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THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
HYDERABAD | THURSDAY | 17 DECEMBER 2020

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Vol. 83 No. 348 Established 1938 | 24 PAGES | ₹6.00

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WEATHER

Max: 28.6°C

Min: 19.6°C

RH: 54%

Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy. Mist or haze likely. Max/Min temp. 30/19 °C

COVID-19

COUNT

CASES	DEATHS
(+18,708)	(+377)
99,51,072	1,44,487

covid19india.org

STATE GOVERNMENT BULLETINS

(+536)	(+3)
TS: 2,79,135	1,502
(+478)	(+4)
AP: 8,76,814	7,067

CASES AROUND THE WORLD

7,41,15,931
DEATHS 16,48,567
COUNTRIES, AREAS WITH CASES 218

worldometers.info/coronavirus

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Dakshinayana

Tithi: Margasira Shuddha Tadiya till 3.23 pm

Star: Uttarashada till 7.17 pm

Variyam: 11.16 pm to 12.51 am(Friday)

Durmuhurtam: 10.22 am to 11.06 am; 2.46 pm to 3.29 pm

Rahukalam: 1.30 pm to 3 pm

HUIJI CALENDAR

Jamadi-ul-Aakhir 1, 1442 AH

PRAYERS

Fajar: 5.34 am

Zohar: 12.22 pm

Asar: 4.09 pm

Maghrib: 5.51 pm

Isha: 7.05 pm

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.39 AM

SUNSET TODAY 5.45 PM

MOONSET TODAY 8.31 PM

MOONRISE TOMORROW 9.08 AM

COUNTER

POINT

People are anxiously counting the days to get rid of the Covid year!

BRIEF

India in currency manipulator list

Washington: The US on Wednesday added India along with Taiwan and Thailand to the "monitoring list" of currency manipulating countries that includes major trading partners like China and six others. It also branded Vietnam and Switzerland as currency manipulators. Other countries in the monitoring list are Japan, South Korea, Germany, Italy, Singapore and Malaysia.

LPG prices hiked by ₹50 a cylinder

New Delhi: Cooking gas LPG price on Wednesday was increased by ₹50 per cylinder, the second hike in rate this month following firming of international prices. Non-subsidised LPG price was increased to ₹694 per 14.2-kg cylinder from ₹644 earlier.

SC for setting up panel to resolve farmers' stir

Farmers to protest till three laws are repealed

SANJAY KAW and PARMOD KUMAR
NEW DELHI, DEC. 16

Noting that the Centre's negotiations with the farmers protesting against the agricultural reform laws have not yielded any results, the Supreme Court on Wednesday said it could form a committee to work out a solution between the two sides. The court said the proposed committee will comprise representatives from the government and farmers' unions across the country in an attempt to break the deadlock.

The protesting farmers described the court's suggestion on forming such a committee as their "moral victory" but remained firm on their stand that they will continue with their agitation till the three laws are repealed by the Centre. The ongoing protests, that are now in their third week, have seen thousands of farmers, primarily from Punjab and Haryana, gathering at the borders of the national capital.

"Even if a committee is formed, our agitation will continue until the three laws are withdrawn," the All India Kisan Sangarsh Coordination Committee, a pan-India organisation of 250 farmers' groups, said. The AKSSC said the formation of the committee would be fruitful only if it has the representatives of all national and regional farmers' outfits.

The farmers' unions also sent a written reply to the Centre rejecting its December 9 proposal in which it offered significant concessions. In an email to agriculture min-



Farmers shout slogans during their protest against the new farm laws, at Singhu Border in New Delhi on Wednesday.

— PTI

PG 7 | PILs FILED TO REMOVE FARMERS

istry joint secretary Vivek Agrawal, Sanyukt Kisan Morcha leader Darshan Pal said: "With reference to the proposal and letter received from you, we want to inform the government that the farmers' unions had held a joint meeting on the same day and discussed your proposal and rejected it because it was the written format of the proposal verbally offered by the government representatives on December 5, 2020."

Mr Pal also asked the government to stop maligning the farmers' movement. "We want the government to stop

maligning farmers' movement and stop parallel negotiations with other farmer organisations," he said. The written response from the protesting farm unions came a day after agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the government was awaiting a written response on its proposal sent to the farmers. Five meetings have taken place between the protesting farmers and the minister. Union home minister Amit Shah also met the farmers once, but the deadlock has persisted, with both sides sticking to their stance.

JEE Mains 4 times a year, more choice for students

New Delhi, Dec. 16: The JEE-Mains for admission to engineering colleges will be held four times a year starting 2021 to offer flexibility to students and a chance to improve their scores, Union education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank announced on Wednesday.

The first edition of the Joint Entrance Examination-Mains (JEE-Mains) will be held from February 23 to 26, followed by rounds in March, April and May. "We have examined the suggestions

received from students and various quarters, and it has been decided that JEE-Mains will be held in four sessions in February, March, April and May," Nishank said.

The first session will be held from February 23 to 26 and the results will be declared within five days from the last date of exams, he said. "The move will ensure that students do not miss out on opportunities due to clash of exams or due to the COVID-19 situation at present," the minister said.

Nishank also said that students will be given a choice to answer 75 questions — 25 each in physics, chemistry and mathematics — out of 90 in the JEE-Mains paper. In the exam paper of 90 questions, 30 questions each will be from physics, chemistry and mathematics, he said.

The minister informed that a candidate need not appear in all the four sessions. "If they appear in more than one session then his or her best of scores in 2021 will be considered for ranking. —PTI

WEDDING | SEPARATION **Petitioner wants anomalies in divorce laws removed without prejudice on religion, race or caste**

SC to hear plea on uniform grounds for divorce

New Delhi, Dec. 16: The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to hear a plea seeking "uniform grounds of divorce" for all citizens, keeping with the spirit of the Constitution and international conventions. A bench of Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and Justices A.S. Bopanna and V. Ramasubramanian orally observed that it may consider the prayer for directing the Law Commission of India to examine the laws relating to divorce and suggest 'uniform grounds of divorce' for all citizens in the spirit of Articles 14, 15, 21, 44 of the Constitution

within three months. The top court issued notice to the Centre on the plea and sought its response. The plea sought directions to the Centre to take steps to remove anomalies in divorce laws and make them uniform for all citizens, without any prejudice on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. "Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains have to seek divorce under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. Muslims, Christians and Parsis have their own personal laws. A couple

SC: DON'T EVICT DAUGHTER-IN-LAW UNDER SENIOR CITIZENS ACT

New Delhi, Dec. 15: The right of a woman to stay in a shared matrimonial household cannot be defeated by securing an order of eviction under the Senior Citizens Act 2007, the Supreme Court has said.

The top court said object of the Protection of Women from Domestic

belonging to different religions has to seek divorce under the Special Marriage Act, 1956," it said. If either partner is a foreign nation-

PM sets off 50th jubilee fete of victory over Pak

Lights victory torch; Year to be called Swarnim Vijay Varsh

PAWAN BALI | DC
NEW DELHI, DEC. 16

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday lit the 'Swarnim Vijay Mashaal' from the National War Memorial's eternal flame marking the launch of the 50th anniversary celebrations of India's decisive victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war, which led to the creation of Bangladesh.

This year is also being celebrated as 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh'.

"On Vijay Diwas we recall the unwavering courage of our armed forces that resulted in a decisive victory for our nation in the 1971 war. On this special Vijay Diwas, had the honour of lighting the 'Swarnim Vijay Mashaal' at the National War Memorial," Mr Modi said in a tweet.

Four Victory Mashaals (flames) will be carried to different parts of the country, including to villages of Param Vir Chakra and Maha Vir Chakra awardees of the 1971 war.

The soil from the awardees' villages and from the areas where major battles were fought in 1971 are being brought to the National War Memorial.

KCR PREPARES FOR WARANGAL, KHAMMAM POLLS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Keeping the experience of the recent GHMC elections in mind, TRS president and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao has begun a rigorous exercise for the upcoming elections to the Warangal and Khammam municipal corporations, which would most likely be held in February next, party sources said.

Sources disclosed that Rao found party workers at the booth level were not so effective in mobilising voters, and that the candidates also solely depended on the positive vote without working to mobilise voters.

Sources said the party chief felt that there was an urgent need to strengthen the booth level mechanism.

■ **Page 2: BJP leaders look for strong leaders**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi lights the 'Swarnim Vijay Mashaal' on Vijay Diwas which commemorates the victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war that led to the independence of Bangladesh, at the National War Memorial in New Delhi.

— PTI

Each year, December 16 is celebrated as "Vijay Diwas" to commemorate India's historic victory over Pakistan.

The swift and professionally planned operations, executed by the Indian armed forces led to one of the greatest military victories recorded in the annals

of world history. It was on this day that the largest military surrender after World War II took place in Dhaka when Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, accepted the surrender of 93,000 Pakistani troops from Lt. Gen. A.A.K. Niazi of the Pakistan Army.

This year various commemorative events will be held across India in which war veterans will be felicitated and events like band displays, seminars, exhibitions, equipment displays, film festivals, conclaves and adventure activities are planned.

Fiat Chrysler drives into city with ₹1.1K-cr digi hub

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) on Wednesday decided to invest \$150 million (approximately ₹1,100 crore) to set up a new global digital hub in Hyderabad.

The innovation and technology development facility will be the company's largest digital hubs outside of North America and EMEA. The investment significantly expands the automobile manufacturing group's presence in the country, a company press release said.

FCA ICT India will create nearly 1,000 cutting-edge technology jobs by the end of 2021, the official statement said. FCA has plans to increase hiring over the next two to three years. The newly recruited staff will work on exciting products and concepts that will define the future of mobility at FCA. The

global digital hub will serve as a 'transformation and innovation engine' for FCA and drive global IT strategy and deliver excellence through a robust platform, technology and service centers of excellence, it said. The hub will focus on building strategic competencies in niche technology areas like connected vehicle programmes, artificial intelligence, data accelerators, and cloud technologies.

"In the digital era, data is the new currency. Our goal is to build an innovation powerhouse that harnesses the intelligence enabled by data to build exciting new products and services to deliver at the speed of our customers' expectations," said Mamatha Chamarthi, CIO, FCA, North America and Asia Pacific.

The availability of talent coupled and culture of innovation and pro-business policies led FCA to

pick Hyderabad. The hub will expand FCA's relationships with several ecosystem partners, including strategic partners, start-ups, digital accelerators and universities, and accelerate an innovation agenda, Mr Chamarthi said. FCA has a major presence in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, with headquarters in Mumbai and employs over 3,000 people. With the global digital hub, FCA will be expanding its presence in Telangana. The firm has a joint venture vehicle and powertrain manufacturing facility in Ranjangaon, Maharashtra. Its engineering and product development operations are located in Pune and Chennai.

"The investment in Hyderabad cements our continued commitment to India and our customers," said Dr Partha Datta, president and managing director, FCA India.

— PTI

SHORT TAKES

INDRAKARAN: TS TAKES LEAD IN SAVING FORESTS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Minister A. Indrakaran Reddy said the Telangana government had adopted precautionary measures to safeguard forests well before any other state.

The minister was speaking at the convocation of the Forest College and conferred degrees on its 50 students as well gold medals to those who had excelled, at the Mulugu College campus in Siddipet district. Minister Harish Rao said proposals to upgrade the Forest College into a university and giving reservation for its students were under study. As per the Chief Minister's aspirations, students of Forest College should top the all India services exams, said academic counsellor chairperson R. Shoba.

HYD ZOO FIRST TO GET UK AWARD

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad, has become the first zoo in the country to be awarded the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Standards Certification from ASCB of the United Kingdom.

The ASCB (Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies) gave the certificate after an audit conducted in a phased manner. It expressed satisfaction with the standards particularly in fields of sanitisation, food processing, animal breeding, zoo hospital, animal care, hygiene maintenance and establishment. It also appreciated the efficiency, team work and commitment of the staff.

Transparency, response to any emergency round the clock, and standards being followed fulfill the criteria for ISO certification.

MAN CONSUMES ADULTERATED TODDY, DIES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

A 40-year-old man died and another fell sick after consuming toddy that was allegedly adulterated at Jalpally in Pahadi Shareef on Wednesday.

Police said the victim, Srinivas, was a toddy addict and a regular at the place.

"He went to drink on Tuesday night and was reportedly fine until 3 am of Thursday but was found dead later in the day. We also found out that another person, Ravi, who works at the place, complaining of stomach pain and was admitted to a hospital where his condition is said to be stable," the police officials said. A case was booked under Section 174 (suspicious death) of the CrPC and Srinivas' body was shifted for the post-mortem examination. Officials have also sent a sample of the toddy to laboratories to check for adulteration.

BJP LOOKS FOR STRONG LEADERS

From Page 1

The TRS felt the need to first concentrate on strengthening booth level committees in the Khammam and Warangal municipal corporation areas.

Though the BJP previously had no stronghold in Warangal and Khammam municipal corporations, Congress, TD and Left leaders in both cities are rallying towards the party after the GHMC election results.

The Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation has 58 divisions of which the TRS had won 44 in 2016, and the BJP one. The BJP did not win a single ward in the Khammam Municipal Corporation in 2016.

After the GHMC elections, BJP leaders are extensively touring both cities to attract strong leaders from other parties into the BJP to build up the party base, as well as galvanise the cadres and voters.

Sources in the TRS said that Chandrashekar Rao was watching political developments in both cities. He has asked the district ministers to keep a tab on movements of Congress and BJP leaders as they could try to poach TRS leaders.

Sources revealed that Chandrashekar Rao was likely to tour both cities in the coming days to gear up the party cadre and leaders.



Farmers stage a protest at Dharna Chowk opposite Indira Park in Hyderabad on Wednesday, in protest against the Centre's farm laws and the proposed Electricity Bill.

— DEEPAK DESHPANDE

TS farmers take to the streets against new agriculture laws

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Farmers of Telangana have shown solidarity with their protesting counterparts in Delhi, who are agitating against the three farm bills enacted by BJP-led NDA government, which have become laws with President Ram Nath Kovind okaying them.

The Telangana farmers' solidarity is by way of an indefinite protest they have started at the Dharna Chowk abutting Indira Park in the city. Those who protested included tenant and women farmers, agricultural labour from different parts of Telangana, social activists, and general public.

Damarakonda Kumari from Warangal Rural district, who is an agriculturist and owns one and half acres of land, told *Deccan Chronicle*: "These three farm laws will turn farmers like us into slaves of corporate bigwigs. The Union government has sold the fate of Indian farmers to rich corporates. We are protesting as we want the centre to rescind the laws to protect families whose livelihood depends only on cultivation," he stated.

