be realistic to examine ways of promoting ties, particularly as India might have much to contribute in IT and ITeS. Britain as well as India's ardour for Chinese goods and 5G technology has also dampened considerably and so even this crisis-ridden time smells of opportunity to get ties right.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

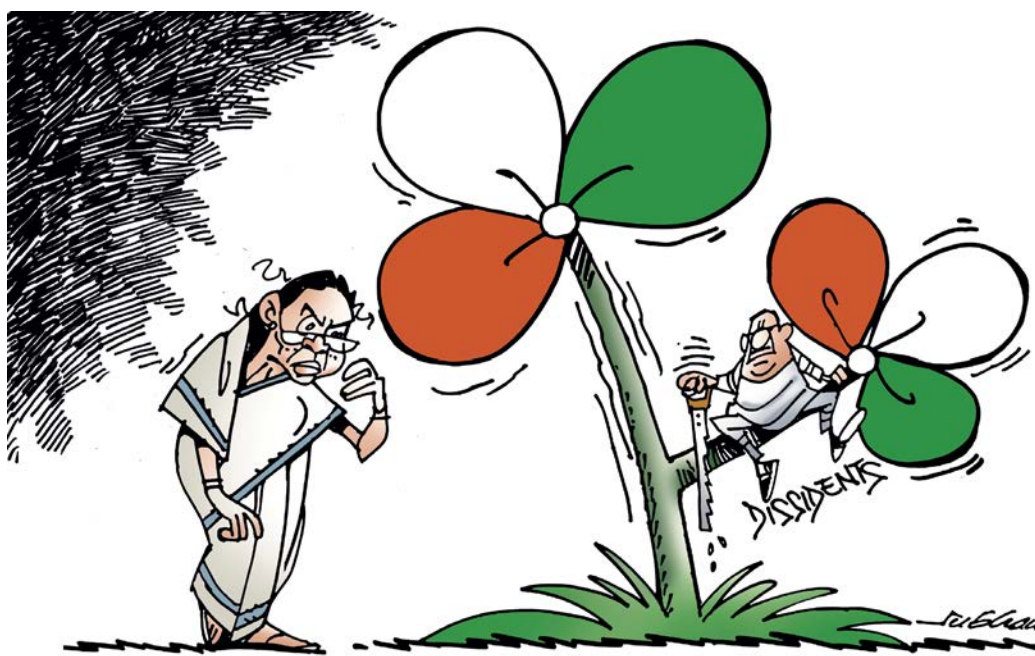
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Subhani



How rise in inequality distorts Indian society



Mohan Guruswamy

In 2013 the French economist Thomas Piketty released *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, a magnum opus on income inequality. It was an event book very much like Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*. Hawking's book sold as many as 10 million copies, by comparison Piketty's tome had 2.4 million buyers so far. Such event books are more often than not read by only a fraction of the buyers. Speaking for myself, I still have somewhere a slightly read copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, still considered by the cognoscenti as the foremost work of modern literature. It is said that an analysis of Kindle readers of the Piketty book revealed that a typical reader got through 26 of its 700 pages. But have no fear, those first 26 pages have all you need to know. They encapsulate the rationale and results of Piketty's monumental work.

I once asked a well-known economist who had reviewed Piketty's *Capital* about what the main proposition of the book was. He encapsulated it quite brilliantly. He just said that Piketty had set out to prove that R was greater than G, where R is the return on capital and G is the growth of the economy. There is much empirical evidence to back this up. In the eight years between 2006 and 2014, the US benchmark index S&P 500 gained 45 per cent, an average simple growth rate of 5.6 per cent, four times higher than the average GDP growth rate of around 1.5 per cent. The consequence of this, of course, is the explosion in income inequality, which is the hallmark of the post-World War II era, and particularly after the

advent of globalisation. Oxfam has informed us that in the past two decades 73 per cent of the growth has been cornered by just one per cent of the population. Oxfam has a known tendency to exaggerate a bit to prove its point, but this proposition, that few people benefited the most during this period of huge economic expansion, is undisputable.

Paul Krugman wrote: "What excited them was Piketty's novel hypothesis about the growing importance of disparities in wealth, especially inherited wealth, as opposed to earnings. We are, Piketty suggested, returning to the kind of dynastic, 'patrimonial' capitalism that prevailed in the late 19th century." We only need to look around us to see that most of the wealthy today are inheritors, and without doubt many of them are building on those inheritances to further accentuate the income inequality. What is really troubling about this growing concentration of wealth is the concentration of political power in the hands of very few who are able to influence politics and policies.

According to Marx an individual's position within a class hierarchy is determined by their role in the production process and argues that political and ideological consciousness is determined by class position. He saw a class as those who share common economic interests and are conscious of those interests. Classes, according to Marx, were inherently antagonistic and in a state of constant struggle.

In his new book *Capital and Ideology*, Thomas Piketty argues, with far greater validity, that inequality is driven by human institutions, which in turn reflect the

The nature of the institutions determines outcomes, not the means of production or processes

dominant ideology. Piketty defines his thesis very succinctly thus: "Inequality is neither economic nor technological: it is ideological and political. In other words, the market and competition, capital and debt, skilled and unskilled workers, natives and aliens, tax havens and competitiveness — none of these things exist as such. All are social and historical constructs, which depend entirely on the legal, fiscal, educational, and political systems that people choose to adopt and the conceptual definitions they choose to work with. These choices are shaped by society's conception of social justice and economic fairness and by the relative political and ideological power of contending groups and discourses."

Does this mean Marx was wrong? The times in which Marx and Piketty lived are very different. Marx saw the distortions and inequity in society and wondered why? He came up with explanations. His prescriptions were limited by the knowledge and evidence available to him then. The world has moved on and moved very far since then. When Karl Marx began writing his first three volumes of *Das Kapital* (1867-1883), it was the early days of electricity. Marx couldn't contemplate the massive leaps of productivity made possible in the 1900s, when the world witnessed a monumental expansion of knowledge and, with it, capital. Piketty's study relates to how both capital and knowledge came to be inequitably allocated because of the institutional arrangements within societies. To understand how institutional arrangements determine outcomes, just

think of India's educational system. We now have two or possibly three parallel educational streams. The two urban upper classes largely benefit from a higher standard and quality of education imparted in English in schools with high quality teaching and facilities. This is the stream that produces India's managerial classes (both government and industrial). The working class stream flows out of our government schools, with its emphasis on vernacular education and indifferent standards. There is a third stream of rural education from which escape even into the next higher class becomes even more difficult, if not impossible. The flow into the upper reaches of Indian society from these three streams is vastly unequal. What Piketty is saying is just this. The nature of the institutions determines outcomes, not the means of production or processes.

Capital and Ideology is rich in references to India and draws inferences about the institution of castes (*varnas*) and the rising role of brahmins, after the advent of Muslim rule, leading to the diminution of the role of Kshatriyas. The role of the brahmins expanded to an even more dominant status under the British. Piketty lauds the determined "affirmative action" policies after Independence that vastly increased the upward mobility of the lower castes, like most of us do. He also notes that the benefits could not be fully realised due to the low standards of education and its unevenness in towns and the hinterland and between regions. So, what's new? Most Indians with even an elementary understanding of post-independence India know this. The question is — what is to be done now?

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

LETTERS

FARMERS' PANEL

The Supreme Court's decision to set up a committee is the best solution (*SC for setting up panel to resolve farmers' stir, DC, Dec. 17*). Farmers must believe in the apex court instead of dragging on with the strike against the three agriculture laws. The Centre and the farmers must agree so that a solution is arrived at.

Vikram Raj Vivaan K.N.
Hyderabad

COVID-19 VACCINE

Though companies manufacturing Covid-19 vaccines are claiming their products to be more effective percentage-wise, none of them is giving 100 per cent assurance. People are in two minds whether to go in vaccination as doubts linger in their minds on the efficacy.

Dr G.V. Kumar
Hyderabad

MAKE IT ZERO YEAR

The year 2020 was full of Covid-19 fear, lockdowns and floods and can be called the worst year in human history. Universities and colleges for their own interests started sub-standard online classes with collecting fees with reduced syllabus. No practicals were conducted. Both the parents and students are losers, students more. As a parent I urge the UGC, Central and state governments to declare 2020 as a zero academic year.

T. Kailash Ditya
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

VENUS-7 TRANSMITTER SILENT

MOSCOW, DEC. 17. According to latest reports the Venus-7 transmitter shut off after 35 minutes and there was no indication that it still could function.

The Soviet news agency Tass said Venus-7 sent data that was being processed and studied but gave no indications of any findings.

The Venus-7 entered the planet's atmosphere at 8.02 am Moscow time and on command from ground controllers, the descent craft was separated.

After a skip entry into the thick atmosphere, the descent module had slowed to a speed of 820 feet a second. Ground crews then popped open its parachute system.