Among the protestors is Duddeda Sugunama, 45, an agriculture labourer with three daughters. She had received the Best Farmer Award in 2010 in the United States of America (USA). When she got the US award, the then state government promised to grant her agriculture land, which has not fructified so far. As such, Sugunama continues to be a tenant farmer. Sugunama's son committed suicide when the family went into debts after their crops had failed due to drought and pest

Sad tale of Sura Radha amid farmers' protest

SANJAY SAMUEL PAUL | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Sura Radha, a 27-year-old agriculture farmer who has seen enough turmoil in her young age, is now the lone breadwinner for her seven-year-old son as also her old parents. She used to cultivate her three-and-half acres of land after her husband committed suicide in 2014 when crops repeatedly failed and he ran into huge debts.

Radha lives at Katkur village in Bachanapet mandal of Jangaon district. She returned to her parents soon after her husband's suicide when she found no support from her in-laws. She was well supported by her brother till fate played a cruel joke. Their crops failed again and they ran into debts, leading to her brother too committing suicide.

The unfortunate Radha was among the farmers protesting at the Dharna Chowk who spoke to *Deccan Chronicle*. Misfortune has not left her. Authorities razed her

attacks, due to which they could not pay rent for the land they were cultivating.

Says Sugunama: "There have been many farmers who have committed suicide after they repeatedly failed to make any profit on their crop. These new laws, which have been framed by the central government, will force many more farmers to take their own lives in the coming



Sura Radha

dilapidated house, where she lived with her parents and son. At the time of dismantling her house, officials promised her a double bedroom house within the complex of such rooms they were going to build after razing several houses including that of Radha. She never got it though.

"We are living in another dilapidated house. We suffered heavily during rains and recent floods. All our food grains too got washed off."

Radha sold one acre of her three-and-a-half acres of land to drill a bore well. That too failed and she is now left clutching at straws.

times, as corporate entities will squeeze them for their own profits."

Rekha of Katkur village in Jangaon district maintained: "All governments are anti-farmer. Funds under the Rythu Bandhu scheme of TRS government are being given mostly to those who own farm lands. These funds are being denied to tenant farmers and agricultural labour, as they have not

"Lives of poor and marginal farmers are very tough. Those dependent on rains find it tougher. Their survival is solely dependent on God and what He lets us produce," she stated.

Radha wants to educate her seven-year-old son in an English medium school, who also helps her in her field.

"I have admitted him into a private English medium school. This year, I have failed in paying his fees, which is more than Rs. 10,000 per annum. Unfortunately, government schools never provide good education, which is a fact known to all," she remarked. The last straw on her back is that she is unable to educate her son, as she could not pay the dues of fee. She can only console herself saying he is helping her in farming."

"Government gives lakhs and lakhs to rich landlords in the name helping some farmers. Policy makers should actually help poor and marginal farmers, identifying them after a proper survey," she added.

been put on the beneficiaries' list." Rekha maintains that the KCR government is depositing Rythu Bandhu funds into accounts of absentee farmers, many of whom are working in USA.

The protest at Dharna Chowk is being organised under the auspices of AIKSSC, Makam, CCC, Rythu Swarajya Vedika, Palampur Adhyana Vedika, and TVVU.

MAN ARRESTED FOR SPREADING FAKE MESSAGES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The Rachakonda cyber-crime police arrested a man from Kurnool for forwarding a fake message on WhatsApp and creating panic among the public. He had forwarded two voice notes which claimed that a government hospital was providing 'chemical masks' to the public which kills the wearer.

The accused, Sadik Basha, 29, is an electrician and resident of Amaravathinagar of Adoni in Kurnool district, said Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat. The officer said Basha had received the voice messages from an unknown number. Basha forwarded them to his friends, relatives and other contacts through WhatsApp and created panic, which might lead to disturbances, Bhagwat said.

Fungal infection in Covid recovered

Use of high-end steroids to combat Covid is considered one of the reasons for this

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Steroids used in the treatment of Covid-19 are causing severe side-effects in a few patients which is leading to fungal infection. The reason is stated to be that those who have recovered from Covid-19 are severely immune-compromised.

So far, 50 patients have reported to corporate and small hospitals in the city with fungal infections. It is found that patients developed the infection in the middle and later stages of recovery.

The use of high-end steroids to combat Covid-19 is considered to be one of the reasons for this. Steroid use is increased in patients who are critically ill to control the cytokine storm in the body. But the steroid use allows opportunistic fungal infections like deadly mucormycosis to enter the body.

This infection is also noted in patients who have undergone liver and kidney transplants, and they are duly cautioned about it. Among Covid-19 recovered patients, fungal infection is found in those suffering from ENT problems, diabetes, kidney problems, sinusitis and dental problems.

Dr Srinivas Kishore Sista, consultant ENT surgeon and sleep specialist at Star Hospitals, said doctors had seen 10 patients with fungal infection in the last 15 days.

"All of them had recovered from Covid-19. The fungal infections are found in different parts of the body such as eyes, brain and bones. This is worrying as it can also lead to permanent loss of eye sight and damage the organs. Those who have recovered from Covid 19 need to be alert," Dr Sista said.

A senior doctor on condition of anonymity said, "In order to control the situation, patients in the moderate category were also given steroids. The cases of fungal infection emerging now are mostly due to the excessive use of steroids. The medical fraternity has to check on its use of medicines as the side-effects are harmful."

The nature of Covid-19

TELANGANA RECORDS 536 FRESH COVID-19 INFECTIONS, THREE DEATHS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The state recorded 536 cases of Covid-19 and three deaths on Tuesday, the state health department bulletin said on Wednesday. The three deaths took the toll to 1,502. The total number of cases is 2,79,135.

The toll is based on the Covid-19 positivity report. However, there have been sudden deaths among those suffering from Covid-19, and it is not known if they died of the Coronavirus disease or there was some other cause.

Sudden heart attacks, death in sleep have come to the fore but are not being recorded. Municipal workers who are asked to sanitise the place which is creating panic as it is an indication that it could be a probable Covid-19 case.

A senior government

doctor said, "We really do not know. Those who are tested are tracked. But it is not clear in the case of those who do not get tested or have gone too late. Municipal authorities are carrying out the process of sanitization based on the information given to them by health authorities."

The government states that they have asked people to come forward to get tested in case they are suffering from Covid-19 symptoms of cold, cough, fever, headache and fatigue. Those who are suffering from loss of smell and taste must get tested as that is the first indication of Covid 19 disease.

There were 52,057 tests carried out on Tuesday and a total of 62,57,745 tests have been done in the state so far.

In the GHMC limits, a total of 107 cases were confirmed.

Symptoms of fungal infections:	Who is at high risk?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe headache Pain in teeth Body pains and breathing problems Pain in the face Weakness and fatigue after mild exertion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid-19 recovered patients who are also suffering from sinusitis, diabetes, ENT disorders, dental and kidney problems. Organ transplant patients also need to be alert.

and the speed at which the virus spread has led to the use of different medicines. Dr C. Shekar Singh, senior ENT surgeon, explained, "We are seeing patients now. This means those who had recovered earlier were either missed or minimal numbers reported to clinics."

Dr Singh said there are two conditions which must be taken into account: The immune compromised state of the patient and the use of medicines for recovery from Covid 19. "Since immunity is compromised, development of disease is inevitable as it was noted in organ transplant cases. If it is due to

use of medicines, there has to be a rethink as to how to minimise its use and stabilise the patient," Dr Singh said.

These aspects are important as fungal infections are not only dangerous but treatment is also expensive. Experts state that re-building of immunity with proper supplementation of protein, vitamins and minerals must be taken up. Guidance from a nutritionist must be sought so that there is proper intake of fruits, vegetables and low-fat proteins. Adequate rest and sound sleep will also allow the body to rejuvenate back stated experts.

MLA Ramesh is German citizen, Centre tells HC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The Union home ministry of home affairs, New Delhi, filed the memo stating that he had contacted the German Embassy over mail on December 6, 2020, to get the citizenship details. But, the documents and the memo showed that the German Embassy had given the details on February 28, 2020.

February 28, 2020.

Justice Kodandaram pointed out the discrepancy and asked, "Is this the method of performing of duties by the higher authorities? If the authorities of the home affairs ministry have even failed get the details of this small issue, how can you get back those who bankrupted the country?"

Justice Kodandaram observed: "Are the authorities are not aware that a sworn affidavit should be filed before the courts? Just by throwing a memo, you are trying to misguide the court."

The judge directed Rajeshwar Rao to ensure that the secretary, home ministry, files a sworn affidavit for better understanding of the issue, and adjourned the hearing to January 20, 2021. Till then, the stay on the home ministry's proceedings suspending the Indian citizenship of Dr Ramesh will remain in force.

WHY IS GOVT ASKING FOR AADHAAR: HC

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday faulted the Telangana state government for compelling those who want to get their non-agriculture properties registered to submit their Aadhaar details.

The court was informed that despite the undertaking submitted by the Advocate General, officials were asking owners for their Aadhaar card details at the time of booking slots for registration through the old method. On hearing this, the division bench of Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice B. Vijayen Reddy observed that the government was adopting surreptitious methods and ignoring the undertaking submitted before the court.

The bench was dealing with a batch of petitions opposing the decision of the state government to collect Aadhaar and caste details of property owners to upload on the Dharani portal.

Advocate General B.S. Prasad informed the bench that a Cabinet Sub-Committee has been constituted to reconsider the Dharani portal issue, and sought time to file a counter-affidavit. The court directed the Chief Secretary to file an affidavit by Thursday with an assurance that Aadhaar and caste details will not be asked from citizens while updating details in the portal.

SHORT TAKES

HYBIZ TV
ANNOUNCES
MEDIA AWARDSDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Hybiz TV, a digital business channel based in the city, announced the launch of media awards to honour professionals from all three media platforms — print, electronic and radio. The awards will cover journalism, advertisements and circulation. The awards will be given out on January 30, 2021.

“We believe these professionals maintain high standards to sustain public trust in media, impacting lives of common people. These awards will recognise and honour some of the outstanding media professionals,” said M. Rajgopal, managing director, Hybiz.

“Journalists — reporters, desk editors and anchors, who work odd hours, often sacrificing their comfort and risk their lives in challenging situations like riots, conflicts, natural disasters — are unseen warriors who face many challenges to bring news to you. Society must recognise them,” he added. “But media industry is incomplete without advertising.”

A jury of eminent professionals from the media and communication community will select the final list of awardees, he added.

ACTIVISTS SAY
SEEK PUBLIC VIEW
ON GHMC BILLDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Civic activists demanded that the state government seek public opinion on the draft GHMC Bill and incorporate suggestions before its introduction in the Legislative Assembly.

The demand was made by members of the Forum for Good Governance (FGG), Justice Reddappa Reddy (retired), M.V. Krishna Reddy, Dr Rao Chelikan and M. Padmanabha Reddy, secretary, in a representation submitted to the municipal administration and urban development department.

Padmanabha Reddy said that the FGG had requested the government to take opinions and suggestions from people on the Telangana Municipalities Bill, 2019. This was not done. “As there were lapses the Governor returned the Bill passed by Assembly with certain observations, for reconsideration. Subsequently ordinance route was adopted. Even then, the Act was not free from controversy and there is a case pending in the High Court against certain sections,” he said.

He pointed out that the Kerala government had incorporated public suggestions, and its Police Act was considered the best in the country, Padmanabha Reddy said.

ACB SEIZES
₹1.99CR FROM
EX-IMS DIRECTORDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The officials of Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) seized ₹1.99 crore in cash from Devika Rani, former director of Indian Medical Service (IMS) and accused in a medical purchase scam. The cash seizure was in addition to the ₹6.76 crore recovered earlier from her.

Apart from Dr Rani, government officials including Dr Padma, K. Vasantha Indira, M. Radhika and V. Harshavardhan were arrested by the officials apart from Omni Medi managing director K. Srihari Babu and company representative Siva Nagaraju.

The ACB said the money seized on Wednesday was in the form of a demand draft from a chit fund company in which Dr Rani and her family members had invested in Telangana state and Tamil Nadu. The seized demand drafts will be deposited in the court, ACB officials said.

The scam came to light following a vigilance inquiry that was launched into purchases made by the IMS for ESI hospitals in the state. The inquiry found that medicines which were not needed were purchased to favour a few firms and the medicines were regularly purchased at relatively high prices.

Further inquiries revealed that the firms that supplied medicines to ESI in this manner were owned by close family members of Dr Rani and her benami persons. The state government then ordered the ACB to investigate the finding of the inquiry.

Private schools financially
hit, but set for reopening

Safety of students along with comfort to be top priority

HARLEEN
MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

As the debate is on in both government and educational circles as well as between parents and schools about reopening even as the Covid pandemic is still about us, *Deccan Chronicle* explores the readiness of schools in different segments. In the last part of this series, we look at private elite schools.

Private schools like the ABODE Montessori & Multiple Intelligence School, Glendale Academy and the Hyderabad Public School, among others, have ensured that as and when students return, their safety will be accorded top priority, along with comfort, at the school premises.

What allows this outlook and resolve is the availability of open, ventilated spaces inside their campuses, their capacity of resources to ensure that classes are conducted with equal consideration for each student.

A visit to two schools to understand the extent of preparations and challenges they are facing despite all resources revealed that private schools are, obviously, best prepared for reopening but have not been spared the turbulence of the lockdown.

At Glendale, the school management, in order to provide a safe environment for students hired a medical expert during the pandemic to oversee sanitation and other facilities. The school has decided to reduce the class size when physical classes restart, which will be restricted to senior school students.

The class size has been pushed down to 12, from the previous 24 to 30 students. No pre-primary, or primary classes will be called, the school management said.

Among other arrangements to ensure safe distancing and avoid crowding in closed spaces, the school has decided to not operate dining hall for mid-day meals and school transportation in buses. Parents will be required to drop their children at school once it reopens and pick them up.

Deep cleaning has been taking place every couple of hours already, with maintenance charges already up by five to 10 per cent without physical classes. Dr Samadi, medical expert, said this budget is estimated to go up by 40 per cent once classes start, because deep cleaning of the entire premises will be undertaken every hour.

Similar is the case with Hyderabad Public School (HPS), which is spending between ₹1.5 and 2.5 lakh each month just for purchasing dis-



Model of classroom with social distancing to be followed once the private schools reopen in Hyderabad.

Edu dept to fulfil
TRSMA demandsDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The education department has assured the Telangana Recognised School Managements Association (TRSMA) that it will meet some of the demands of budget private schools, association general secretary S. Madhusudhan told *Deccan Chronicle* on Wednesday.