Mahir Ali



On 250th birth anniversary, Beethoven still holds his own

If music be the food of love, play on; Give me excess of it..." The opening lines of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night might have entered the thoughts of the uniquely privileged Viennese audience that witnessed Ludwig van Beethoven premiering his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies in the Austrian capital on Dec 22, 1808.

For good measure, the artistic showcase also featured the first performances of his Piano Concerto No 4 and Choral Fantasy. A 20th-century equivalent would have entailed The Beatles, say, unveiling 'Sgt Pepper' and 'Abbey Road' simultaneously in a live performance. Incidentally, the latter album's Because is based on reversing the chords of the Moonlight Sonata. It wasn't the only time turned up in the pop pantheon.

By 1808, Beethoven was already viewed as the most fascinating composer of his age. He was born in Bonn, probably precisely 250 years ago today. He first visited Vienna as a teenage prodigy, and may have been tutored by Mozart. He was obliged to return to Bonn

to attend to his dying mother, but went back to Vienna at Haydn's invitation five years later and remained there for the rest of his life.

I cannot claim to be an aficionado of Western classical music — the temporal investment it requires has always been a hard slog. Yet there are compositions that insinuate themselves into the subconscious, from Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik to Strauss's Blue Danube, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Ravel's Bolero and Chopin's etudes.

I would make a particular exception, though, for Beethoven. It dates back, perhaps, to a presentation on the weekly Disney show featured on PTV in the early 1970s, where a dramatised biography of Beethoven showed the opening chords of the Fifth Symphony being inspired by a debtor banging on the door of the composer's rented accommodation. Those dramatic notes are more often described as the knocking of Fate.

The show was possibly more accurate in its depiction of a deaf Beethoven being swung around by

a soloist after inaugurating his Ninth Symphony to witness the rapturous response. The Ninth came almost a decade after the Eighth, which had been unveiled before an audience of international leaders at the Congress of Vienna in 1814.

That particular segment, now the official anthem of the European Union, has stood the test of time in more ways than one. Beethoven's death centenary in 1927 was widely commemorated across Europe, from Britain to the Soviet Union. As a German, though, he was also appropriated by the Nazi regime, which continued to honour him despite determining that he was 'mixed race'. Based on Beethoven's looks, the suspicion of African ancestry has persisted, albeit without any firm foundation.

His politics have also served as the basis of much conjecture. Beethoven famously rescinded the dedication of his Third Symphony, Eroica, to Napoleon after the latter emerged as a potential tyrant. And there is a tale, possibly apocryphal, about how he, while out for a walk

in a park with Goethe, encountered a royal party and strolled right through it, even as Goethe stepped aside to bow and scrape.

For all his antipathy towards authority, Beethoven relied for much of his life on the sponsorship of European nobles, and many of his compositions were dedicated to princes, counts and barons. But he regularly fell out with patrons, and occasionally detested royals. Yet his Symphony No 8 was unveiled before the crowned heads of Europe at the Congress of Vienna in 1814.

He never compromised his art, though, confessing at the turn of the century that his devotion to music had prevented him from suicide. His personal life was a shambles, littered with unrequited love or romances doomed by the social rules of the era. Yet, despite a handful of detractors, few who heard his compositions could fail to be moved by them.

And the legend only grew after his demise in 1827, just three years after he had inaugurated his magnificent Symphony No 9, whose glorious final movement, a setting for Schiller's Ode to Joy, has been

appropriated for political purposes throughout the past two centuries, and serves today as the European Union's official hymn.

Not surprisingly, the German Nazi regime picked Beethoven as an avatar (despite concluding that he was mixed race). However, a century earlier Friedrich Engels had waxed eloquent about the Fifth Symphony, and some decades later Vladimir Lenin declared he could listen to the Appassionata sonata every day. "What astonishing, superhuman music," he is quoted by Maxim Gorky as saying. "It always makes me proud ... to think that people can work such miracles."

But perhaps the pianist and conductor Daniel Barenboim summed up Beethoven best a few years ago by pointing out that "he freed music from hitherto prevailing conventions of harmony and structure", and that much of his work could be paraphrased "by saying that suffering is inevitable, but the courage to fight it renders life worth living".

By arrangement with Dawn

SHORT TAKES

ADHIKARI LOYALIST
TIWARI QUILTS TMC,
TO JOIN BJP

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, DEC. 17

Former West Bengal minister Shubhendu Adhikari and his loyalist Jitendra Tiwari, also Pandabeshwar MLA, severed their long ties with the Trinamul Congress in a span of few hours on Thursday, over their revolt against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

After dealing the double blow to their party, the duo, along with two-time Burdwan East TMC MP Sunil Mondal, is now set to join the BJP in the presence of Union home minister Amit Shah at a rally in Midnapore on December 19 upon his arrival on a two-day state tour this weekend.

Adhikari, who resigned as an MLA of Nandigram on Wednesday, wrote to Banerjee politely in a letter, “I am writing to tender my resignation as a member of All India Trinamul Congress as well as from all other positions held by me in the party and its associate organs with immediate effect. I am thankful for all the challenges and opportunities that has been afforded to me and I will always value my time spent as a member of the party.”

NCB ISSUES NOTICE
TO KARAN JOHAR
OVER VIRAL VIDEO

Mumbai, Dec. 17: The Narcotics Control Bureau has issued a notice to Bollywood filmmaker Karan Johar over a viral video allegedly showing drugs being consumed at a party at his house last year, NCB sources said on Thursday.

The notice has been sent to Johar to check the video’s veracity, an NCB official said.

The central agency is conducting an anti-drugs probe that began in connection with the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in June this year.

The video, which also shows several top stars, is being investigated as part of NCB’s probe, the official said.

The NCB had received a complaint regarding the video of a party, which was attended by top Bollywood stars last year, the official said.

The complaint was about movie stars apparently seen in a ‘drugged’ state in the video.

CONG LEADERSHIP
WORKING TO END
INTERNAL TIFF

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

As the internal elections in the Congress draw close the top leadership wants to bridge the gap with the 23 letter writers who were demanding change in the working style of the party and an ‘active and present’ leadership. Insiders claim that a meeting between Congress president Sonia Gandhi and representatives of letter writers is expected as soon as coming weekend.

Acting as a bridge between the two sides is the veteran party leader and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath. In the last couple of days he has met with the letter writers and also with the Congress president in a bid to find a middle path to the internal strife going on.

The parleys between the leadership and the letter writers had come to an abrupt end when senior leader Ahmed Patel had contracted Covid in early October and finally passed away in late November.

SC UPHOLDS HC
ORDER ON
KAHEEL KHAN

New Delhi, Dec. 17: The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to interfere with the Allahabad High Court verdict which had quashed the detention of Dr Kafeel Khan under the National Security Act (NSA) and ordered his immediate release, saying it is “a good judgement”.

“We will not interfere in the judgement. However, the observation will not impact any other proceedings,” said the bench comprising Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian. The bench was hearing the Uttar Pradesh government’s plea challenging the high court’s September 1 verdict. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the state, told the bench that observation made by the high court exonerates Khan in the criminal proceedings. “Criminal cases will be decided on their own merits,” the bench observed.

Chilling out



Workers warm themselves around a bonfire amid the snow-laden area at Sonamarg in Ganderbal district of Central Kashmir on Thursday. The minimum temperature across Kashmir plummeted several degrees below the freezing point on Thursday owing to a clear sky as the valley reeled under cold conditions, with Srinagar experiencing the coldest night of the season -6.4.

Modi to join Hasina in
March for ‘Bijoy Dibosh’

SRIDHAR
KUMARASWAMI | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held a virtual summit with his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina that included “comprehensive discussions covering all areas including connectivity and trade, development cooperation, border management and rivers water sharing” after which it was announced that PM Modi would be visiting Bangladesh in March next year to “join the celebrations on the occasion of 50th anniversary of Bangladesh’s Independence and 50 years of Bangladesh-India diplomatic relations”.

It may be recalled that the Pakistan Army had surrendered to the Indian Army in Dhaka on December 16, 1971, marking the liberation of the erstwhile East Pakistan which emerged as an independent nation Bangladesh.

In response to a question at a special MEA briefing on the summit in the evening regarding Sheikh Hasina’s recent reported statement that Bangladesh can never forget or forgive Pakistan for the atrocities committed in 1971 and also on demands for an apology from Pakistan, India

also took a dig at Pakistan, with New Delhi saying, “There is no denying that state-sponsored oppression against Bangladesh’s just war of oppression led to the death of more than 3 million, more than 2 lakh women were raped and tortured. We deeply respect and understand the sentiments expressed by PM Sheikh Hasina.”