This comes a day after *Deccan Chronicle's* ground report on the disheartening conditions and preparedness of budget schools in face of the possible reopening of classes amidst the pandemic.

At a meeting on Tuesday with the representatives of TRSMA, education minister Sabitha Indira Reddy and special chief secretary Chitra Ramachandran said that some of the demands will be met in the next two or three days.

The agitation that the TRSMA had planned from December 16 to 29 with a charter of demands to the government to save budget schools has been put on hold.

The association had planned to present its demands to MPs, MLAs and public representatives, hold press conferences and a round table meeting to sensitise the stakeholders. The association had also planned to observe a ‘black day’ and a hunger strike in

infants, informed HPS principal Skand Bali. The management said the school is fully prepared to welcome students back into the open, green campus.

KTR inaugurates
324 2BHK housesDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Minister K.T. Rama Rao on Wednesday inaugurated 324 double bedroom houses for the urban poor in Vanasthalipuram. Speaking at the event, he said no other state since independence had taken up such a massive initiative as is being done in Hyderabad. Rama Rao, the minister for municipal administration and urban development, congratulated the beneficiaries and appealed to them to ensure sanitation and upkeep of the premises.

The minister said that it is the responsibility of residents to maintain the premises and not to dump trash. With the Covid-19 situation

prevailing, it is important to ensure cleanliness, he said.

Rama Rao said the 324 houses were constructed at a cost of ₹28 crore, and the state government had taken up construction of one lakh 2BHK houses at a cost of ₹9,714 crore.

The minister said that the Government had spent about ₹9 lakh on each flat, the market value of which could be over ₹40 lakh to ₹50 lakh.

The 324 2BHK houses were constructed in three blocks each having a cellar, a still and nine floors.

Further, there are rain harvesting structures, fire safety system, lightning arrest system, CC roads, streetlights, underground drainage, drinking water and lifts etc.

● **THERE ARE** disinfectant tunnels installed, washrooms being prepped with sensor taps, classrooms and labs marked as per social distancing norms.

management says it will try and move classes outdoors, as and when required. This process of disinfecting the huge campus, the management claims, has increased their expenses by 10 per cent already.

ABODE Montessori and Multiple Intelligence School in Gachibowli, which houses classes only till upper elementary (class VI), meanwhile, does not plan to open schools physically anytime soon, considering the safety of younger children.

Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Suman Puvvaladasu, founder and chairperson of ABODE schools, said, “It is more about the parents who are reluctant and apprehensive and may so even until late next year, at least.”

“Even if we plan on restarting classes, we will do it only for maybe Classes V and VI. We have an open class system, which will give enough space to students and teachers to ensure safety. We plan on making small groups that will be allowed in school at a time. As students start to come in, will we really understand how that impacts our maintenance budgets,” said Suman Puvvaladasu.

He added that the school, like many others in this segment, has suffered major losses, almost to the tune of ₹50 to ₹60 lakh per month on transport. He said that at least 1,500 schools in the city are planning to reach out to banks that lend loans for commercial transport to extend a moratorium.

VIJAY DIWAS CELEBRATED AT ARMY PARADE GROUND

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

As part of the Vijay Diwas celebrations, a wreath laying ceremony was organised at Veerula Sainik

Smarak at the Army Parade Ground, Secunderabad, by the Telangana and Andhra Sub Area headquarters on Wednesday.

Vijay Diwas, celebrated on December 16 every year,

commemorates the victory of the Indian armed forces in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War which resulted in the capture of over 93,000 prisoners of war and the liberation of Bangladesh.

SCB OFFICIALS
TO REQUEST
INTEGRATION
WITH GHMCDC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Officials of the Secunderabad Cantonment Board will ask defence minister Rajnath Singh to merge the SCB with the larger Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. “There is a meeting tomorrow. We will raise this issue there and seek opinions of all the concerned,” said the official.

Officials in this isn't the first time that there has been a proposal along these lines. In May last year, Congress MP A. Revanth Reddy had demanded that the SCB be removed and the area merged with the GHMC. The civic body could look after the needs of the people of the area, he said.

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SHORT TAKES

SCR GETS SIX AWARDS FOR ENERGY MGMT.

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

South Central Railway has won six awards for energy management that were instituted by the Confederation of Indian Industry, said Gajanan Mallaya, General Manager, South Central Railway, at a webinar to mark the National Energy Conservation Week.

SCR is the first railway zone to introduce energy neutral stations to adopt energy conservation measures.

Mallaya said SCR was ahead in implementation of energy conservation measures in the traction and non-traction wings.

The zone had implemented innovative concepts to make use of the renewable energy by installing solar roofs, solar covers over platforms and daylight pipes.

SCR is also ahead in installation of energy efficient gadgets, LED lighting, brushless DC electric motor energy saving fans and inverter type ACs among others.

The Energy Conservation Week is celebrated from December 14 to 21 every year as per the guidelines of Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) and the Union ministry of power.

GOVT SETS LAND CONVERSION RATES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The state government on Tuesday announced the rates for conversion of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. The rate will be two per cent of the basic value of the land in the areas covered under the GHMC and 3 per cent in the areas other than the GHMC.

The rates were contained in a government order issued under sub-section (1) of section 4 of the Telangana Agricultural Land (Conversion for Non-Agricultural Purposes) Act, 2006 (Act No.3 of 2006).

The government also issued a GO notifying that the Telangana Agricultural Land (Conversion for Non-Agricultural Purposes) (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Telangana Act No.19 of 2020), will come into force from December 16.

PAK-RETURNED SEARCHES FOR HER FAMILY

Hyderabad, Dec. 16: Gita, a deaf and mute woman who returned from Pakistan five years ago, visited Basar in Telangana state along with her caretakers as part of her effort to locate her family from whom she got separated as a child.

It turned out to be another disappointing mission as she could not connect with any of the spots in the town, about 200 km from Hyderabad on the Maharashtra border.

An official of the NGO, Anand Service Society in Indore in Madhya Pradesh, that is taking care of Gita, had last month said they will conduct a fresh search after efforts to find her family have borne no fruit since her return in 2015.

The society's director Gyanendra Purohit, a sign-language expert, had then said that during communication with Gita they got some vital clues about her geographical background which indicated the region around Nanded in Maharashtra and Telangana state.

—PTI

● **GITA, WHO** returned from Pakistan, got some vital clues about her geographical background which indicated the region around Nanded in Maharashtra and TS.

BJP, MIM activists clash over land next to temple

The land and a Hindu graveyard belong to a temple: BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Police detained BJP Goshamahall legislator T. Raja Singh and BJP workers for attempting to prevent the construction of a fence around a parcel of land adjacent to the Kalika Mata temple at Uppuguda.

Police said the work was being carried in compliance with court orders but BJP workers claimed that the land measuring eight acres and 23 guntas belonged to the temple and a Hindu graveyard.

One Sheri Narsimha Reddy had approached the III Additional Chief Judge, City Civil Court, and obtained an interim injunction restraining the respondents, Mohd. Saleem Dawela, Syed Zahoor, T. Anand Kumar and Godkekar Manoj Kumar, from interfering with his possession of the property.

Hundreds of BJP workers and locals gathered on Wednesday on the site and started raising slogans when a fence was being built around the land, and staged the protest. The police tried to pacify them and said that protection was provided on the direction of the court. When the protesters did not relent, police detained them and shifted them to the Dabeerpura and Falaknuma police stations.

Meanwhile, AIMIM workers



gathered at Balsetty Khet where State BJP president Bandi Sanjay speaks on Uppuguda Kali Mata temple land issue during a press meet at the party head office in Nampally on Wednesday.

— S. SURENDER REDDY

they clashed with BJP workers and tried to stop BJP state president Bandi Sanjay who has on his way to the Dabeerpura police station. However, the Mirchowk ACP intervened and dispersed both groups. Sanjay's feet reportedly came beneath the tyre of a vehicle during the tussle.

Raja Singh, speaking to the media later, said that a graveyard is located adjacent to Kali

Mata Mandir, Kandigal, which has the 8.23 acres of land in Chandrayangutta constituency. In the past, land-grabbers and officials of the endowment department had tried thrice to alienate the land which was foiled by locals.

Raja Singh said that when they failed to alienate the property, the land grabbers approached the court and endowment officials did not plead in the case. He said the locals approached the High Court and obtained an order.

Instead of implementing the High Court orders, the alleged land grabbers tried to implement the orders of the lower court under police protection.

South Zone DCP Gajarao Bhupal said one Sheri Narsimha Reddy had obtained orders from the III Addl. Chief Judge City Civil Court.

He approached the Police on Tuesday seeking protection in respect to the property. He said local people under the leadership of a local rowdy sheeter, Sonum Venkatramma, and S. Sinu, A. Bhaskar and Surendar had gathered at the spot.

He said police tried to stop them from entering the property. In the afternoon they entered the premises and broke the poles and created nuisance.

He denied the allegation of Sanjay that the police had supported the MIM.

Owaisi, Rajbhar pact for UP polls on cards

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi met Om Prakash Rajbhar, chief of the Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP), at Lucknow and discussed a pre-poll alliance for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections scheduled in 2022. The meeting comes a day after the Aam Aadmi Party announced that it will contest the UP elections.

Incorporated by the results of the Bihar Assembly elections, where the party won five seats, the AIMIM chief is looking to spread its wings in the northern states. He has already announced that the party will field its candidates in the West Bengal Assembly elections due next year.

Speaking with Rajbhar, Owaisi said, "So we will go along with him. We will go with the 'Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha.'" To a question on whether he would ally with Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party, Owaisi said it was unlikely at this stage. "I don't know what lies for us in the future. But as of now, I am part of the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha and we will take it forward, and see what happens in the future."

He said that in Bihar the MIM had contested under a grand alliance. "Rajbharji too had a role in the success we got in Bihar. We got a lot of confidence from the success there, and we will continue that momentum," he added.

Owaisi said every election was different. "Our party workers led by UP unit president Shaukat

Muslims not Didi's 'jagir'

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

● **POSTING ON** Twitter, Owaisi said, "So far you've only dealt with obedient Mir Jaffers and Sadiqs. You don't like Muslims who think and speak for themselves. You've insulted our voters in Bihar...."

failures on 'vote cutters'. Muslim voters aren't your 'jagir'." The MIM president said: "Never was a man born who can buy Asaduddin Owaisi with money. Her allegation is baseless and she is restless. She should worry about her own home, so many of her people are going to BJP. She has insulted the voters of Bihar and the people who voted for us."

● **OWAISI SAID** that in Bihar the MIM had contested under a grand alliance. "Rajbharji too had a role in the success we got in Bihar. We got a lot of confidence from the success there, and we will continue that momentum," he added.

Ali are working very hard and this time I am sure that our performance will be much better."

He recalled that the AIMIM has fought the UP elections earlier as well but without success. Since then, the party has contested a few municipal corporations polls. "We have been working continuously to strengthen our base,"

he said. Rajbhar said the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha was striving for education, health and jobs. Replying to allegations that the AIMIM "splits" votes, Rajbhar said, "We want Owaisiji to split the votes of his community. Rajbhar will split those of his, and Krishna Patel (Apna Dal) of her community. Let all these votes get accumulated and ensure our win."

The morcha also includes former Bahujan Samaj Party leader Babu Singh Kushwaha's Jan Adhikar Party, Babu Rameshwar Singh's Rasthra Uday Party, Anil Singh Chauhan-led Janta Kranti Party and Premchand Prajapati's Rashtriya Upekshit Samaj Party.

9th DAY CEREMONY

P. BHARATHI
DOB: 01-10-1949 DOD: 09-12-2020
9th Day Ceremony is observed at our residence
Address: H.No. 99/1, Bharathi Nilayam, Ram Nagar, Picket, Secunderabad.
M: 9052000578, 9912220805
Lunch follows from 12 Noon
Inserted by: Sri P. Anand Rao (Husband), Srikanth & Rajnikanth (Sons), Madhavi & Geethanjali (Daughters) and FAMILY
(S/2021/D00963)

REMEMBRANCE
PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS. PSALM 116:15

Mrs. KOMMU PRAMILA SAMUEL
(Retd. Lecturer)
W/o. Late. Mr. K.Z. Samuel
DOB: 12.09.1942 DOD: 08.12.2020
Inserted by:
Mrs & Mr. Kommu Ganasa Sundar
Daughters, Sons-in-law & Grand Children
(S/2021/D00954)

11th DAY CEREMONY

Sri THUMU KRISHNA RAO (S.C.R.)
Date of Birth: 29-12-1941 — 7-12-2020 Expired
11th Day Ceremony on 17-12-2020 at Resi: 12-10-284/285, Seethapalmandi, Secbad
Inserted by:
Brothers-in-law — Sisters
1) Pilli Hanumanth Rao - Pilli Laxmi Bai (Late)
2) Pilli Vijay Kumar - Pilli Geetha Rani
3) Pilli Subash - Pilli Uma Rani
4) Pilli Raj Kumar - Pilli Aruna
5) Pilli Nageshwar Rao - Pilli Anuradha
6) Pilli Manikya Prabhu - Pilli Janaki
West Marredpally, Secunderabad
Ph: 9391106900
(S/2021/D00943)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Smt. Sushilaben Mansukhlal Doshi
Heavenly Abode on 17-12-2013
"Your Memories are always in our hearts forever"
Inserted by:
Doshi Brothers & Family
(S/2021/D00953)

"The memory of the righteous is a blessing" Prov. 10:7

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
LT. K. SUNDARAMMA SAMSON
34th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

V. SHALEM CLINTON
Slept in the Lord 17-12-2018
Those who die in the Lord will live, their bodies will rise again. **Isaiah 26:19**
"You are in our hearts: ever & forever ..."
Daddy: V.V. Rao
Mummy: Diamond Ruth
Sister: Neethi Sharon
(CA-3478)
(S/2021/D00951)

CM'S SECY CALLS FOR DRINKING WATER SCHEMES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

Smita Sabharwal, the Chief Minister's Secretary, has called for more programmes to motivate people to drink only water supplied from Mission Bhagiratha. "There is no purer drinking water than from Mission Bhagiratha," Sabharwal said at a review meeting with chief executive officers and superintendents of all the districts at the Mission Bhagiratha headquarters in Erramanzil on Wednesday.

Smitha Sabharwal said that under drinking water from the project should be provided to the newly constructed farmer platforms and Vaikunthadams.

Bhagiratha connections should be given to anganwadis, government educational institutions and medical institutions as well as charities.

She said that officers have been directed to ensure that Bhagiratha water bottles are used at all government functions.

Earlier, Engineer in Chief Krupakar Reddy briefed the CM's Secretary on the supply of drinking water daily. He said all the villages were receiving purified drinking water and Mission Bhagiratha was providing more water than expected. The focus was on water quality along with supply. "We are also testing the quality of water supplied to households during the stabilisation programmes," he said.

He denied the allegation of Sanjay that the police had supported the MIM.

He denied the allegation of Sanjay that the police had supported the MIM.

ANTIM ARDAS (17-12-2020)

When tomorrow starts without me, don't think we're far apart, for every time you think of me, I'm right there in your heart.



Mrs. NEELAM BAJAJ

Due to Covid-19, we are not holding a Public Prayer Meeting for safety of all. Please keep her in your prayers.

May her soul rest in peace.

Inserted: Surinder Bajaj (Husband), Sandeep Bajaj, Amanda Bajaj, Manmeet Khara, Deepshi Khara

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Smt. C. SUDHA SAGAR
DOB: 09.11.1958 DOD: 26.11.2014
It is now six years, you left us. But you are always stay loved and remembered every day. We live with your memories
...Vidya Sagar (Husband) and
Children: Swetha Sri, Sowmya Sri, Arun Rao, Prashanth, Grand Children: Abhiram, Akshara, Kaira, Hyderabad.
(S/2021/D00952)

UTHAVANA

CA Vijaykumarji Kabra
(S/o. Late Sri Bihari Lal Kabra)
Left for heavenly abode on Tuesday 15th Dec. 2020. UTHAVANA Today, Thursday, 17th Dec, 2020 between 1:00 p.m. & 1:30 p.m. at Karnataka Sahitya Mandir, Opp. Lane Patel Ghanashyam Bhawan, Beside Raghavendra Swamy Temple, Kachiguda, Hyd.
Mourning by: CA Vinay Kumar Vasant Kumar & Kabra Family
VIJAY & CO., Chartered Accountants
Qurtiguda, Hyd. Ph.: 9849065454, 9985306161
(S/2021/D00954)

IN SWEET LOVING MEMORY OF OUR GREAT SERVING LION

V.J. BOBBY MADISON
Inserted by:
Lion Rajwant Singh Gulati, and Members of Lions Club of Medchal Dist. 320 B. Past Dist. Governors & Other Lions
(S/2021/D00958)

ANTIM ARDAS

Mrs. NEELAM BAJAJ
Inserted by:
ANURADHA - PAVAN GUPTA
SUDHIDA - ADITYA MANKANI
SAKHI - ROHIT CHUGANI
(S/2021/D00961)

4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Rev 14:13

Late Ch. PRASADA RAO
(Retd. Addl. Sec., APPSC)
DOD: 17.12.2016
"You will always remain in our hearts and thought with silent tears forever"
Inserted by: Wife & Family Members
Ph: 9490943692
(S/2021/D00957)

11th ANNIVERSARY

UMESH SHUKLA
DOB: 26.06.1991 DOD: 17.12.2009
Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond measure words, and missed beyond measure. We miss you a lot **UMESH**
Inserted by:
Shanti Shukla - Shukla Motilal
Grand mother: Late. Janki Bai, Aunt: Muma
Ph: 9849720911
(S/2021/D00953)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Mrs. NEELAM BAJAJ
DOLLY & SUTINDER SINGH BAJAJ
Mrs. JOGINDER KAUR & FAMILY
(S/2021/D00952)

11th DAY CEREMONY

Sri THUMU KRISHNA RAO (S.C.R.)
11th Day Ceremony 17-12-2020 at 12 Noon at Resi: 12-10-284/285 Near Seethapalmandi Flyover back side Sai Baba Temple.
Inserted by: Thumu Premavathi (Wife) Sons Daughters-in-law
1) Thumu Rama Rao - Swathi
2) Thumu Lakshman Rao - Archana
3) Thumu Srinivas — Daughters
1) Akula Narsing Rao - Anuradha
2) Sirigiri Narendar - Anitha
3) Daughter - Anila
(S/2021/D00942)

33rd DEATH ANNIVERSARY
I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalms 23:6

Mrs. MARIA SANTHOSH
W/o Late Mr. K.C. Simon
Mom, we miss you, love you & thank God for you.
Inserted by:
Mrs. Sandra Christopher Paul & Family and All Children, Sons-in-law, Daughters-in-law, Grand Children & Great Grand Children
(S/2021/D00959)

OBITUARY
I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, I kept the faith. 2 Tim 4:7
Thanking God for His faithfulness towards
Late Mrs. PHYLLIS DAVID
for 98 long years.
DOB: 23-10-1923 DOD: 12-12-2020
Rejoicing and celebrating your life on earth with joy are
Sons, Daughters-in-law, Grand Sons and Relatives
(S/2021/D00949)

24th ANNIVERSARY

Sri Jangala Narayana Mudhiraj
DOD: 17-12-1996
Years has passed without you, your place can never be filled, your memories are always with us. May your soul rest in peace.
Inserted by: Jangala Vijay Kumar Mudhiraj, Family Members & M/s. Balaji Industries, Bewenpally, Secbad. Ph: 9866661767, 9640068535
(S/2021/D00952)

Boat rides back at Srisailem

DC CORRESPONDENT
KURNOOL, DEC. 16

Boating on Krishna river is back with the AP Tourism Corporation at Srisailem launching trips to Akkamahadevi caves from Wednesday at Srisailem reservoir.

The round trip costs ₹320 for adults and ₹220 for children, said an official.

Life jackets, fire extinguishers, water guns and other safety gear

were made available on the boat, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Srisailem unit manager B. Penchal Reddy.

Officials had stopped the boat trip on Krishna river near Srisailem in September 2019 following a tragedy.

Soon after the Covid-19 pandemic struck a blow to the tourism department.

Reddy said that the government has given permission for operat-

ing boats to various tourist destinations across the state recently paving way for resuming water travelling by boat at Srisailem reservoir.

After getting permission from governments from both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana state, the AP tourism department resumed boat trips for Akkamahadevi caves from Srisailem reservoir in Krishna River on Wednesday.

IN LOVING MEMORY

V. SHALEM CLINTON
Slept in the Lord 17-12-2018
Those who die in the Lord will live, their bodies will rise again. **Isaiah 26:19**
"You are in our hearts: ever & forever ..."
Daddy: V.V. Rao
Mummy: Diamond Ruth
Sister: Neethi Sharon
(CA-3478)
(S/2021/D00951)

SHORT TAKES

THREE HELD FOR SELLING PARKED BIKES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD DEC. 16

Three persons were arrested by the Nampally police for stealing bikes from the parking lots of residential areas. Officials recovered eight bikes worth ₹3.2 lakh from the possession of Sathyaram Krishna, 32, M. Sanju Kumar, 32, and Dosla Anjaneyulu, 30. The trio was involved in eight theft cases reported in Hyderabad, police said.

The arrest was made following a complaint from S. Aadarsh, whose parked bike was stolen from the parking lot of Niloufer Hospital.

AUTO DRIVER ARRESTED FOR MURDER CHARGES

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

An autorickshaw driver was arrested by the Rachakonda police on Wednesday for murdering a woman passenger after he failed to sexually assault her.

Her body was found by locals on the morning of December 7 with a disfigured face. Police said they were able to identify the victim on December 13. Police noted that she boarded the autorickshaw at at Bismilla tea point at Hafiz Babanagar.

The accused was identified Mohammed Feroz, 23. The 30-year-old victim, a resident of Chandrayangutta, boarded the autorickshaw at about 9.15 pm on December 6.

Police said Feroz had stabbed the victim with a screwdriver and smashed her head with a cement brick to hide her identity. Police alleged that Feroz drove her to Jalpally road and tried to sexually assault her. When she resisted and tried to scream for help, he killed her, police said.

AFA GRADUATION PARADE TO BE HELD ON DEC. 19

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD DEC. 16

A combined graduation parade will be held at the Air Force Academy (AFA), Dundigal, on December 19 to mark the completion of the pre-commissioning training of flight cadets.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh will be the reviewing officer and will confer the President's Commission on the graduating trainees.

The ceremony includes presentation of wings and brevets to the flying and navigation cadets.

The flight cadet from the flying branch standing first in the order of merit will be conferred the Chief of the Air Staff Sword of Honour.

The minister will present the President's Plaque to those who stand first in the overall merit in flying and ground duty branches.

The event will also have an aerobatic display by the Si-30 aircraft, the famous Surya Kiran team, Sarang helicopter display team, Pilatus PC-7 trainer and a flypast by formations of PC-7, Kiran and Hawk aircraft.

29-YEAR-OLD GETS LIFER FOR ASSAULTING MINOR

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD DEC. 16

A 29-year-old man was sentenced to life imprisonment for sexually assaulting an 11-year-old girl who was his relative. The Mangalhat police said that in November last year, the accused, Ravindra alias Rohit, approached the girl when she was alone and asked her to come inside his room.

"He closed the door and sexually assaulted her and threatened her not to inform anyone about the incident. Fearing consequences, she kept the assault from her family. But she confided in her teacher who questioned her when she complained of pain," said the police.

Following a complaint, the police registered a case under the IPC and the POCOA Act. A local court on Wednesday sentenced Ravindra to life imprisonment and also imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on him.

● FOLLOWING A complaint, the police registered a case under the IPC and the POCOA Act.

'Too much democracy' hits decision on next PCC chief

Aspirants run amuck with self-promotion, lobbying, sponsored attacks on rivals

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

It is only apt that the Grand Old Party has a de facto prelims method of the American politics at work to decide on the next Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) chief, after its current incumbent Uttam Kumar Reddy, the only known decorated armed forces officer in politics, took responsibility and resigned after a series of dismal electoral debacles.

Under Uttam Kumar Reddy, the Congress has not failed to unseat the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), but has even lost the right to be called its principal challenger, that mantle now having shifted to the Hindutva party.

The free for all fight is on, perhaps the only deserving bet in the country to be accused rightfully of "too much democracy", with each candidate, much to the chagrin of the high command, going all out in lobbying for the post with senior Congress leaders in Delhi, writing letters to the high command, and running social media campaigns or leaking information against each other to their favourite media outlet. A day after AICC in-charge Manickam Tagore reportedly submitted his 'findings', collating opinions of a wide range of leaders on who they prefer as the next TPCC president, serious leaders who are expecting a post landed in the national capital on Wednesday for lobbying.

The high command has two important axes of dilemma, as per sources. One, should it be a Reddy or a non-Reddy candidate who will lead the Congress from here on, and two, when should the announcement be made.

The timing is crucial with reports that the bye-election to the Nagarjunsagar Assembly polls may take place in Febru-

The high command has two important axes of dilemma, as per sources. One, should it be a Reddy or a non-Reddy candidate who will lead the Congress from here on, and two, when should the announcement be made.

ary, coinciding with the Tirupati Lok Sabha by-poll in AP. Should the new president be named before, giving him too little time or to the fight the poll under existing scenario.

The Reddy question is far more vexatious. The party has realised that the Reddy community, which is about eight to nine odd percentage of the electorate, but its leaders are not able to get the votes. The Reddy community, mostly landed farmers, had moved towards TRS after it implemented the Rythu Bandhu scheme, and is now very rapidly gravitating towards a resurgent BJP.

Non-Reddy leaders argue that with Reddy voters having left the party, the best chance for revival of the party lies in tapping the SC, ST, and OBCs, which along with trying to tap the minorities, is the best bet for the Congress.

However, the clout of the Reddy leaders in the party is visible. First among equals, and the principal cotender, is Lok Sabha Member of Parliament, a four-time MLA, who famously resigned from ministership for Telangana agitation, Komatreddy Venkat Reddy. A life-long Congressman, he has risen the ranks from NSUI and Youth Congress.

He reportedly met Congress President Sonia Gandhi and former president Rahul Gandhi separately in New Delhi, pressing for his candidature. Later, speaking to media at Janpath, he said that he had requested the party chief to give hardworking

party loyalists a chance, so the party can come back to power in Telangana.

Sources in the Congress party say that in high command assessment, while Komat Reddy is capable of leading people and raising funds, he has the habit of shoot-off his mouth and perhaps lacks the maturity and stability to build a consensus and take everyone along.

"No one is a prime contender," a senior Congress leader and union minister in the UPA decade of power said. "Party is looking for alternatives across all sections of society, Reddy or SC or BC. Based on the feedback from AICC in-charge, other AICC secretaries, an independent study, the high command has shortlisted a panel. But it is a very long panel right now, with most serious contenders being in the fray."

The second name being touted is Jana Reddy, formerly home minister and whose leadership would be acceptable to everyone. Given the Nagarjunsagar bye-election slated ahead, which the party must win to remain in contention for the state politics seriously, rising his ire might lead to losing him, his son and the Assembly bypoll.

"Jana Reddy is a non-controversial leader. But no one will trust him to lead the party and defeat the KCR family. Other names include Jeevan Reddy, currently MLC and a six-term MLA, who is very acceptable but the party does not think he has the ability to raise resources for elections. Another name is Marri Shashidhar Reddy, for whom the Gandhi family has a soft corner. He is highly respected, is very efficient and can use his knowledge in cornering opponents in debates on crucial issues. But age is a concern for all the three leaders," the former union minister said.

Besides Jagga Reddy, an

also ran, is another serious contender and currently party working president and MP A. Revanth Reddy, whose it is rumoured is the favourite of AICC in-charge Manickam Tagore, who revealed he is more than happily gunning for Revanth, when he said, "new TPCC president will be announced in New Year with naya josh."

"Revanth has charisma, glamour and in popular perception, a strong anti-KCR voice. He has visible attraction among youth, especially the Reddy youth. But he is divisive. Those opposed to him have written to Sonia Gandhi, arguing that his charisma does not translate into votes, visible in the Kondangal Assembly loss to his inability to win many wards in the GHMC polls. Besides, he is not loyal to a party or ideology. He began his career with the RSS and was with the BJYM, besides having been a member of the TRS, the TDP and now

Sources in the Congress party say that in high command assessment, while Komat Reddy is capable of leading people and raising funds, he has the habit of shoot-off his mouth and perhaps lacks the maturity and stability to build a consensus and take everyone along.

Congress. There is also the issue of many serious cases pending against him, conviction in any of which may prove a big liability to the party. Most importantly, several senior leaders, including four out of six MLAs, have point blank told the high command they will leave Congress if Revanth was made TPCC chief."

In the non-Reddy category, the Dalits have been the backbone of Congress, among which community,

are two contenders - Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Damodar Raj Narasimha. While Bhatti has held many posts, including deputy Assembly speaker, working president and is currently the CLP leader, the fact that 13 MLAs defected to TRS under his watch pins him down. Damodar, who served as deputy CM, is from the numerically influential Madiga community. He is a second generation Congress leader, highly educated and a good orator. But having lost two consecutive elections for MLA makes him weak.