In his remarks, Modi told Sheikh Hasina, “Following the Victory Day, our meeting today is of even more special significance. It is a matter of pride for us to celebrate the historic victory of Bangladesh over Anti-liberation forces as the Victory Day with you. Today, when Bangladesh is celebrating forty nine years of independence, I pay homage to the martyrs of both the countries who sacrificed their lives. On the occasion of Victory Day, yesterday I paid tributes at the National War Memorial in India and lit a ‘Golden Victory Torch’. These four ‘Victory Torches’ will tour all over India and will be taken to all the villages of our martyrs. Since 16 December, we are celebrating the ‘Golden Victory Year’, during which many events will be organised across India.”

The two Prime Ministers “jointly unveiled a com-

memorative postal stamp issued by the Government of India on the occasion of birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, while PM Modi also “thanked the Government of Bangladesh for issuing a stamp in honour of Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of Gandhi’s 150th birth anniversary celebrations earlier in September 2020”.

In all seven agreements were signed at the virtual summit between the two countries in the areas of hydrocarbon, culture, agriculture, high-impact community development projects. A decision was also taken “to expeditiously conclude the ongoing joint study on the prospects of entering into a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement”. The joint statement said, Modi also “assured that (Covid) vaccines would be made available to Bangladesh as and when produced in India”.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina “highlighted the need for early signing of interim agreement for sharing of the Teesta waters, as agreed upon by both the governments in 2011” and Modi “reiterated India’s sincere commitment and continued efforts in that regard”, a joint statement said.

DAC APPROVES
11 OFFSHORE
PATROL VESSELS

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed by defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday in a meeting granted Acceptance of Necessity (AoNs) for proposals worth ₹28,000 crore including airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) systems for the Indian Air Force.

These airborne early warning and control systems will be designed and developed by DRDO. These are reported to be deployed on six Airbus aircraft to be acquired from Air India. AEW&C which are airborne help in detection and tracking of attacking enemy aircraft, missiles and drones much before ground based radars. They also provide crucial inputs during dogfights with the enemy fighter jets and give information on troops deployment by enemies on ground.

DAC also approved proposals for 11 next generation offshore patrol vessels for the Indian Navy and modular bridges for the Indian Army.

In a major push to Make-in-India, six proposals out of seven for which AoNs were granted will be sourced from the Indian industry.

MHA transfers 3
WB IPS officers

Mamata Banerjee govt refuses to accept the
Centre’s order; likely to challenge it legally

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, DEC. 17

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has accused the Narendra Modi government of “colourable exercise of power” after the Union home ministry ordered the central deputation of three IPS officers of her government on Thursday. The Trinamul Congress supreme also refused to accept the Centre’s order which her government, according to sources, may challenge legally.

Banerjee, who is now in North Bengal, Tweeted, “GoI’s order of central deputation for the three serving IPS officers of West Bengal despite the state’s objection is a colourable exercise of power and blatant misuse of emergency provision of IPS Cadre Rule 1954. This act is nothing but a deliberate attempt to encroach upon state’s jurisdiction & demoralise the serving officers in WB.”

● **BANERJEE SAYS**
Centre’s order despite the state’s objection is a colourable exercise of power and blatant misuse of emergency provision of IPS Cadre Rule 1954.

She added, “This move, particularly before the elections is against the basic tenets of the federal structure. It’s unconstitutional & completely unacceptable! We wouldn’t allow this brazen attempt by the Centre to control the state machinery by proxy! West Bengal is not going to cower down in front of expansionist & undemocratic forces.”

The IPS officers are Rajeev Mishra, inspector general (South Bengal), Praveen Kumar Tripathi, deputy inspector general (Presidency Range) and Bholanath Pandey, superintendent of police (Diamond Harbour Police District) in South 24 Parganas.

In August last year a video of Mishra, touching

the feet of the CM at Digha in East Midnapore went viral.

The Centre has assigned Mishra, a 1996 batch officer, to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police. Tripathi, of the 2004 batch, has been sent to Sasshastra Seema Bal while Pandey, from the 2011 batch, has been deputed to the Bureau of Police Research and Development. All the three organisations are under the ministry of home affairs headed by Amit Shah. The officers came under the MHA’s scanner for security lapses after Trinamul workers attacked the convoy of BJP president J.P. Nadda last week at Diamond Harbour.

The MHA, the nodal controlling authority of the IPS cadre, requisitioned them for central deputation while asking the state government for their release. Furious, the Chief Minister then held them back which only prompted the MHA to act this time strongly.

CORONAVIRUS
CASELOAD
CROSSES 99.56L

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, DEC. 17

With 24,010 fresh cases in a day, the country’s Covid-19 caseload crossed 99.56 lakh, while the number of people who have recovered from the infection surged to 94.89 lakh. According to the Union health ministry, the total Coronavirus cases mounted to 99,56,557 and the death toll rose to 1,44,451 with 355 new fatalities in a day.

As per the health ministry data, active recoveries outnumbering new cases on a daily basis have ensured a high recovery rate among patients. The total recovered cases are nearing 95 lakh (94,89,740). The recovery rate has improved to 95.31 per cent on Thursday. The gap between recovered cases and active cases is also increasing consistently, and presently stands at 91,67,374. The Covid-19 case fatality rate stands at 1.45 per cent.

Modi, like RSS, is not dogmatic on economy. But, he is
close to a Gandhian socialist, claims author Sitapati

SRIRAM KARRI
HYDERABAD

The economics of the Sangh parivar and of Prime Minister Narendra Modi are not based on dogmas or ideology; the RSS is actually like a rainbow coalition of all kinds of economic views. Modi takes his decisions based more on politics than economics, per se, argues Vinay Sitapati in this concluding part of his interview.

● **Everybody today tries to guess the deep rooted economic policy impulse, inclination and instinct of Narendra Modi. Some argue he is pro-free markets or pro-corporates. The farmer bill agitation currently hinges on it. You explore the evolution of RSS, the Jan Sangh and now BJP for hundred years. Is RSS, and consequently Modi, socialist or pro-free market?**

As I trace in my book, the RSS is a loose umbrella coalition when it comes to economics. They do not have a fixed ideological view on it. Throughout its history Hindu nationalism has articulated so many different views of economics. In Deen Dayal Upadhyaya’s work, *Integral Humanism*, which is very core to RSS thinking, a vast welfare scheme and

uplift of the downtrodden is strongly articulated. You have free market supporters like Balraj Madhok and Dr. Subramanian Swamy as much as centrists like Vajpayee. It also included someone like Nanaji Deshmukh, whose personal honesty was peerless and who would raise funds from businessmen, including say Nussli Wadia, grandson of Jinnah.

Even though Prime Minister Vajpayee was one of the greatest economic reformer we ever had, he only continued the economic direction that P.V. Narasimha Rao started.

In essence, the Hindu nationalist ideology was around organising and uniting the Hindu society but had little view on the modern state, or issues that we refer to as ‘governance’. The Sangh looks at economics as a flexible tactical political issue, in which the quest for votes is more significant. So Modi’s assertion that least governed is best governed is his slogan rather than an RSS ideology.

Modi has a certain view of economics, certainly, but it is that state must play a role and it is crucial. A visceral Gandhian socialist view. In contrast to Modi’s economic policies, you can see ideological fervour in Modi’s changing of Article 370 or the Citizenship Bill. These are in the ideological realm, with a long genealogy.

Incidentally, they have no strong ideological view on foreign affairs either. Yes, there are vague assertions like Vasudeva Kutumbikam or a goal of becoming a Vishwa Guru, but they are not substantial. And arguments of Akhand Bharat mean nothing in modern geopolitics.

● **Why does it look today that Modi’s BJP with the backing of the RSS is so hard to defeat in elections?**

They win for many reasons, but a big one is teamwork and unity. This RSS teamwork is a response to the history lesson that Indians are terrible team players. They fight among themselves and split into factions. RSS uses this simple but deep insight to create organisational unity. Only one other man did it before them — Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The RSS has created in a sense a very un-Indian ideal of unifying Hindus, to habituate them into teamwork as an ideal. BJP leaders too have lots of internal bickering and differences, but they rarely divorce and split the party.

Vajpayee was able to use this trait to get rid of two of his earliest rivals — Madhok and Subramaniam Swamy — who were very individualistic and unafraid to air their differences in public.

Even Veer Savarkar was an opinionated individual, whereas Hedgewar and Golwalkar were committed to the sangh above all. This is what I call Hindu fevicol, and it is a hard bond to break.

Congress in that sense is typically Indian organisation. They fight it out in the open and sabotage their own larger cause for a pettier goal. Congress is not a uniquely nepotistic party but a typically Indian-minded family party. Every Indian wants to hand over their power to their son or daughter. In that sense there is a Nehru-Gandhi in all of us.

In contrast, when Indians see Narendra Modi, a man without a family to benefit, they are in respectful awe but it is so unlike them. That sense of sacrifice is what puts Modi above others in the minds of common Indians.

● **Talking of Gandhi, we can see a strand of commonality between him and Vajpayee and Modi... idea of Brahmacharya, extending the logic of sacrifice of family and material concerns, at least in perception. Does this favour a Yogi Adityanath to inherit the mantle from Modi?**

It is a very powerful appealing idea, the old Hindu tradition of adopting Brahmacharya. Our psyche puts those who accept the monastic life in

position of reverence. This is the appeal of Yogi Adityanath also. It obscures many legitimate criticisms of his politics. It definitely gives him an upper-hand if he enters the race to become prime minister one day.

● **Many say that despite being from the RSS, Vajpayee was a moderate acceptable to all whereas Modi is a Loh Purush (iron man). Did the incarceration in Emergency play a role in giving the BJP leaders like Advani and Vajpayee a different experiential perspective in the issue of personal liberties?**

Yes, while Modi was underground in Gujarat during Emergency, Vajpayee and Advani (and a plethora of others), developed a strong view about personal liberties because they were the worst victims of state atrocities during Emergency. Had Modi been arrested then, who knows what kind of a different viewpoint he would have had?

But it was also about the coalitions. The participation of Vajpayee-Advani in the Janata Party government and their later leadership of NDA shows they were willing to engage with a range of people — from a socialist like George Fernandes to aristocrat like Jaswant Singh. Modi has been electorally

freed from the need for a coalition.

● **Coming to Vajpayee and Advani, your jugalbandi book, how did their relationship evolve?**

Advani began as a fan to the star Vajpayee. Their personal backgrounds were very different — Vajpayee was a communicator, poet, orator, very Hindi heartland, lower middle class, whereas Advani was from Karachi, highly cosmopolitan, very English, but introverted and serious.

Vajpayee, like Syama Prasad Mukherjee before him, had charisma and magic. He could mean different things to different people. Advani was also under-confident but he had other strengths. He was loyal, disciplined, always willing to make a self-sacrifice. He was for most part underrated. They were great friends too. They are the kind who would go watch Bollywood movies, cry over some scenes and eat pani puri on the roadside.

● **Did Advani stick to Vajpayee through thick and thin because he was too scared by Partition and even the idea of a separation was very heavy on him?**

(Hmm). I wish we had spoken before writing the book. Could be. But to answer another question of yours, Advani, the rich

scion was comfortable with jail life and never complained of difficulties whereas Vajpayee despite being from a poor background found it hard — because of Partition. Advani lost everything, his home, his comfort and material wealth, his beloved Sindh... all in one go. Partition was an event for Vajpayee but a lifelong trauma for Advani.

● **In the end, What’s your appraisal of Vajpayee and Advani? How do they differ from the Modi-Shah duo?**

At heart, Vajpayee and Advani were both romantics, even children at heart. No one would say that about Modi and Shah. Their jugalbandi is very different. They won’t be seen eating pani puri in public or crying while watching Bollywood movies.

The other difference is their understanding of India. Unlike Vajpayee or Advani, Modi and Shah have never served for a single day before taking power in 2014. They have no background of compromising with smaller and regional parties in Parliament. They were also not shaped by Partition or Emergency. They have been shaped by caste and religious politics in the Hindutva crucible of Gujarat. But the two jugalbandis share more than we imagine. All four of them are team players. That’s why the BJP wins.

SHORT TAKES

'21 BERLIN FILM FEST MAY GO VIRTUAL

Los Angeles, Dec. 17: The Berlin International Film Festival might be held virtually for its upcoming 2021 edition.

Sources told *Variety* that the festival organisers are expected to delay the festival due to resurgence in Coronavirus cases in Germany. They will be announcing their plans later this week. As of now, the 71st edition of the film gala is scheduled to run as a physical event from February 11-21, but the organisers are now rethinking their strategy.

The festival is now looking to stage a competition section in a virtual format in early March, with the European Film Market running as a digital event at the same time. The organisers are also thinking of holding a mini-festival with a series of onsite world premieres for early June.

US JOINT CHIEFS CHAIRMAN MEETS TALIBAN

Kabul, Dec. 17: The top US general held unannounced talks with Taliban peace negotiators in the Persian Gulf to urge a reduction in violence across Afghanistan, even as senior American officials in Kabul warned that stepped-up Taliban attacks endanger the militant group's nascent peace negotiations with the Afghan government. Army Gen. Mark A. Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met for about two hours with Taliban negotiators in Doha, Qatar, on Tuesday and flew Wednesday to Kabul to discuss the peace process with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

Milley's meetings came amid a new drawdown of US troops, although under current US policy a complete pullout hinges on the Taliban reducing attacks nationwide. "The most important part of the discussions that I had with both the Taliban and the government of Afghanistan was the need for an immediate reduction in violence," Milley said.

CYCLONE YASA: FIJI IMPOSES EMERGENCY

Suva, Dec. 17: Fiji imposed a nationwide curfew Thursday after urging people near the coast to move to higher ground as the island nation prepared for a major cyclone to hit.

Cyclone Yasa was expected to hit the two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu later Thursday or early Friday. Authorities imposed an overnight curfew and declared a state of natural disaster. The National Disaster Management Office warned the cyclone could bring waves as high as 16 metres (52 feet) in some places and sustained winds of up to 250 kilometres per hour (155 mph), with gusts hitting 350 kph (217 mph).

In the capital Suva, many residents were experiencing power cuts.

Michael Cheer, who owns the Samabula Cake Shop, was moving cakes into his car so he could take them home and put them into a cooler, rather than driving them across the island to deliver them to another town.

CHINA PROBE BRINGS HOME MOON SAMPLES

Beijing, Dec. 17: China's Change-5 probe successfully touched down on Earth in the early hours of Thursday, bringing home the first samples of the moon in over 40 years. The spacecraft landed in Siziwang Banner in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region at 1:59 AM (local time), according to the China National Space Administration (CNSA). Zhang Kejian, head of the CNSA, declared the Change-5 mission a success.

It marks a successful conclusion of China's current three-step lunar exploration programme of orbiting and landing, and bringing back samples which began in 2004, state-run *Xinhua* news agency reported.

President Xi Jinping congratulated scientists on the complete success of the Change-5 mission. As China's most complicated space project, President Xi in his message to the CNSA said, the Change-5 mission "is another major achievement in overcoming difficulties by giving full play to the advantages of the new system of pooling national resources and strength, marking a great step forward in China's space industry".

Record cases, deaths in Calif.

Most of state's 40 mn residents under stay-at-home orders

Los Angeles, Dec. 17: California has reported more than 53,000 new Coronavirus cases and 293 deaths, setting new records as hospitals struggled to keep up with the surge.

State health officials said Wednesday a change in data processing added 15,337 previous cases to the count, but the new virus cases remained a daily record. The state has been grappling with soaring cases and hospitalisations. Most of California's 40 million residents are under stay-at-home orders because of dwindling intensive care unit capacity.

Hospitals are filling up so fast that officials are rolling out mobile field facilities and scrambling to hire more doctors and nurses. — AP

2 health staff develop allergic reactions to Pfizer's Covid vaccine

New York, Dec. 17: Two healthcare workers, who received Pfizer's Coronavirus vaccine, developed "concerning reactions", even as the US rolled out the vaccine to frontline healthcare workers and high-risk individuals amid increasing Covid-19 infections across the country. A report in *The New York Times* said the two health care workers at Bartlett Regional Hospital in Alaska developed concerning reactions just minutes after receiving Pfizer's Coronavirus vaccine this week.

One staff member was hospitalised for a few days. One of the healthcare workers, a middle-aged woman, had no history of allergies but had an anaphylactic reaction 10 minutes after receiving the vaccine. She experienced a rash over her face and torso, shortness of breath and an elevated heart rate, the *NYT* report said adding that anaphylaxis can be life-threatening, with impaired breathing and drops in blood pressure. The second worker received his shot on Wednesday and developed eye puffiness, lightheadedness and a scratchy throat 10 minutes after the injection, the hospital said. — PTI

RO KHANNA IS DEM VICE CHAIR OF INDIA CAUCUS

Washington, Dec. 17: Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna, who represents the Silicon Valley in the US House of Representatives, has been named as the Democratic Vice Chair of the Congressional India Caucus. The seat has been created for the first time since its formation in 1994.

Khanna, 44, who was recently elected for a third consecutive term from the congressional district representing Silicon Valley, is being considered as a potential contender to fill the US Senate seat from California that will fall vacant in January after Kamala Harris is sworn in as the country's vice president. "I believe Ro Khanna would be an outstanding Democratic Vice Chair," Congressman Brad Sherman, Democratic Co-Chair of the Caucus, said in an email. — PTI

UN | PRIZE

Vidyt Mohan helps farmers earn extra by converting waste farm residues into value-added chemicals

Indian among 'Young Champions of the Earth' winners

United Nations, Dec. 17: A 29-year-old Indian entrepreneur is among the seven winners of the prestigious "Young Champions of the Earth" 2020 prize given by the UN environment agency to global change-makers using innovative ideas and ambitious action to help solve some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.