Amongst the OBCs, senior leader Hanumantha Rao has declared himself to be in the fray. But the former TPCC president and MP does not have age on his side. Ponnamm Prabhakar is the other OBC leader who fits the bill well, having been an NSUI and YC leader, an articulate speaker and a good organiser. But recent election losses in 2018 and 2019 are going against him.

The last name doing the rounds, more as a consensus candidate to please everyone and displace none to much, is Sridhar Babu, former minister and a four-time MLA. He has a good grip on his district, is efficient, respected for his integrity and character. But being from the Brahmin community is a big liability.

While the high command has purportedly taken a strong view of disapproval over the back biting and washing of dirty linen between rivals, especially sponsored campaigns against each other on social media, the aspirants are pushing on. Revanth Reddy and Bhatti Vikramarka are in Delhi to lobby for the position directly with Sonia Gandhi.

But in the end, if the high command decides on Jana Reddy, with Nagarjunsagar singularly outweighing all factors, none will be surprised.



PSLV C-50 ready to take off from the second launch pad in Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Shar, in Sriharikota.

All set to launch PSLV-C50 today

DC CORRESPONDENT
NELLORE, DEC. 16

The countdown commenced on Wednesday for the launch of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)-C50 to place the communication satellite CMS-01 in orbit. The rocket is scheduled to blast off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at the Sriharikota range at Nellore district 3.41 pm on Thursday.

The satellite is envisaged to provide services to the extended C-Band to cover the Indian mainland, Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands.

CMS-01 will be India's 42nd communications satellite and the PSLV-C50 the 22nd flight of the

● THE SATELLITE is envisaged to provide services to the extended C-Band to cover the Indian mainland, Andaman, Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands.

rocket in the 'XL' configuration with strap-on motors. This will be the 77th launch vehicle mission from the SDSC.

Shar officials said that the operation to fill fuel into different stages of the vehicle is going on. Indian Space Research Organisation has arranged for live telecast of the launch through Doordarshan from 3.10 pm on Thursday besides livestreaming it on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.



Home minister Mohammed Mahmood Ali inaugurates the new Karkhana police station building along with minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, DGP M. Mahendar Reddy, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar and other leaders in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

Theft cases down by 28%, 19% fewer attacks: Anjani

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

The city has witnessed a 10 per cent decline in the crime rate as compared to last year, Hyderabad police commissioner Anjani Kumar said on Wednesday. Theft cases were down 28 per cent and there were 19 per cent fewer attacks as compared to 2019.

Kumar revealed these statistics at a function to mark the inauguration of the Karkhana police station building on Wednesday. He said 18 more police station buildings will be inaugurated soon.

The building was inaugurated by home minister Mohammed Mahmood Ali, with minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav and Ch Malla Reddy, Cantonment legislator G. Sayanna, DGP M. Mahendar Reddy, SCB

● MAHMOOD ALI said, "Construction of police stations with modern facilities, provision of new vehicles, and facilities with technology are being done. The government is giving high priority to the safety of women and children."

vice president J. Rama Krishna among others.

"In 2020, 95 people were sent to jail under the Preventive Detention Act," the police commissioner said. Case of murders and attempt to murder fell by 26 per cent. He noted the investments flowing into the city and said Hyderabad had earned the reputation of being the safest city for the last six years. "We have made many reforms in the police department," Anjani Kumar said.

DGP Mahendar Reddy noted that some police stations had been accommodated in the same buildings from the time of the Nizam. "After the formation of Telangana state, we are setting up new police station buildings. The government has allocated a budget for new buildings for 19 police stations in Hyderabad," he said.

Talasani Srinivas Yadav said, "We are constructing police station buildings like a corporate office." He said other city had as many CCTV cameras as Hyderabad.

Mahmood Ali said, "Construction of police stations with modern facilities, provision of new vehicles, and facilities with technology are being done. The government is giving high priority to the safety of women and children."

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DECCAN Chronicle

17 DECEMBER 2020

Facts don't back PM's theory on farmers' stir

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech in Kutch on Tuesday, in which he spoke of "a great conspiracy to mislead farmers, in and around Delhi", can be said to mark a new stage in the agitation of farmers of North India, in the vanguard of which are Punjab farmers. This stage bespeaks the hardening of the government's stand against the farmers knocking on the doors of the nation's capital for the past 20 days.

After six rounds of dialogue between the government and the farmers' representatives, including a session with Union home minister Amit Shah, the food growers maintain their opposition to the three controversial agri-laws, passed in controversial circumstances last September. The government is just as adamant and will not agree to their repeal, the farmers' key demand. The farmers have rejected the government's implied offer of amending specific sections of the three laws if farmers can pinpoint them.

In Parliament, and in various statements made by the government's representatives outside the legislature, not excluding the remarks of the PM at various forums, the government is yet to cogently explain to the need for the laws that have created a storm, other than to say that these represent much-needed "reform" that will benefit farmers and the farm sector, and will not leave them worse off. The agriculturists are not persuaded, however. The government's bland assurances have done nothing to reassure farmers that the real reason for these "reforms" was to not to benefit big industry, rather than the owners of farmland.

Ironically, even as Mr Modi attacked the Opposition parties — and when he does that he specifically means the Congress since he says "they" were unable to bring reforms when in power — the real attack on the government has

come from Akali Dal president Sukhbir Badal on the same day that PM was accusing the Opposition of misleading farmers and playing politics in the guise of backing farmers. The Akalis depend principally on the votes of agriculturists.

Such was the force of the Dal's opposition to the three farm laws that its announcement of leaving the Narendra Modi government came on the floor of the Lok Sabha, in the course of the discussion on the controversial farm laws. Subsequently, the Punjab party left the ruling alliance. Therefore, the notion of innocent farmers being "misled" by the Opposition — assiduously propagated by the government and the BJP — does not square with the facts. In the first instance, this opposition to the agri-laws came from the Akali Dal when it was a member of the ruling NDA until three months ago. This was clearly a case of opposition from within.

In a newspaper interview, Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the BJP under Mr Modi came back with an increased majority in 2019 because of the "transformative" policies of demonetisation and GST. The extremely negative economic effects of these policies did not concern him and he equated more seats in Parliament with approval of these policies by the people. In the same way, he noted, the farm laws, that have triggered a tsunami of protest, will also be backed by the electorate.

The farmers seem to be up against the strength of ideology rather than economic logic.

Naked power grab

The fracas in the Karnataka Legislative Council may be par for the course in many a legislature, but it did nothing for the reputation of a House of Elders. The physical pushing and shoving of the deputy chairman, who was the presiding officer at the time and the kind of street language members used against each other made this a new low so far as meetings at the majestic Vidhana Soudha building in Bengaluru goes. The issue does run deeper and the incident only further illustrates the naked power grabbing politics gripping places reserved for people's representatives.

It appears the ruling party BJP was in a tearing hurry to pass the contentious Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill 2020 and the Congress, afraid of losing the chairmanship and control of the council, was hell bent on stopping the proceedings and the Bill. But the Congress chairman had no right to duck legislative business in adjourning the House on December 10 even as the BJP and JD(S) had no right to forcibly occupy the chair through deputy chairman Dharmegowda to try and pass the Bill.

The Congress' fear of losing the last vestige of power in Karnataka it had enjoyed in its alliance of convenience with the JD(S) till 2019 may have led it to such subterfuge in blocking legislation the BJP is keen to enact. The cattle protection laws are in keeping with BJP's pursuit of Hindutva, to enable which it has been seen enticing the JD(S) into its sphere of influence by dangling the carrot of an alliance that may stretch into the next Assembly elections.

The JD(S) is a past master in the art of gravitating towards political power as evidenced in its supreme H.D. Devegowda once becoming Prime Minister of India in a large coalition with a minuscule number of MPs. Its effort to remain relevant in Karnataka politics today is understandable. However, the least expectation is presiding officers of legislatures will meticulously follow the rule book so as not to deny a majority from having its say, such majority always being on the floor of the House.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

KAUSHIK MITTER
Editor

K. SUBHAKAR
Printer & Publisher

DECCAN CHRONICLE offices are located at:

Hyderabad: 36, Sarojini Devi Road, Secunderabad - 500 003, Ph: 040-27803930-4; Fax : 040-27805256
Vijayawada: No.C-3 & 4 Patamata, Industrial Estate, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada (A.P.), Ph: 0866-2555284/2555287; Telefax: 0866-2555234

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Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



Gymkhana divided on suspension of ex-cop

Due to various complex rules around admission, the Delhi Gymkhana Club has maintained its exclusive "aura" for 107 years. Its governing body is comprised of various retired government and defence officials as well as other private citizens. Its elections are a hotly contested affair, often leading to accusations of use of "illegal" and "unlawful" means between the contestants.

These days the club is roiled by a letter written by 50 members collectively to the club president expressing their outrage at the "arbitrary decision" of the governing body. One of the issues that has riled members is the proposed suspension of a member, Dr Parvez Hayat, a retired IPS officer, for a day and further debarring him from contesting the club elections. Sources say that the member's suspension was the result of allega-

tions levelled against him by vice-admiral B.S. Randhawa. The letter alleged that the club authorities did not observe the rules and due process before taking the decision to suspend the retired IPS officer.

Such controversies are not new. Earlier this year, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had ruled that the club was acting in a manner "prejudicial to public interest" and, therefore, must be probed. It said that a five-member central government appointed panel should investigate the affairs of the club, including land usage and its admission policy for members.

UPRIGHT BABU RILES UTTARAKHAND MINISTER

These days your average babu can rarely say "no" to a minister. Blind obedience is what is expected from them, leaving little room for independent decision-making.

But like always, there are exceptions to the rule. An instance from Uttarakhand has recently come to light. There is even a touch of the bizarre about it!

The state's minister of women and child welfare, Rekha Arya, reportedly wrote to the DIG of Dehradun, Arun Mohan Joshi, inquiring about her additional secretary V. Shanmugam, who, she said, was "missing". And since the officer was "incommunicado", she feared he might have been kidnapped!

As it turns out, according to sources, trouble had been brewing between the minister and the IAS officer for some time. Matters came to a head sometime in September when Mr Shanmugam awarded a contract in a tender possibly against the wishes of the minister. Subsequently, he went into a two-day "self-isolation" and did not take any calls from his

office or the minister.

The irate mantri forced chief minister Trivendra Rawat to order an inquiry into the award of the contract, but additional chief secretary Manisha Panwar has reported that the probe did not find any misconduct by Mr Shanmugam. Further, Mr Panwar has stated that the officer had followed due process while awarding the contract and while going on leave. This is where matters rest, for now. It remains to be seen whether the minister will pursue the issue further or let it fly. It would also be interesting to see if the babu manages to hold on to his post or gets transferred elsewhere.

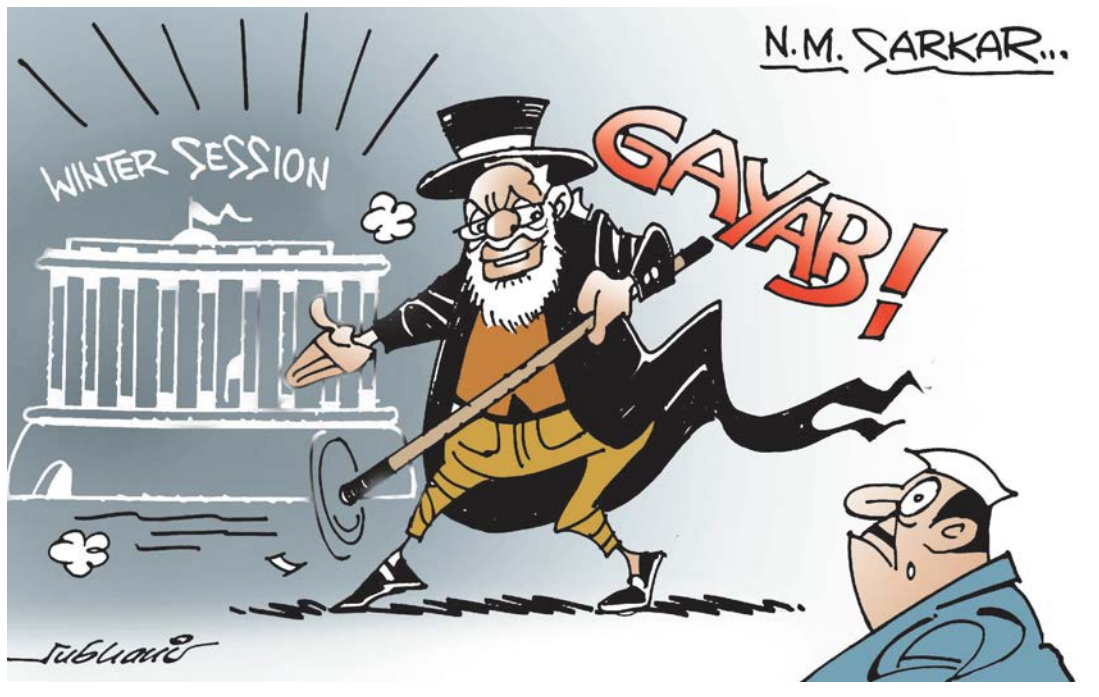
Contrast this with a powerful babu in Delhi who did not vanish after his "gaffe". Immense sweeping powers and other capabilities were exercised in Delhi and his statement vanished instead. What

One issue that has riled up members is the proposed suspension of a member, Dr Parvez Hayat, retired IPS officer, for a day and further debarring of him from the club elections. The member's suspension was the result of allegations levelled against him by vice-admiral B.S. Randhawa.

was reported in the media (of course, the story was promptly withdrawn, though the video exists!) on questioning the credentials of democracy itself led to much speculation whether this was just a gaffe or something more!

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@Twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect.

Subhani



Child nutrition crisis may derail India's aspirations



Patralekha Chatterjee

Dev 360

It can be tempting to blame every crisis on the Covid-19 pandemic. But quite often, facts get in the way. Many things were bad enough even prior to the onset of the pandemic, that gutted so many lives and livelihoods.

The latest data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) is a case in point. It shows that several states across the country are doing worse since the last NFHS was conducted in 2015-16. They have reversed course and are showing worsening levels of child malnutrition despite improvements in sanitation and better access to fuel and drinking water.

Arguably, the first set of findings from the NFHS-5, conducted in 2019-20, four years after the last one (2015-16), relates to only 22 states and Union territories and does not include major states like Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Data for these states will be released sometime in the middle of next year.

It is also true that not everything in NFHS-5 reeks of gloom.

Immunisation coverage has expanded in many states, the number of households using clean fuel has improved. Ditto with sanitation facilities. The total fertility rate (TFR) across most Indian states is also declining.

All this is good news. But we can't afford to take the eye off the ball and gloss over the heart-breaking reality of growing numbers of stunted and undernourished children in India.

In Maharashtra, the percentage of children in the 6-59 months group who are anaemic has shot up from 53.8 per cent (2015-2016) to 68.9 per cent in 2019-2020. Rural children are more severely affected. In the same period, the percentage of children under five who are stunted (low height for age) has gone up from

34.4 to 35.2.

What leapt out at me was the data from Mumbai. Children in the 6-50 months group who are anaemic has risen from 65.7 per cent in 2015-2016 to 72.8 per cent in 2019-2020.

Or take Gujarat, a relatively affluent state. The percentage of children under five who are stunted has risen from 38.5 (2015-2016) to 39.0 (2019-2020). In the same period, children under five who are severely wasted has gone up from 9.5 per cent to 10.6 per cent and those between 6-59 months who are anaemic has shot up from 62.6 per cent in 2015-2016 to 79.7 per cent in 2019-2020.

Nutrition experts point out that out of 22 states and Union territories for which we have data, there is a surge in severe acute malnutrition cases in 16 states/UTs, compared to NFHS-4 conducted in 2015-2016.

Even Kerala, that usually leads in social policies, has problems: anaemia is growing among children.

The underfed hugely outnumber the overfed but alongside the crisis of child under-nutrition, we are also seeing a rise in child obesity, perhaps due to more junk food consumption.

All this is exacerbated by widespread under-nutrition and anaemia among women, including those who are pregnant.

What is going wrong and what has changed between 2015-2016 and 2019-2020?

"We don't have granular data for all states and Union territories as yet but the first lot of data from NFHS-5 points to worsening malnutrition and anaemia in several states. From the data that's available, it's hard to pinpoint why malnutrition worsened even before the pandemic set in, but it's important to note that the period when it worsened coincides with the time India suf-

fered economic shocks. We had demonetisation in 2016, which gutted much of the informal sector which dominates the Indian economy. We don't know to what extent those who took a severe hit during demonetisation have recovered. The GST rollout also affected small businesses and rural wages have stagnated," says Dipa Sinha, assistant professor of economics at New Delhi's Ambedkar University and a key figure in India's Right to Food Campaign.

"The other unknown for which we don't have much data is the impact of the weakening of the social protection framework with inadequate budgetary support and no expansion in response to the economic slowdown which could have affected affordability of diets. PDS (public distribution system) provides only rice and wheat in most states. Some states also give pulses and oil, but many poorer states don't," she adds.

Some experts point out that the work of the Narendra Modi government's flagship National Nutrition Mission and Anaemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) campaign, with an ambitious target of reducing anaemia by three percentage points per annum till 2022, are not really captured in the NFHS-5 data because they really got going only recently.

Even if that is so, it is vital to review what is actually happening on the ground. There are enough indications that all is not well with many programmes. Take the mid-day meals, for example—the Central government's flagship school-based feeding programme aimed at improving the nutritional status of students and promoting the universal

isation of elementary education.

According to the Accountability Initiative of the Centre of Policy Research, only 14 states in India could utilise 100 per cent of the funds allocated to them for mid-day meals for the year 2018-2019, and states like Telangana, Assam and Goa used only two-third of the money allocated to them under this head.

Gujarat and Haryana used only 40 per cent of the funds allocated to them for mid-day meals. All this goes to show that there is a lot that is dysfunctional on the ground.

India's child nutrition crisis should give policy-makers sleepless nights.

Stunting is a marker of chronic or recurrent undernutrition, usually associated with poor socioeconomic conditions, poor maternal health and nutrition, frequent illness, and/or inappropriate infant and young child feeding and care in early life.

Children who suffer from stunting may not only not grow to their full height, there is also a risk that they would not develop their full cognitive potential.

Experts say mothers who suffer from under-nutrition are more likely to have children who suffer from stunting or wasting, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and undernutrition. Anaemia is also hugely debilitating. It can affect children's cognitive performance and physical growth. In women, anaemia can adversely impact the capacity to work and can lead to poor pregnancy outcomes.

Children are India's future, on whom the country's dreams rest, but they are paying the price of adult bungling and apathy. We can't afford that. Nor can we afford diversions like the needless hullabaloo over serving boiled eggs, a source of protein, to poor children in government programmes.

The writer focuses on development issues in India and emerging economies. She can be reached at patralekha.chatterjee@gmail.com

LETTERS

FARMERS' AGITATION

Instead of making political statements, why can't Prime Minister Narendra Modi call leaders of farmers' leaders and tell them what is the conspiracy and who is behind it and present a viable solution to end the agitation? (*PM sees conspiracy behind farmers stir, DC, Dec. 16*). **Adamant hardening of stance, accusations and counter-accusations lead nowhere.**

Dr O.Prasada Rao
Hyderabad

The farmers' agitation has reached a stage where it is adversely affecting the movement of goods and services. It is testing the Central government that has kept its door open for discussion to resolve the issue. Farmers must talk and help end the agitation.

S.D.Mukherji
Hyderabad

VACCINATION

The fears and doubts expressed over Covid-19 vaccine are still persisting due to messages on social media, debates with medical experts and TV channels. Due to corporate hospitals and their treatment and exorbitant medical bills that give absolutely no results, the government should ensure the procurement and distribution of the vaccine properly.

Garlapaty Sitharamaiah
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN

DECCAN Chronicle

S.C. VERDICT NO DEFEAT OF GOVT. — PM

NEW DELHI, Dec. 16

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi emphatically declared amid cheers in the Rajya Sabha today that the Supreme Court judgment striking down the princes derecognition order did not constitute any defeat of the Government.

Hitting back firmly at interpellation from the Jana Sangh and Swatantra benches on a calling attention motion tabled by Mr Bhupesh Gupta (CPI) about the judgment and the situation arising from it, Mrs. Gandhi also declared that the Government was not in any predicament as a result of the court order. The discussion which lasted two hours was marked by noisy interruptions by various members. To the thumping of desks from her colleagues, Mrs. Gandhi said the Government fully anticipated "obstacles in every path in the march to progress".

SHORT TAKES

PATNAIK DEMANDS
HOUSES FOR
FANI-HIT VICTIMSAKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO | DC
BHUBANESWAR, DEC. 16

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday shot off a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting him to consider his demand for sanctioning of special houses to people affected by cyclone Fani in the state under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G).

In his letter, the Chief Minister said the state has identified, geo-tagged and Aadhaar seeded 7.87 lakh houses in 14 Fani affected districts. The beneficiaries may be brought into the permanent wait list of PMAY (G) and considered for sanction of PMAY (G) special houses.

He said the move will not only provide relief to the affected families, but also ensure safe housing to rural families to withstand natural calamities in the cyclone prone areas.

He further insisted the PM to open a window of Aawaas+ mobile app to geo-tag houses that had been left out from the permanent wait list of PMAY-G in 16 non-Fani affected districts, to accomplish the objective of 'safe housing for all'.

"The state has identified 6.07 lakh eligible households who had been left-out from the permanent wait list of PMAY (G) in 16 non-Fani affected districts," the Chief Minister mentioned in the letter.

Cyclone Fani which hit the Odisha coast on May 3, 2019 had claimed 64 human lives. Besides, it had claimed lives of 37.28 lakh poultry birds, 2,210 large animals like cows and buffaloes and 2488 small animals like sheep and goats.

According to damage, loss and need assessment (DLNA) report prepared by the government, the state needed ₹29,315 crore for restoration work. The infrastructure sectors were the hardest hit and constituted about 42 per cent of the total needs. And the social sectors, which included housing, constituted 36 per cent of the total needs. The report estimated the total damage and loss in the cyclone to be ₹24,176 crore.

CABINET OKAYS
NEXT ROUND OF
SPECTRUM AUCTION

New Delhi, Dec. 16: The Union cabinet on Wednesday approved the next round of spectrum auction to be held in March in which frequencies of 2,251 megahertz would be sold, communications minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.

The government will not put on sale spectrum frequencies that have been identified for 5G services. The government will put on auction 2,251 MHz of spectrum in the frequency bands of 700 MHz, 800MHz, 900 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz and 2500 MHz, Prasad said.

"The notice inviting application shall be issued in this month and by auction will be conducted by March," Prasad said.

The Digital Communications Commission, the apex decision making body of the Department of Telecom, in May had approved the spectrum auction plan worth ₹5.22 lakh crore which included radiowaves for 5G services as well.

According to Reliance Jio, spectrum worth ₹3.92 lakh crore is lying unused with the DoT for auction.

The telecom ministry gets an average revenue share of around 5 per cent as spectrum usage charge from telecom operators which is calculated based on their spectrum holding of companies and 8 per cent as licence fee from the revenue earned by the companies from sale of communication services.

Frozen view



A couple looks at a partially frozen waterfall at Tangmarg in Baramulla District on Wednesday. Kashmir valley recorded its coldest night recently as the temperature dropped below zero. — PTI

Volunteers 'tolerate'
Covaxin in Phase-I

Vaccine induced robust binding; neutralised antibody responses

New Delhi, Dec. 16: The interim findings of phase 1 clinical trial of Covid-19 vaccine Covaxin, indigenously developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the ICMR, showed that it was well tolerated in all dose groups with no serious or adverse events.

The vaccine induced robust binding and neutralising antibody responses which were comparable to those observed in the convalescent serum collected from patients who had recovered from Covid-19, according to the findings which have appeared on medRxiv, a preprint server.

A preprint is a version of a scientific manuscript posted on a public server prior to formal peer review. One serious adverse event was reported, which was found to be unrelated to vaccination, the findings showed. It was a double-blind randomised controlled phase 1 clinical trial to evaluate the safety and immunogenicity of Covaxin (BBV152).

The document mentions that BBV152 is stored between 2 degrees Celsius and 8 degrees

Celsius, which is compatible with all national immunisation programme cold chain requirements and further efficacy trials are underway.

According to the "A Phase I: Safety and immunogenicity trial of an inactivated SARS-CoV-2 vaccine BBV152", after the first vaccination, local and systemic adverse events were predominantly mild or moderate in severity and resolved rapidly, without any prescribed medication. A similar trend was observed after the second shot was administered.

— PTI

Probe into riots
at Wistron plant

Bengaluru, Dec. 16: Investigations into the recent violence at the Wistron's iPhone manufacturing plant are on and a report was likely in a couple of days, Karnataka labour minister Shivaram Hebbar said on Wednesday even as he expressed hope about the factory restarting soon, with the Centre also involved in addressing issues.

Asserting that the government was there to protect the interest of the labourers, the minister, however, said such incidents may have an adverse impact on investment and job creation prospects in the state.

Wistron Corp, a Taiwanese contract manufacturer for Apple, has informed the Taiwan Stock Exchange that the December 12 violence at the iPhone manufacturing facility at Narsapura in Kolar district, did not cause any material damage to major manufacturing equipment

and warehouses. It put preliminary damage estimates in the range of New Taiwan Dollar 100 to 200 million, which is about ₹52 crore.

Earlier reports, quoting the complaint by company officials to the local police station, had put the estimate at about ₹437 crore. "There is no employees union as yet...There was immaturity on part of the labourers, also the company should have paid attention towards contractors. We will get to know in a couple of days, the exact information on how much amount was paid (towards workers) and when," Hebbar said.

He said meetings have taken place at the government level and also with the Union cabinet secretary from Delhi — the Centre is also involved.

The company has said it will try to start the factory in about 15 days, the minister said.

— PTI

BJP TARGETS MAHA
GOVT OVER METRO
CAR SHED FIASCOBHAGWAN PARAB | DC
MUMBAI, DEC. 16

Following the High Court stay on Metro car shed work at Kanjurmarg, the BJP has targeted the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government and environment minister Aaditya Thackeray in particular, saying the government's decision to move the car shed to salt pan land was doomed from the beginning and it was taken only to satisfy 'ego.' However, Aaditya has insisted that Kanjurmarg was the best available place for Metro car shed.

Calling the HC decision 'a slap on the face of the MVA government,' BJP leader and former chief minister Devendra Fadnis on Wednesday urged the government to give up its 'ego' and resume the construction in Aarey colony, which was the original site for the car shed. "The government had made it an ego issue to shift the car shed. The Kanjur land was not economically viable," he said.

India, UK panel to study
recognising of degrees

New Delhi, Dec. 16: India and the UK on Wednesday agreed to set up a joint task force consisting of designated higher education organisations from both the countries to work towards mutual recognition of academic qualifications, Union education minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said.

A decision in this regard was taken in a bilateral meeting between Nishank and UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab here on Wednesday.

"India and the United Kingdom have agreed to set up a joint task force consisting of designated higher education organisations from both the countries to work towards mutual recognition of academic qualifications. This will support India's agenda for internationalisation of higher education.

"The agreement to work towards mutual recognition of academic qualifications aligns with the vision

● **A DECISION** in this regard was taken in a bilateral meeting between Nishank and UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab.

● **BOTH SIDES** expressed hope and confidence that they would further enhance mutual engagement in the field of education, research and innovation, leading to deeper and stronger bilateral relations.

● **THE PROPOSED** reforms to open up opportunities for students, the economy.

of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for creating a globally mobile workforce and internationalisation of Indian higher education, as proposed in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 rolled out in July this year," Nishank said.

The meeting was also attended by minister of state for education Sanjay

Dhotre and senior officials of the education ministry. Raab hailed India's National Education Policy 2020 as visionary and said the proposed reforms will open up opportunities for students, the economy and for deeper engagement and collaboration between the two countries.

"This policy will help make the bridge of education between India and the UK stronger. The UK has a lot of respect for the academic rigour coming out of India, and the contribution of the Indian student community is highly valued by our country. The UK has made several changes in its visa and immigration rules to facilitate student mobility," he said.

Both sides expressed hope and confidence that they would further enhance mutual engagement in the field of education, research and innovation, leading to deeper and stronger bilateral relations. — PTI

SUSPECTED
NAXAL GUNNED
DOWN IN BASTARRABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY | DC
BHOPAL, DEC. 16

A suspected Maoist was on Wednesday gunned down in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar district of Sukma.

Sukma district superintendent of police K.L. Dhruv confirmed the incident.

According to Bastar police, a joint search party comprising district reserve group and 223rd battalion CRPF personnel came under attack by a group of armed Naxals in the forest near Milliampali-Rajpenta villages at around 10.30 in the morning, leading to a fierce gun battle between them.

Security forces recovered the body of a Maoist in uniform at the spot when the encounter ended.