Vidyt Mohan, an engineer, is the co-founder of "Takachar", a social enterprise enabling farmers to prevent open burning of their waste farm residues and earn extra income by converting them into value-added chemicals like activated carbon on-site, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) said in a statement on Tuesday.



A police car drives at the empty pedestrian zone at early morning in Dortmund, western Germany, on Thursday, at a partial lockdown to curb the spread of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. — AFP

Macron latest to test +ve for Covid

Paris, Dec. 17: French President Emmanuel Macron is the latest world leader to test positive for Covid-19, joining a growing list of others just as inoculation drives against the illness are beginning in a number of countries.

Macron, 42, has repeatedly said he is sticking to strict sanitary protocols during the pandemic, including not shaking hands, wearing a mask and keeping distance from other people. The Elysee Palace announced on Thursday that Macron would be isolating for seven days.

President Donald Trump announced in October that

he and his wife, first lady Melania Trump, tested positive for the Coronavirus. At 74, the US president was the oldest head of state to become infected with the virus to date, and his age put him at higher risk of serious complications from Covid-19.

British PM Boris Johnson was the first major world leader confirmed to have Covid-19, after facing criticism for downplaying the pandemic. Prince Charles, the heir to the British throne, also tested positive in March and showed mild symptoms.

Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro announced his

illness in July and used it to publicly extol hydroxy-chloroquine, the unproven malaria drug that he'd been promoting as a treatment for Covid-19 and was taking himself.

Honduras president Juan Orlando Hernandez announced in June that he had tested positive, along with two other people who worked closely with him. Hernandez said he had started what he called the "MAIZ treatment," an experimental and unproven combination of microdactyn, azithromycin, ivermectin and zinc. He was briefly hospitalised and released.

The president of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, who dismissed concerns about the virus as "psychosis" and recommended drinking vodka to stay healthy, said in July he had contracted it himself but was asymptomatic.

Others who were infected include Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Prince Albert II of Monaco, Guatemalan president Alejandro Giammetti, Bolivian interim president Jeannie Anez, president of the Dominican Republic Luis Abinader. — AP

VACCINATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC BY MID/LATE '21: WHO

Jakarta, Dec. 17: The World Health Organisation said Thursday that countries in the Asia-Pacific region are not guaranteed to have early access to Covid-19 shots and urged them to adopt a long-term approach to the pandemic. "The development of safe and effective vaccines is one thing. Producing them in adequate quantities and reaching everyone who needs them is another," WHO Regional Director Dr Takeshi Kasai told reporters in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. — AP

Despite US sanctions, Turkey not to step back on Russian S-400s

Ankara, Dec. 17: Turkey won't step back from its decision to deploy Russian air defence systems despite US sanctions imposed on the country over the purchase, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Thursday.

In an interview with Turkey's 24 TV television, Cavusoglu also said Turkey was mulling steps it would take to reciprocate against the US sanctions, but did not say what the steps could entail. The US announced sanctions earlier this week over Turkey's procurement of Russia's advanced S-400 system, under a US law known as CAATSA, aimed at pushing back on Russian influence. The sanctions target Turkey's Presidency of Defence Industries, the head of the presidency and three other senior officials. The penalties block any assets the four officials

GREECE TO PAY \$2.8 BN FOR FRENCH RAFALE JETS AMID TURKEY TENSION

Athens, Dec. 17: Greece's government said on Thursday that it will pay 2.32 billion euros (\$2.8 billion) for the purchase of French-made Rafale fighter jets and an upgrade of compatible missiles, under a major military overhaul amid tensions with neighbouring Turkey.

Delivery of the 18 jets will begin in mid-2021 and be completed over two years, government spokesman Stelios Petsas said.

als may have in US jurisdictions and bar their entry into the US. They also include a ban on most export licences, loans and credits to the agency.

It is the first time that CAATSA has been used to

penalise a US ally. "If we were to step back we would have done so before now," Cavusoglu said in response to a question on whether Turkey would cancel the S-400 deal with Russia. Cavusoglu added:

"Now we are assessing the impact of these sanctions in great detail...and will take steps accordingly."

The minister also described the sanctions as "wrong both legally and politically," arguing that Turkey's purchase of the Russian system in 2017 predated the CAATSA law. Cavusoglu said that an improvement of relations between Turkey and the United States would be conditional on President-elect Joe Biden's ability to address Ankara's grievances.

Ties between the two have been plagued by numerous disputes, including the jailing of American citizens and local consular staff, US support for Syrian Kurdish fighters considered to be terrorists by Turkey and the continued US residence of a Muslim cleric accused of masterminding the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey. — AP

Navalny poisoning: No role, says Putin

Moscow, Dec. 17: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday rejected allegations that the Kremlin was behind the poisoning of his top political foe, opposition leader Alexei Navalny, and accused US intelligence agencies of fomenting the claims. Speaking via video call during an annual marathon news conference, the Russian leader countered the accusations by saying that if the Kremlin wanted to poison Navalny it would have pressed the attack home.

"If there was such a desire, it would have been done," Putin said with a chuckle. Navalny fell sick on Aug 20 during a domestic flight in Russia, and was flown while he was in a coma to Germany for treatment two days later. Labs in Germany, France and Sweden, and tests by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical

CHARLIE HEBDO HIT: 30 YRS' JAIL FOR I.S. WIDOW

Paris, Dec 17: The fugitive widow of an Islamic State gunman and a man described as his logistician on Wednesday were convicted of terrorism charges and sentenced to 30 years in prison in the trial of 14 people linked to the January 2015 attacks in Paris against the satirical Charlie Hebdo newspaper and a kosher supermarket.

The verdict ends the three-month trial linked to the three days of killings across Paris claimed jointly by the Islamic State group and al-Qaida. During the proceedings, France was struck by new attacks, a wave of Coronavirus infections among the defendants, and devastating testimony bearing witness to bloodshed that continues to shake France.

All three attackers died in police raids. The widow, Hayat Boumedienne, fled to Syria and is believed to still be alive. The two men who helped her out of France were tried in absentia, may be dead, though one received a sentence of life in prison. — AP

'88 LOCKERBIE BOMBING: NEW CHARGES BY U.S.

Washington, Dec. 17: The Justice Department plans to unseal new charges in the coming days in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet that exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people, according to a person familiar with the case.

The bombing of Flight 103, whose victims included dozens of American college students, spurred global probe and produced sanctions against Libya, which surrendered two intelligence officials for prosecution before a Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands. The New York-bound flight exploded over Lockerbie less than an hour after takeoff from London on Dec. 21, 1988. — AP

Weapons, established that he was exposed to a Soviet-era Novichok nerve agent. Russian authorities have vehemently rejected the accusations of involvement in the poisoning.

On Monday, the investigative group Bellingcat and Russian outlet The Insider released a report alleging that operatives from the FSB, Russia's domestic security agency, which is a top KGB successor, followed Navalny during his trips since 2017, had "specialised training in chemical weapons, chemistry and medicine" and "were in the vicinity of the opposition activist in the days and hours of the time-range during which he was poisoned." The investigation, conducted by Bellingcat and The Insider in cooperation with CNN and Der Spiegel, identified the supposed FSB operatives. — AP



quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	46,890.34	0.48
Nifty 50	13,740.70	0.42
S&P 500*	3,717.43	0.44
Dollar (₹)	73.58	0.01
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.96	0.50
Euro (₹)	89.98	-0.15
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,455▲194	0.39
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	51.38	0.30
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.952	0.008
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.895	-0.025

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Economy seems bottoming out: Credit Suisse

After years of downgrades to the country's medium-term growth outlook, the estimates are likely to be upgraded now, Credit Suisse said in a report. The country's economy is showing signs of bottoming out, it said. The consensus forecasts of GDP growth for FY22 over FY20 stopped falling after October 2020 (currently at -1 per cent). Analysts at Credit Suisse expect these estimates to be revised upwards.

Puravankara to get ₹556 crore from IFC, EAF



IFC, a member of the World Bank group, and IFC Emerging Asia Fund (EAF) will invest Rs 556 crore in an affordable housing platform of Puravankara Ltd to develop up to four projects. IFC and IFC EAF have partnered with the Puravankara Group to invest in the development of up to four residential projects under the Puravankara group's affordable housing brand 'Provident'. Two of these four projects are planned in Kochi and Bengaluru.

Redmi 9 Power smartphone sales from next week

Redmi India unveiled Redmi 9 Power which will be sold online from Dec. 22. Redmi said the new smartphone comes with a 6,000 mAh battery that last for two days after a single charge. Redmi business head Sneha Tainwala said the year has been phenomenal for Redmi India, and the company is further pushing boundaries with Redmi 9 Power. Redmi 9 Power's two variants are priced at Rs 10,999 and Rs 11,999.

Blockchain-led solar power trading in UP

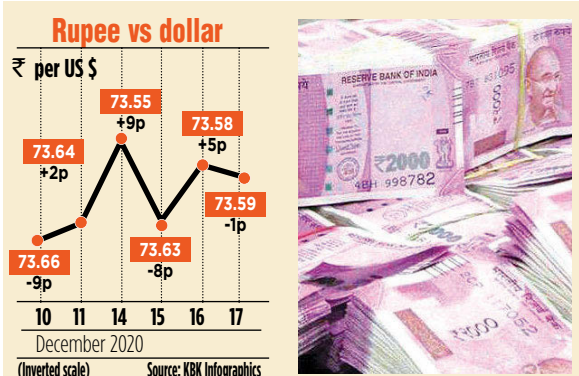
US-based tech services firm Abjayon Inc has partnered with India Smart Grid Forum (ISGF) to support the integration of blockchain platform with UP Power Corporation's (UPPCL) billing system. UP has launched India's first blockchain-enabled peer-to-peer trading of rooftop solar power on a pilot basis in Lucknow. UPPCL, Madhyanchal Vidut Vitran Nigam and UP New & Renewable Energy Dev. Agency will host the project.

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■ Fallout of US placing India on watchlist RBI may go slow on forex interventions

FALAKNAAZ SYED
MUMBAI, DEC. 17

The US adding India to the watchlist for currency manipulation could keep the Reserve Bank of India guarded on aggressive forex intervention and may help the rupee gain, according to experts. The United States Treasury report once again included India in its monitoring list of countries with potentially "questionable foreign exchange policies" and "currency manipulation" after the RBI relentlessly bought dollars to forcibly keep the rupee weak to boost exports. Abheek Barua, chief economist at HDFC Bank told *Financial Chronicle*, "The RBI will have to consider the ramifications of continuing with their action (of massive dollar buying), what possible penalties or the cost of ignoring the US altogether be? It's a difficult call but I believe that the RBI will have to take their foot off the intervention pedal a little going forward given this new development." "This is rupee positive and bond yields should go down theoretically, but sentiment is a critical factor in the very short term and let's see how that is perceived. There will be pressure on the RBI to stop buying dollars at the rate they have been both in the spot and in the forward market...So we will just have to see. I don't think it will have a major



impact but certainly it will have some near-term weakness against other currencies such as sterling, euro, yuan and yen. In the first nine months of 2020, the RBI bought a whopping \$57 billion just in the spot market. Its purchases through forward contracts are around \$12.6 billion. The US Treasury Department's report said that the Indian central bank's interventions added up to 2.4 per cent of the country's GDP, breaching one of the thresholds that the US monitors. India was last included in the currency watchlist in October 2018, but removed from the May 2009 list. A currency manipulator tag is given by the US to countries that deliberately keep their currency low against the dollar to gain export advantage. The treasury report, published twice a year, warns of any unfair currency practices. The US has included India, Taiwan and Thailand to its monitoring list.

IFC invests \$30 million in Biological E

New Delhi, Dec. 17: International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group, on Thursday said it is providing a loan of up to \$30 million (around Rs 220 crore) to Biological E Limited. The loan will support the pharmaceutical firm's expansion of low-priced, generic vaccines for routine immunisation of children and to boost capacity for manufacturing any future Covid-19 vaccine, it added.

An investment in one of India's top vaccine manu-

facturers, BioE, will expand access to low-cost vaccines for children in developing countries and help increase the production of a Covid-19 vaccine when developed, a key step in saving lives and restarting economies, IFC said in a statement. The IFC financing package aims to support the production of new vaccines and boost the company's capacity for manufacturing any future Covid-19 vaccine, the statement said. IFC interim managing director and executive

vice president, and chief operating officer Stephanie von Friedeburg said vaccines are one of the most critical and cost-effective means of improving health outcomes in emerging markets like India. Welcoming IFC's long-term financing, Biological E Ltd managing director Mahima Datla said it has come at a crucial time when the company is gearing up to expand its vaccine-products portfolio for routine immunisation. —PTI

HFCL begins production of FTTH cables

Hyderabad, Dec. 17: HFCL on Thursday said it has begun the commercial production of fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) cables from its new facility in Hyderabad, involving a fresh outlay of Rs 40 crore. So far the company has invested Rs 300 crore in the Hyderabad plant, as part of its expansion road map. HFCL said it has become the largest manufacturer of FTTH cables in India.

With this new facility, HFCL along with its subsidiary company HTL Limited has become the largest manufacturer of FTTH cables in India with a capacity of 6 lakh kms per annum. The company had earlier invested Rs 260 crore in the Hyderabad plant, for manufacturing optical fibre, that was commissioned in January 2020. "This new...automated high-speed FTTH cable

facility has come up with a fresh outlay of Rs 40 crore to ensure high throughput, economies of scale and highest quality standards," it said. Mahendra Nahata, MD, HFCL said, India is seeing buoyant FTTH activity, driven by private telcos and government's thrust on rural network deployment. Expanding FTTH rollouts will boost 4G connectivity and prepare for 5G launch, he said. —PTI

UK's largest Rolex retailer lifts forecast as demand improves

CORINNE GRETLER
DEC. 17

Watches of Switzerland Group Plc raised its revenue forecast after a stronger-than-expected first half, providing a glimmer of hope for the battered Swiss watch industry. The company, which is the UK's largest watch retailer, forecast full-year sales of 900 million pounds (\$1.2 billion) to 925 million pounds. Demand was better than anticipated in the six months ended October as well into the start of the Christmas holiday period. The stock rose as much as 10 per cent Thursday morning in London. The upbeat outlook reflects some improvements for the Swiss watch industry as it suffers from store closures and a virtu-

al standstill in travel. Swiss watch exports slipped 3.2 per cent last month, continuing a gradual moderation of declines caused by the coronavirus pandemic that's led to a slump of 24 per cent so far this year. "There is more demand," Watches of Switzerland chief executive officer Brian Duffy said in an interview. "That gives us the luxury of being able to conduct our business a fair bit better than others." The company's previous sales forecast was for 880 million pounds to 910 million pounds. The number of people working in Switzerland for the watch industry dropped by about 1,550 in the year through September, an industry group said Wednesday. —Bloomberg

Mrs Bectors Food IPO subscribed 198 times

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, DEC. 17

After the grand listing success of initial public offerings by Burger King India and Gland Pharma in the recent past, Rs 540-crore public issue of biscuits and bread maker Mrs Bectors Food Specialities has also received overwhelming response, getting subscribed over 198 times on the last day of the public offer. In fact, the public issue got oversubscribed on the very first day after opening for subscription on Tuesday. As per details made available by stock exchanges and sources working closely with the merchant bankers, total subscription as per the last update was 198.02 times shares on offer. The qualified institutional buyers portion has been subscribed 176.85 times, non-institutional investors or high net worth investor portion was subscribed 621 times and the retail individual investors portion was subscribed more than 29 times. Earlier on Monday, the company raised Rs 162 crore from the anchor investors. The price band for Mrs Bector Food Specialities public offer has been fixed at Rs 286-288 per share of Rs 10 face value.

In rare move, Japan sells gold to fill budget hole

TETSUSHI KAJIMOTO
TOKYO, DEC. 17

Japan has sold 80 tonnes of gold used for minting coins to another arm of the government to fund part of its huge stimulus package to combat the coronavirus crisis, government officials told Reuters. Saddled with public debt twice the size of its economy and tax revenues hit by the pandemic-induced recession, the finance ministry is under pressure to find non-tax revenues to cover the rising cost of spending to deal with the health crisis. The ministry usually taps reserves set aside as special accounts, and profits the Bank of Japan (BOJ) and other agencies return to state coffers after they close their annual books. This time, the ministry resorted to a rare



arrangement involving the central bank. Under the move, the ministry's division in charge of international affairs sold a portion of dollar reserves to the BOJ. With the yen it received, the division bought gold from another division of the ministry in charge of debt management. From the gold sale, the division in charge of debt management gained proceeds worth 500 billion yen (\$4.84 billion) that would be used to finance a

new fund aimed at boosting research and development at universities, two officials told Reuters on condition of anonymity. The BOJ announced on Wednesday it would buy dollars from the ministry as a precaution against any market disruptions caused by the pandemic. But some analysts say the arrangement may have been initiated by the finance ministry, which wanted to avoid issuing too much debt or using taxpayers' money for the fund. "From the standpoint of fiscal consolidation, this deal may be described as effective use of state property," said Yoshimasa Maruyama, chief market economist at SMBC Nikko Securities. "It sounds reasonable for the BOJ to top up dollar funds. But it was probably the government, not the BOJ, that pulled the trigger," —Reuters

Smartphone market up 42% in Oct.