— PTI

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
COLLECTOR OFFICE :: WANAPARTHY

Lr. No.: G/2383/2018 Date: 09-11-2020

As per Section -19 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act No. 30/2013) and Sub Rule (1) of Rule -25

FORM - VII PUBLICATION OF DECLARATION

Whereas it appears to the Telangana Government / Dist. Shanaipally Village, Revally Mandal in Wanaparthi District for public purpose, namely for formation of Sree Veeranjanya Balancing Reservoir.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in Sree Veeranjanya Balancing Reservoir, Shanaipally Village of Revally Mandal in Wanaparthi District measuring Ac. 8.08 gts of land, whose detailed description is as following, is under acquisition.

SCHEDULE

Sl. No. Survey No. Classification of Title Classification of Land Area under Acquisition Name of the Pattadar Name of the Enjoyer Boundaries

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

1 6 Patta Wet 1.12 China Ram Reddy S/o Laxma Reddy S/o China Ram Reddy 7 4 22 5

2 6 Patta Wet 1.13 Panduga Venkat Reddy S/o China Ram Reddy Panduga Venkat Reddy S/o China Ram Reddy 7 4 22 5

3 6 Patta Wet 2.25 P. Surendra Reddy S/o China Ram Reddy P. Surendra Reddy S/o China Ram Reddy 7 4 22 5

4 23 Patta Dry 0.33 Jambulamma S/o China Ram Reddy Jambulamma S/o China Ram Reddy 21 29 22 322

5 23 Patta Dry 0.35 Danaiah S/o China Ram Reddy Danaiah S/o China Ram Reddy 21 29 22 322

6 23 Patta Dry 0.34 Balagachai S/o China Ram Reddy Balagachai S/o China Ram Reddy 21 29 22 322

7 114 Patta Dry 0.18 Sathyan Nagaiah S/o China Ram Reddy Sathyan Nagaiah S/o China Ram Reddy 119 Village Boundary 113 115

This notification is made, to inform all whom it may concern, 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) amended by Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Telangana Amendment) Act, 2016 (Act No. 21/2017).

A plan of the land may be inspected, by all the concerned, in the office of the District Collector, Wanaparthi and in the Office of the Revenue Divisional Officer, L.A. Wanaparthi on any working day during the office hours. The Government of Telangana/Collector appropriate Government is pleased to Revenue Divisional Officer 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 such notification without prior approval of the Collector. Claims / objections to the acquisition, if any, may be filed by the person interested/affected within 60 (sixty) days from the date of publication of this notification as provided under section 15 of the Act before District Collector/Authorized officer.

Land Acquisition Officer/ Revenue Divisional Officer Wanaparthi Sd/- Additional Collector, Wanaparthi Sd/- District Collector Wanaparthi

R.O. No. 1023/LA-PP/Advt/ Pub/2020-21

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

e-tender Notice

No. 54 of 2020-21 (Open)-Engg/DDU

On line (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by DRM/Engg/DDU for and on behalf of the President of India invite "Open" "E-Tender" on "Two Packet System" from the eligible and experienced agency or contractor for e-tender no. MC-12-GAYA-MCC-OBHS-20-24. Particulars are as under:-

Tender No. 42-DDU-SRDEN-II-20-21

(i) Name of work with its location : Loading unloading and handling of various types of PWay materials and transportation of PWay material under SSE (PWay)/CTD/Gaya (ii) Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 18136.181.50 (iii) Earnest Money : ₹ 240700.00

Tender No. 43-DDU-SRDEN-II-20-21

(i) Name of work with its location : CTR (P) 4.582 TKM, TRR (P) 1.473, TBR 15.80 TKM, TFR 1KM, TTR 4 SET under SR, DEN/IDDU (ii) Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 18558349.79 (iii) Earnest Money : ₹ 242800.00 (iv) Closing Date & time for submission of e-tender : 04.01.2021, Up-to 12:00 hrs. (v) Website particulars of e-tendering : www.ireps.gov.in

Divisional Railway Manager East Central Railway, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Division PR/1136/DDU/ENGG/T/20-21/40

E-TENDER NOTICE

No. MC-12-GAYA-MCC-OBHS-20-24, Date : 15.12.2020, Sr. DME/ECR/DDU on behalf of the President of India invite "Open" "E-Tender" on "Two Packet System" from the eligible and experienced agency or contractor for e-tender no. MC-12-GAYA-MCC-OBHS-20-24. Particulars are as under:-

1. Name of work with its location : Mechanized cleaning of coaches (External & Internal) with watering of coaches at Washing pit and Mechanized cleaning & watering of turn round trains at GAYA platform and cleaning of depot premises with provision of toiletries in toilets of AC coaches of train no 12397/98 and 12389/90 at Coaching Depot Gaya and On-Board Housekeeping services of trains at Gaya Coaching Depot for 04 years (1460 days). 2. Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 9,63,79,199.44 (Rupees Nine crore sixty three lakh seventy nine thousand one hundred ninety nine and forty four paisa) only. 3. Earnest Money to be deposited : ₹ 6,31,900/- (Six lakh thirty one thousand nine hundred) only. 4. Date & Time for submission of tender and opening of Tender : From 21.12.2020 up to closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. on 04.01.2021. 5. Website particulars, Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. : IREPS Website : www.ireps.gov.in Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids online through this website only. Manual offer are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Note : Detail information may be seen in the tender documents. Divnl. Mech Engg. (Chg.&EnHm) ECR/Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya PR/01140/DDU/Mech/T/20-21/52

Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation

NIT No. Name of work Estimate Amount / ECW Downloading Start Date & Time Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bid Name & Address of E/ESE

for 7 No. works of Laying of VDC Road and Engaging of IRT Vehicle (Tractor) along with labour & Material for filling of Pot Holes, attending SW Drain Complaints and placing of RCC covers, Metal in Rajendranagar, Circle-11, GHMC

Rs. 116.35 Lakhs Dt: 16-12-2020 at 2.30 P.M. Dt: 16-12-2020 at 2.45 P.M. Executive Engineer Rajendranagar Div. No. 11, GHMC Cell No. 988983008 e-mail id: ecet1.ghmc@gmail.com Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, DIVISION-XI, (R/NH), GHMC RO No: 7710-PPV/CL/Adv/1/2020-21

भारत सरकार Government of India परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग Department of Atomic Energy क्रय एवं भंडार निदेशालय Directorate of Purchase & Stores

CORRIGENDUM

The following amendment is hereby authorized with regard to tender which was uploaded on <https://etenders.dpsdae.gov.in>

TENDER NO Existing Entry New entry Read As

1. DPS/CPU/03/B2/1848-TPT DUE DATE OF SUBMISSION 11-12-2020 30/12/2020

ALL THE OTHER TERMS & CONDITIONS REMAIN UNALTERED

Government of India DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY NUCLEAR FUEL COMPLEX ECIL Post, Hyderabad - 602

Tender Ref No: NFC/MZF&CCF/Gas sensors//56/2020/01

Sub: Calibration of different gas detectors and sensors of NFC

On behalf of the President of India, sealed tenders are invited from competitive and well experienced contractors by Sr.Manager, MZFP & CCF, Nuclear Fuel Complex, Department of Atomic Energy, ECIL Post, Hyderabad - 500 062.

Estimated cost: Rs.4,66,572/-, EMD - Rs.9,331/-, Period of contract -12 Months.

Note: The Tender Documents will be issued, in person only, to the prospective bidders, or their representatives, on all working days from 17-12-2020 to 24-12-2020 between 10:00 hours to 15:30 hours on submission of Demand draft or banker's cheque which is nonreturnable, payable at Hyderabad drawn in favour of "Pay & Accounts Officer, NFC" for Rs. 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred only). Office of the Manager, Sr.Manager (M-ZFP & CCF), ZFP Building, Nuclear Fuel Complex, Hyderabad - 500062 (Telephone No.: 040-2718-3470/3246/4412) may be contacted for the any query and for further details please login to our website: <http://www.nfc.gov.in/open-tenders.html>.KARNATAKA CO-OPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED KMF COMPLEX, DR MH MARIGOWDA ROAD, BENGALURU - 560029 Phone: 080-25536539, E-mail: admin@kmf.coop

NOTIFICATION

Karnataka Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd (KMF) Bangalore is the second largest Co-operative milk producers' federation in India and is marketing milk and milk products in the brand name of **NANDINI**. KMF has taken up market expansion of milk and milk products in Hyderabad city and their suburbs.

In this regard KMF invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from experienced individual candidates to work as full time marketing consultant for marketing of Nandini milk and milk products.

Interested candidates may submit their expression of interest with updated Curriculum vitae and a brief write up on their experience and suitability for this work on or before **28-12-2020** to admin@kmf.coop For any clarification, contact Additional Director (Marketing) KMF, Cell +91 9008006321.The EOI document & other details can be downloaded from our website: www.kmfandnini.coop KMF reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications without assigning any reasons thereof.

For KARNATAKA MILK FEDERATION Sd/- MANAGING DIRECTOR

MATCHING | CRIMINALS

To be available to all police, investigative agencies

Database to store suspect fingerprints

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, DEC. 16

The Union home ministry has initiated an ambitious project to automate the collection, storage and matching of fingerprints for expeditious identification of suspects. This will be part of the Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) a database of criminal record being used by different states and courts.

Ministry sources said that this database, the

National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), would be available to all police and other investigative agencies across the country. The move, officials added, would help the investigating agencies expedite their investigations in cases of heinous and criminal cases.

Officials claimed that the initiative would prove to be a major development in helping investigate criminal case and this database

would be available online across a total of 16,098 police stations in the country.

Already, the CCTNS software is being used in 95 per cent police stations, connectivity is available at 97 per cent police stations and 93 per cent police stations are entering 100 per cent FIRs through CCTNS.

"This will also provide a much needed unique identifier for every arrested person in the CCTNS database as NAFIS and CCTNS are

connected at the back-end," a senior home ministry official added.

Union minister of state for home affairs G. Kishan Reddy has said that integrated database concepts like the CCTNS and ICJS have become indispensable to realise the dream of New India.

The entire project will be implemented by the National Criminal Record Bureau and is likely to be rolled out in the next couple of months, Home minister Amit Shah has already

asked various agencies working under the Ministry to encourage use of technology bringing a lot of data-base on the online platforms.

This helps in expeditious completion of criminal cases and investigations into cases of heinous crime. Once the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) is completed the NCRB will start examining other similar projects which can be implemented.



SHORT TAKES

ANIME STUDIO ARSON: JAPAN DETAINS MAN

Tokyo, Dec. 16: Japanese prosecutors on Wednesday charged a man with murder over the 2019 arson attack on Kyoto Animation that killed 36 people, the country's deadliest violent crime in decades.

Shinji Aoba, 42, was detained in the aftermath of the July attack, but has been under constant medical supervision since then after sustaining severe burns in the incident.

The charges include murder, attempted murder, arson, trespass and breach of the arms-control law, the Kyoto prosecutor's office said, without giving further details.

More than 30 people were also injured in the attack, in which Aoba is accused of breaking into the studio's building, spreading gasoline around the ground floor and setting it alight.

TRYING TO FLEE: CHINA INDICTS 10 HK RESIDENTS

Hong Kong, Dec. 16: Chinese prosecutors on Wednesday announced the indictment of 10 people from Hong Kong over an attempt to flee the city amid a crackdown on opposition political activity.

The Yantian district prosecutor's office in the city of Shenzhen just across the border from Hong Kong said on its microblog that 10 of the suspects were charged with illegally crossing the border while two were also charged with organising the attempted journey.

Two others are minors and a decision on how to handle their cases will be made at a later time, the office said. Relatives of the 12 say they have been prevented from hiring their own lawyers and that the accusations against them are politically motivated. The 12 were arrested at sea in August while they were apparently attempting to flee to Taiwan after a tough national security law took effect in Hong Kong.

FIJIANS TOLD TO SEEK SHELTER FROM CYCLONE

Suva, Dec. 16: Fijians living in the path of an approaching super cyclone were told to hunker down at home or head to emergency shelters immediately on Wednesday, as authorities warned of the storm's potential to uproot buildings and cause mass destruction.

The Fiji Meteorological Service said Cyclone Yasa had intensified into a top-of-the-scale category five storm, with gusts of up to 280 kilometres per hour (174 miles per hour).

It is on track to hit Fiji late Thursday and the National Disaster Management Office said around two-thirds of the island nation's population of 900,000 were in its path.

National Disaster Management Office director Vasiti Soko said anyone who doubted their home's structural integrity should prioritise survival over protecting their property and flee right away.

"If you need to move to an evacuation centre, we are pleading that you move before it gets dark."

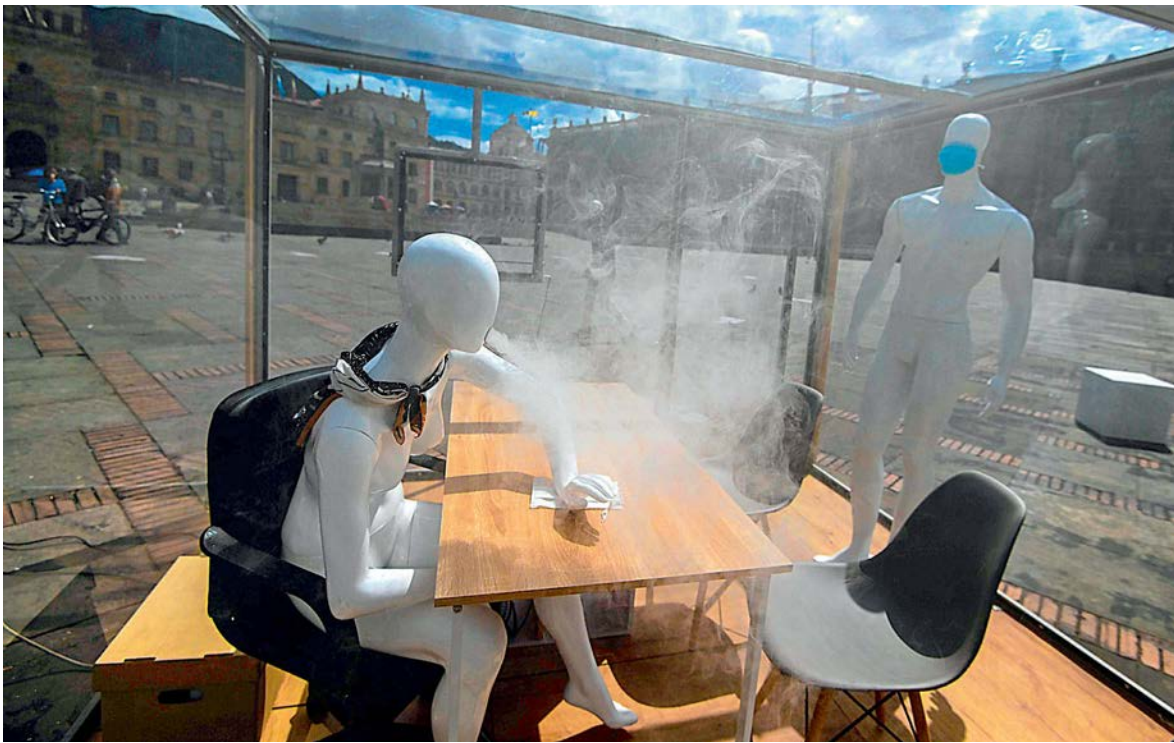
PIG GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOR FOOD GETS NOD

New York, Dec. 16: US regulators have approved a genetically modified pig for food and medical products, making it the second such animal to get the green light for human consumption.