New Delhi, Dec. 17: India's smartphone market grew 42 per cent, with shipments of 21 million units in October—the second highest for a month—driven by multiple online sale events, research firm IDC said on Thursday. IDC said it expects the smartphone market to see a single-digit decline in final consumer sell out in 2020 on a full-year basis. According to IDC, the growth in October was driven by multiple online

sale festivals and continuing pent up demand from the third quarter of 2020. "This is the highest ever October shipments and second highest for a month, following 23 million units in September 2020, an all-time high for a single month," it added. Online platforms accounted for 51 per cent share of the shipment, and the channel grew 53 per cent year-over-year (YoY). Offline channels, especially in smaller

towns and cities, also saw a healthy 33 per cent YoY, IDC said. The low-mid range segment (\$100-200) grew by 60 per cent YoY and its share increased to 58 per cent of the total market in the said month, it added. The premium segment (\$500-700) witnessed multi-fold growth with high shipments of the iPhone XR, 11 and OnePlus 8 driven by affordability schemes/offers. —PTI

Soaring LNG prices worsen gas crunch in Asian nations

JESSICA JAGANATHAN
SINGAPORE, DEC. 17

Surging spot prices for liquefied natural gas (LNG) are exacerbating a gas supply crunch in key fast-growing emerging markets in Asia just as a cold spell in other parts of the region boosts demand for the fuel. Companies from Pakistan to China have cancelled a flurry of LNG tenders this week, several trade sources said, as lofty prices risk pushing up the input costs of industries, which could make energy more expensive for consumers. Benchmark Asia spot LNG prices have soared seven-fold since May to six-year highs, driven by production losses in Australia, Malaysia, Norway and Qatar combined with accelerating use in China, India and elsewhere. "Buyers with no alternatives are now paying top-dollar for prompt cargoes in January," said Chong Zhi Xin, a director at consultancy IHS Markit. The state buyer for Pakistan—one of the



fastest growing LNG markets—did not award an emergency tender seeking three cargoes for delivery in January after it received high prices, according to sources. Power plants may opt to burn dirtier but cheaper fuel oil instead, the sources said, but are also facing rising prices in that market. In India, Gujarat State Petroleum Corp (GSPC) and Indian Oil Corp did not award tenders seeking cargoes for January to February delivery, trade sources said. In Bangladesh, gas shortages are already apparent. "We don't have gas for cooking until (the) afternoon during the winter season. There is hardly

any gas. I can't even boil water, let alone cook food," said Sumi Akter, a mother of two in Dhaka. Bangladesh has only imported one spot cargo this winter despite issuing several tenders over the past few months, an energy ministry official said. "We have started importing from the spot market but the effort was not successful because of the abnormally high prices," the official added. Buyers in China, the world's second largest LNG importer after Japan, are also feeling the pinch, with one steel trader reporting a rise of around 2 per cent in billet prices in steelmaking hub Tangshan, due to the rise of natural gas prices. Higher prices combined with a gas supply crunch have seen operations at liquefaction plants in some areas in northern China being cut by 20 to 40 per cent, sources added. "The LNG prices have reached a point where I don't think it's viable for some price-sensitive buyers," a Singapore-based LNG trader said. —Reuters

Antony Waste's ₹300-crore IPO from Monday

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, DEC. 17

Antony Waste Handling Cell's Rs 300-crore IPO opens on December 21 in the price range of Rs 313 to Rs 315 per equity share of Rs 5 face value. Antony Waste Handling is the second largest player in the Rs 5,000-crore municipal solid waste management industry, with a 19-year track record. The company has undertaken more than 25 projects, of which 18 were ongoing as at November 15, including projects for the municipal corporations of Greater Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thane, Pimpri Chinchwad, Nagpur, North Delhi and Mangaluru, besides Noida and Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority. The company had a fleet of 1,147 vehicles and close to 7,400 full time employees to handle municipal solid waste management. The public issue comprises a fresh issue of Rs 85 crore and an offer for sale worth Rs 215 crore by financial investors.

VIRUS | FATIGUE

Ticket sales in Japan have reached pre-Covid levels in last 3 months

Imax doubles down on China as theatres buzz again

SHIRLEY ZHAO
DEC. 17

Imax Corp sees the potential to add at least 400 theatres in China by 2023, as the cinema chain operator looks to expand its footprint in a country that's emerged as the largest movie market this year. The Ontario, Canada-based firm known for massive screens in its movie halls, has signed a deal with its Chinese partner Guangzhou Jinyi Media Corp for five new locations and upgrades at seven existing ones, it said in an email. Imax, which has about 700 theatres in China, sees the possibility of expanding its network by 50 per cent over the next three years, it added.

The theatre chain is stepping up its commitment in China as the Asian country rebounds strongly from the coronavirus pandemic-induced slowdown while the outbreaks continue to ravage the US and Europe. While both US and China contributed about a third of Imax's global box office in 2019, the latter has surpassed the US as the world's top film market this year, underscoring its importance for movie hall operators. "One big vote of confidence in the Chinese market is that a number of our Chinese leading exhibitors are adding more theatres to their Imax footprint," Imax chief executive officer Rich Gelfond



said in an interview. The company has also "been on a trajectory to release more local language Chinese films," he said. China's box-office gross revenues touched 16.4 billion yuan (\$2.5 billion) this year, compared with about \$2 billion ticket sales in the US, according to data from ticketing platform Maoyan Entertainment

and market tracker Box Office Mojo. "Imax's exposure to China's quick box office rebound gives it a leg-up against regular theatres that have a greater presence in North America and Europe, where the recovery has been tepid," Bloomberg Intelligence analysts Geetha Ranganaathan and Amine Bensaid wrote in a Nov. 17 note. Box office revenues in China are now at 75 per cent of the levels seen last year, owing to local-language blockbusters such as "The Eight Hundred," also the world's top-grossing movie this year -- Gelfond said. The pandemic has also accelerated the company's commitment to releasing more Chinese-

language films, he said. While China has become an increasingly important movie market, it has also become a tricky one as it witnesses a heightened sense of nationalism. As people get fatigued with social distancing and vaccine initiatives become more widespread, Imax expects movie watchers to return in hordes. And not just in China. Ticket sales in Japan in the past three months have reached the same level in the year before while South Korea too has seen a strong comeback, according to Gelfond. "When people feel safe going to the movies, they are coming back in very large numbers," he said. —Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Australian Open moved to February

Melbourne: The Australian Open was pushed back to February 8 on Thursday after weeks of negotiations as coronavirus disruption hits a second Grand Slam tennis season. Men's qualifiers will be held in Doha but Australia will host a series of build-up events including the flagship ATP Cup, the men's ATP Tour said, announcing its early 2021 schedule. The three-week delay to the season's opening Grand Slam comes after this year's Wimbledon was cancelled — for the first time since World War II — the French Open was postponed and the US Open was played behind closed doors. Fans are expected to be allowed at Melbourne Park, the tournament's venue, as the coronavirus is under control in Australia, but players will need to undergo 14 days of quarantine. — *AFP*

Silva, Chhetri propel Bengaluru

Goa: Bengaluru FC piled on further misery on Odisha FC with a 2-1 win in the Indian Super League at GMC Stadium, Bambolim, on Thursday. Cleiton Silva (79') scored the match-winner for Bengaluru after Steven Taylor (71') had cancelled out Sunil Chhetri (38') first-half lead for the Blues, who remained unbeaten in their six matches this season. Bengaluru were dominant from the start but were lucky not to fall behind early in the game. Diego Mauricio played a delightful through ball for Manuel Onwu, who managed to get the ball past Gurpreet, but his celebrations were curtailed, as the assistant referee signaled it offside.

Odisha had their moments in the game with Onwu and Jerry Mawihmingthanga creating problems for the Bengaluru defense but failed to test their keeper.

Cavani charged by FA over racist post

London: Edinson Cavani has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association for a now-deleted social media post containing a Spanish phrase that is offensive in some contexts and for which the Manchester United star apologised.

The 33-year-old Uruguayan striker's Instagram post thanked a friend for his congratulations after scoring twice as United came from 2-0 down to beat Southampton 3-2 last month and included the Spanish word "negrito" (small black person).

He later deleted the post and apologised when it was pointed out the meaning that could be attached to it. Both United and the player said at the time that the word was clearly used in an affectionate manner and has different connotations in South America. — *AFP*

Lakers edge Suns in pre-season bow

Los Angeles: LeBron James and Anthony Davis eased into the NBA's pre-season on Wednesday as the Los Angeles Lakers scored a 112-107 victory over the Phoenix Suns. James, who barely two months ago led the Lakers to their NBA Finals triumph in Orlando, bagged 11 points with two rebounds and two assists during 15 first half minutes in Phoenix. Davis added 10 points with four rebounds in 18 minutes on court. Both James and Davis were rested for the second half. New Lakers signing Marc Gasol added three points in a 21-minute appearance. Kyle Kuzma led the scoring for the Lakers with 23 points. The coronavirus-interrupted 2019-2020 campaign — which shut down for four months between March and July — eventually wrapped up in Florida in October. With the new season tipping off on December 22, it means teams will have the shortest off-season in NBA history. — *AFP*

Live on TV

CRICKET

Australia vs India: First Test — Day Two from 9.30 am on Sony Ten 1, 3, Sony Six, HD

Big Bash League: Sydney Sixers vs Adelaide Strikers from 5.40 am (Saturday) on Sony Ten 1, HD

FOOTBALL

Indian Super League: North East United vs Jamshedpur from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3

WWE

Smackdown: Bouts from 6.30 am (Saturday) on Son Ten 1, HD

AUSSIES GET A GRIP

India end Day One at 233/6 after Kohli runout

SCORECARD

India 1st Innings: Prithvi Shaw b Mitchell Starc 0, Mayank Agarwal b Pat Cummins 17, Cheteshwar Pujara c Labuschagne b Nathan Lyon 43, Virat Kohli run out 74, Ajinkya Rahane lbw Starc 42, Hanuma Vihari lbw Hazlewood 16, Wriddhiman Saha (not out) 9, Ravichandran Ashwin (not out) 15. Extras (b-2, lb-7 nb-7, wd-1) 17. **Total (For 6 wkts, in 89 overs) 233.** **FoW:** 1-0, 2-3, 3-100, 4-188, 5-196, 6-206. **Bowling:** Mitchell Starc 19-4-49-2, Josh Hazlewood 20-6-47-1, Pat Cummins 19-7-42-1, Cameron Green 9-2-15-0, Nathan Lyon 21-2-68-1, Marnus Labuschagne 1-0-3-0.

ed the right amount of caution and aggression in his 180-ball innings, showing one and all that he is a few lightyears ahead of his peers when it comes to quality batsmanship.

If Cheteshwar Pujara (43 off 160 balls) let bowlers dictate terms with an ultra-defensive approach, his skipper gave opposition the respect it deserved but also from time to time, played those shots to drive home a point. His 88-run partnership with Rahane (42 off 91 balls) during the final session nearly put India

on even keel but fortunes tilted once Kohli was back in the pavilion.

Rahane was soon snapped with the second new ball by Mitchell Starc (2/49).

Earlier, Pujara's ultra-defensive approach became his own undoing as India literally crawled during the first two sessions.

So intent was Pujara on blocking anything and leaving everything for the better part of his innings, that a 68-run stand for the third wicket with Kohli couldn't release pressure



NUMBERS GAME

KOHLI'S SECOND RUN OUT IN TESTS

● On the opening day of the first Test against Australia at the Adelaide Oval, Indian skipper Virat Kohli was run out for the second time in 146 innings of 87 Test matches. He was dismissed run out for the first time against the same opponent at the same ground in January 2012.

● It was also Kohli's maiden run out in 91 innings of 56 Test matches as skipper.

● Kohli became the eighth Indian batsman to make 12 or more fifty plus scores against Australia in Tests. His 74 was his 12th fifty plus innings in 35 innings of 20 Test matches against Australia.

— *S. PERVEZ KAISER*



Mickil Jaiswal



Thakur Tilak Varma

Mickil, Tilak and Chandan smash double centuries

Vikram hits ton, Nikhil gets five wickets in top league

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

It rained runs on the second day of the Hyderabad Cricket Association's A-1 Division three-day league matches on Thursday with three batsmen scoring big double hundreds.

Mickil Jaiswal of Marredpally Colts was the star performer of the day. He led the Colts charge with an unbeaten 292 to give his side the upper-hand against Ensconce.

Mickil smashed 22 fours and 16 sixes in his 264-ball knock as MP Colts replied to Ensconce's 358 for 8 in 90 overs with 459 for 4 in 88 overs by close of play. The double centurion has two overs to get eight runs for a landmark triple ton when play resumes on Friday in a match being played in the 90-90 overs (first innings) and 40-40 overs (second innings) format.

Thakur Tilak Varma of Gemini Friends was the next best on show. He played a captain's knock of 224 not out to push Cambridge into a corner. The left-hander belted 26 boundaries and three sixes in his 269-ball innings to take his team to 381 for 2 in their first innings, way ahead of Cambridge's poor scores of 182 and 110 for 7.

Chandan Sahani of Evergreen also scored a double ton. He made 209 in 177 balls, 18 of which were hit to the fence while nine sailed over it. Teammate G. Vikram played second fiddle with a fine 108 to help their side (422 for 6) to a massive total over

Concorde, who had made 163 for 5 in the second innings after having been bundled out for 124 in their first essay.

S. Nikhil of Continental was the other performer. He took five wickets while conceding 29 runs as Zinda Tilismath were out for a mere 120.

A-1 DIVISION (THREE-DAY)

Day-2:

■ Ensconce 358/8 in 90 overs vs MP Colts 459/4 in 88 overs (Mickil Jaiswal 292 batting — 264b, 22x4, 16x6, A. Akash 57, Rahul Radesh 67 batting).

■ Cambridge XI 182 in 45.2 overs & 110/7 in 22.2 overs (Nitish Reddy 38, Vishnu 3/14) vs Gemini Friends 381/2 in 90 overs (Thakur Tilak Varma 224 n.o. — 269b, 26x4, 3x6, Maruthi Reddy 73 n.o.).

■ Concorde CC 124 & 163/5 in 40 overs (A. Vignesh Reddy 59 n.o., G. Aniket Reddy 3/28) lost to Evergreen 422/6 in 90 overs (Chandan Sahani 209 — 177b, 18x4, 9x6, G. Vikram Nalk 108 — 218b, 10x4, Shaik Majid 3/87). **Points:** Evergreen 8, Concorde 0.

■ Continental CC 237 & 169/9 in 40 overs (S. Vaishnav Reddy 54 n.o.) vs Zinda Tilismath CC 120 in 34.3 overs (S. Nikhil 5/29 — 11-4-29-5) & 55/3 in 11.4 overs (Shashank Lokesh 30 batting).

■ Budding Star 221 in 55.1 overs & 188/7 in 32 overs (Mir Jaweed Ali 75, Irfan Khan 3/21) vs Jai Hanuman 320 in 88.3 overs (Rohit Rayudu 78, Sai Purnanand Rao 43, Harshavardhan Singh 36, Irfan Khan 50, Aabid Khan 4/49).

■ Income Tax 208/9 & 108/2 in 17 overs (MSR Charan 43 batting, B. Sandeep 58) vs Sporting XI 317 in 84.3 overs (Rakesh 49, Tanmay Agarwal 39, Prateek Reddy 34, Himalay Agarwal 53, Dhyeay 40, Sadhan 33, Deepak 3/55, Harshavardhan 3/31).

■ Deccan Chronicle 437/6 in 90 overs vs EMCC 368/7 in 88 overs (B. Anirudh 95, Dheeraj Vishal 64, Ajay Dev Godun 46 n.o., Shaik Sohail 64, Abdul Adnan 3/65).



Australia's Mitchell Starc (third from right) celebrates with teammates after bowling out India's Prithvi Shaw on the opening day of their first Test at the Adelaide Oval in Adelaide on Thursday. — *AP*

No Russian flag, song at next two Olympics

Geneva, Dec. 17: Russia was banned on Thursday from using its name, flag and anthem at the next two Olympics or at any world championships for the next two years.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport's ruling also blocked Russia from bidding to host major sporting events for two years.

Russian athletes and teams will still be allowed to compete at next year's Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Winter Games in Beijing, as well as world championships including the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, if they are not implicated in doping or covering up positive tests.

The punishments are less than the four-year ban the World Anti-Doping Agency had proposed.

One small win for Russia is the proposed team name at major events. The name "Russia" can be retained on uniforms if the words "Neutral Athlete" or "Neutral Team" have equal prominence, the court said.

Still, the court's three judges imposed the most severe penalties on Russia since allegations of state-backed doping and cover-ups emerged after the 2014 Sochi Olympics.

The case centered on accusations that Russian state authorities tam-



In this Feb. 23, 2014 file photo the Russian national flag (right) flies after it is hoisted next to the Olympic flag during the closing ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. — *AP*

pered with a database from the Moscow testing laboratory before handing it over to Wada investigators last year. It contained likely evidence to prosecute long-standing doping violations.

The CAS process was formally between Wada and the Russian anti-doping agency. The Russian agency, known as Rusada, was ruled non-compliant last year — a decision upheld Thursday by the three judges.

Rusada was also ordered to pay \$1.27 million to Wada.

When a four-day hearing was held in Lausanne last month, Russian athletes and their lawyers took part as third parties arguing they should not be pun-

ished for misconduct by state officials not working in sports. Giving Wada the lab database by a December 2018 deadline was a key condition for Rusada being reinstated three months earlier when a previous expulsion from the anti-doping community was lifted.

Wada investigators in Moscow eventually got the data one month late. Evidence of doping tests and emails appeared to have been deleted or changed, and whistleblowers were implicated.

The ruling allows Russian government officials including President Vladimir Putin, to attend major sporting events if invited by the host nation's head of state. — *AP*

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