But the company behind it says there are no imminent plans to sell it for meat. The pig is genetically engineered to eliminate the presence of alpha-gal, a type of sugar found in many mammals. The sugar makes its way into many products — including medications, cosmetics and food — and can cause allergic reactions in some people.

The main goal of the company behind the pig, United Therapeutics Corp., is to develop medical products, such as blood thinners, that won't set off such reactions, said its spokesman Dewey Steadman. Eventually, the Silver Spring, Maryland-based firm hopes to develop a way for the pig's organs to be transplanted into people.

The pig, called GalSafe, also has commercial potential as food, but Steadman said the company doesn't know when it might be able to secure an agreement with a meat producer to process and sell it.



Smoke comes out of a mannequin's mouth to show how bacteria can spread in the air during a campaign to raise awareness for the prevention of the Coronavirus, in Bogota on Tuesday. — AFP

Many European nations impose pre-Christmas virus restrictions

Berlin, Dec. 16: Several European countries on Wednesday imposed tighter Coronavirus restrictions ahead of Christmas, as the United States reported another record number of new infections.

Hopes for an end to the pandemic were boosted by positive assessments of the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine, but a study warned that at least a fifth of the world's population in poorer nations may not have access to vaccines until 2022.

With the virus resurgent in Europe, Germany closed non-essential shops and schools, swathes of England came under tighter curbs, and Denmark extended its restrictions.

"It's very good that we're closing the shops, it's for our health. We can't wait for things to fall apart," said shopper Jurgen in Berlin, where people were rushing to finish their Christmas purchases before the shutdown.

Germany had coped relatively well with the first wave in the spring, but it has struggled to contain a resurgence in recent months and its health minister said it wanted the European Union to approve the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine "before Christmas".

Calls have been growing for the EU health regulator to speed up its vaccines decision process, with the bloc lagging behind a growing number of nations that have authorised the drug.

Britain has already started using it, but high infection numbers forced London on Wednesday to join large parts of central and northern England under tough, economically painful restrictions. Pubs, bars, restaurants and other hospitality sites will close, apart from take-aways, as will theatres and other entertainment venues.

"The hospitality business needs this week, and it's devastating. It is devastatingly awful," said Lesley Lewis, owner of The French House, a London pub.

"But if this is what it takes to save lives, that's what we have to do," The Netherlands, France and Turkey have also announced restrictions to be in force over the holiday season.

— AFP

Charity: Bezos's ex-wife gives \$4bn

San Francisco, Dec. 16: MacKenzie Scott, the ex-wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, said Tuesday she has given \$4.2 billion to groups helping the vulnerable as the pandemic hits lives like "a wrecking ball." Scott, who formerly went by the name MacKenzie Bezos, last year signed a "giving pledge" to donate the bulk of her wealth to charity.

In a round of donations early this year, Scott gave nearly \$1.7 billion to groups devoted to race, gender and economic equality, as well as other social causes.

"This pandemic has been a wrecking ball in the lives of Americans already struggling," Scott said in a post detailing

her second round of giving this year.

"Economic losses and health outcomes alike have been worse for women, for people of colour, and for people living in poverty," Meanwhile, she noted, the wealth of billionaires has substantially increased.

Such billionaires include her ex-husband, although Scott did not mention his name. Bezos's wealth has reportedly grown almost 80 percent during the pandemic.

Scott said she enlisted a team of advisors that helped identify 384 organizations across the US that support people suffering from the economic toll of the pandemic.

— AFP

Frankfurt Am Main, Dec. 16: Germany registered a record number of deaths from Covid-19 on Wednesday, the first day of a new partial lockdown to try and cope with a surge in infections.

A total of 952 people died in the previous 24 hours, according to the Robert Koch Institute disease control centre.

It said 27,728 new Coronavirus cases were registered, a figure close

to the daily record of nearly 30,000 infections reported on Friday.

The previous daily record for fatalities was also reached Friday, when almost 600 people were reported to have died as the number of those in intensive care in the country reached alarming levels.

Some 83 percent of intensive care beds in hospitals were occupied on Wednesday, the Interdisciplinary Association for In-

tensive Care and Emergency Medicine (DIVI) said.

The latest figures come as a new partial lockdown was imposed, with non-essential shops and schools closed in a bid to halt an "exponential growth" in infections.

The restrictions will apply until January 10, with companies also urged to allow employees to work from home or to offer extended company holiday.

— AFP

WTO mulls how to ease food aid

Geneva, Dec. 16: World Trade Organisation negotiators were debating Wednesday a proposal to lift all trade barriers inhibiting the delivery of international food aid as the Coronavirus pandemic pushes humanitarian needs to new heights.

Dozens of WTO members, including the United States, the European Union and China, support the proposal put forward by Singapore and the World Food Programme, which won the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize for its humanitarian work.

"This is a very important proposal," EU ambassador to the WTO Joao Aguiar Machado told reporters.

If adopted, the proposal would "ban export restrictions on these foodstuffs which hinder the World Food Programme's ability to procure (food products for) the populations most in need across the world."

But while the draft text enjoys strong support, it could struggle to secure unanimous backing which is required for all decisions at the global trade body.

According to a Geneva-based trade official, who asked not to be named, India has hinted it would be reluctant to back a blanket exemption on trade barriers affecting WFP, pointing to the need to protect "national food security".

The short text up for discussion says WTO mem-

US AUTHORISES FIRST AT-HOME COVID-19 TEST

Washington, Dec 16 : The United States on Tuesday authorised its first rapid at-home test for Covid-19, which is available over-the-counter and produces a result in around 20 minutes.

The test, made by California-based Ellume, will sell for around \$30 and the company plans to roll out three million units in January 2021, and millions more in subsequent months. Stephen Hahn, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, said the emergency use authorization represented a "major milestone."

— AFP

bers "shall not impose export prohibitions or restrictions on foodstuffs purchased for non-commercial humanitarian purposes by the World Food Programme."

It highlights that the work of the WFP has been "made more urgent in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and other crises." The largest humanitarian organisation fighting famine, the UN agency founded in 1961 feeds tens of millions of people each year — 97 million in 2019 — across all continents.

— AFP

VIRUS HUNT: WHO TO SIFT CHINESE SAMPLES, DATA

Falkensee, Dec. 16: A German scientist who is part of a small team of experts assembled by the World Health Organisation to investigate the origins of the Coronavirus says they plan to sift through samples and medical data from China to help determine where the bug first jumped from animals to humans and which species it came from.

The search for the source of the new Coronavirus has sparked claims of cover-ups and fuelled political tensions, particularly between the US administration of President Donald Trump and Beijing.

Most researchers think that the virus, also known as SARS-CoV-2, originated in animals in China, probably bats, and the WHO has put together a 10-person team to examine the science. Mission member Fabian Leendertz, a biologist at Germany's Robert Koch Institute who specialises in emerging diseases, said that the goal is to gather data to be better prepared for possible future outbreaks.

"It's really not about finding a guilty country," Leendertz said. "It's about trying to understand what happened and then see if based on those data, we can try to reduce the risk in the future."

— AP

Senate run-offs: Biden campaigns

Nominates Buttigieg as transportation secy

Atlanta, Dec. 16: President-elect Joe Biden threw his weight into the Democratic battle for control of the US Senate on Tuesday, as his White House win was finally acknowledged by top Republicans and holdout foreign leaders.

Biden flew into Georgia — a southern state he won in an upset against President Donald Trump — to host a rally for two Democratic candidates in run-off races that will determine the Senate's balance of power.

"Honk for your next United States senators Jon Ossoff and Rev. Raphael Warnock," Biden told the crowd at the drive-in event in Atlanta — urging voters to turn out in force on January 5.

"Send me these two men, and we will control the Senate!" One day after the Electoral College affirmed Biden's victory, attention shifted to the looming Senate battle — and to the shape of the incoming administration, as Biden also announced he had nominated Pete Buttigieg, a former Indiana mayor and presidential rival, as secretary of transportation. He would be the first openly gay person confirmed by the Senate to a presidential cabinet post — in sync with Biden's pledge to usher in the most diverse cabinet ever when he takes office on January 20.

Rouhani: 'Happy' Trump leaving

Tehran, Dec. 16: President Hassan Rouhani said Wednesday that Iran was "very happy" over the looming departure from office of US counterpart Donald Trump, who led a campaign of "maximum pressure" against the Islamic republic.

President-elect Joe Biden, who defeated Trump at the ballot box in November, has signalled a willingness to return to diplomacy with Iran after four tense years under the outgoing president.

"Some say you are over-excited by the advent of Mr. Biden. No, we are not, but we are very happy to see Trump leave," he said in televised comments at a cabinet meeting.

"Thank God, these are his final days," Rouhani added, calling Trump a "tyrant", "the most unruly, lawless president" and a "terrorist and murderer." The electoral college confirmed Biden as the next US president on Monday even as the incumbent continues to refuse to accept defeat.

The formal handover of power will take place on January 20 when Biden is sworn in.

Tensions between Tehran and Washington soared during Trump's presidency as his administration sought to bring Israel and the Gulf Arab states closer together with a hard line against Iran.

— AFP

And while Trump still refuses to concede — continuing to tweet baseless allegations of mass fraud that have been rejected in dozens of lawsuits — top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell finally broke his silence with a message to the president: It's over. "The Electoral College has spoken. So today I want to congratulate President-elect Joe Biden,"

McConnell said on the Senate floor, adding that Americans can also "take pride" that they will have their first female VP in Kamala Harris. Biden said that he had a "good" phone conversation with McConnell, a longtime Senate colleague. "I told him that while we disagree on a lot of things, there are things we can work together on," he said. — AFP

Afghan, Taliban in Pak to talk peace

Islamabad, Dec. 16: A high-level Afghan-Taliban delegation arrived here on Wednesday to hold talks with the top Pakistani leadership as part of efforts to push forward the reconciliation process, amid growing incidents of violence in Afghanistan.

The Taliban Political Commission (TPC), headed by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, is on a December 16-18 visit to Pakistan, according to the Foreign Office (FO).

"During the visit, the delegation will meet with the Foreign Minister and call on the Prime Minister," the FO said. The visit comes after a delegation led by US special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation, Zalmay

Khalilzad, on Monday met Pakistan's Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and discussed with him the ongoing Afghan peace process.

AP reported that Baradar and his delegation were summoned to Islamabad from Qatar, where they have been negotiating since September with Afghan government representatives, officials close to the talks said.

According to a report in *The Express Tribune*, the delegation will discuss issues of mutual interest, in particular, problems of refugees, relaxation and facilitation of Afghan's movement to Pakistan, as well as issues faced by Afghan traders.

— PTI

ERDOGAN: U.S. CURBS ATTACK SOVEREIGNTY

Ankara, Dec. 16: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday called US sanctions against Ankara over its purchase of a Russian missile defence system an "open attack" on the NATO member state's sovereignty. The United States made good on months of threats to punish Turkey for buying the S-400 system under a 2017 law known as CAATSA, which aims to limit Russia's military influence and punish it for its behaviour abroad.

The sanctions were lighter than feared, but Erdogan noted that they had never before been used against a fellow member of NATO.

— AFP

Siddharth Chatterjee is UN's China Resident Coordinator

United Nations, Dec. 16: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed senior UN official Siddharth Chatterjee of India as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in China. Resident Coordinators are the UN Secretary-General's representatives for development at the country level.

They lead UN teams supporting countries to recover better from the Covid-19 pandemic through the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Guterres appointed Chatterjee as the Resident Coordinator in China, with the host government's approval.

Chatterjee's appointment follows confirmation from the Host Government, where he will take up his post in the middle of January of next year," Spokesman for the Secretary-General Stephane Dujarric said on Tuesday as he made the announcement.

"We congratulate our friend Siddharth," Dujarric said.

"We proudly remain with full gender parity and North-South balance among all of our Resident Coordinators, who cover 162 countries and territories," he said. Chatterjee has more than 25 years of experience in international cooperation, sustainable development, humanitarian coordination and peace and security. — PTI

PRICELESS | TREASURE

The hoarder risks facing a colossal fine and possibly jail time

Over 27,000 artefacts seized in France

THE MAN had first aroused suspicion in 2019 when he told authorities he had found almost 15,000 Roman coins by chance on land he had acquired in Belgium.

lection himself using metal detectors as well as what appears to be a deep archaeological knowledge.

The man had first aroused suspicion in 2019 when he told authorities he had found almost 15,000 Roman coins by chance on land he had acquired in Belgium.

The French customs service then confirmed that this haul had actually been built up through "the looting of various sites in France", it said.



A picture taken on December 14, 2020 shows Customs seals of some of 27,500 archeological items in Metz, eastern France, seized by Customs officers and which were held by a man from France northeastern region Lorraine who tried to sell them in Belgium. — AFP

The case has now been handed to the judiciary, with the man risking a

colossal fine and possibly jail time. This seizure is "a clear

message to those who -- for the profit and the selfish pleasure of a few -- deprive us of our shared heritage and erase entire sections of our history", Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said in a statement.

He described the haul as a "priceless treasure". The collection includes thousands of rare Roman coins, many of them rich in silver.

Also among the looted objects are bracelets and torques dating from the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, a rare Roman dodecahedron of which there are only around 100 known examples in the world, as well as objects from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. — AFP

quick BITES

INDICATORS		%
Sensex	46,666.46	0.87
Nifty 50	13,682.70	0.85
S&P 500*	3,703.40	0.24
Dollar (₹)	73.58	0.09
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.31	-1.25
Euro (₹)	89.49	0.03
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,059.215	0.43
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	50.70	-0.06
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.944	0.003
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.928	0.007

SBI: GDP to dip only by -7.4%, full recovery in 7 qtrs

India's GDP growth is expected to be at (-) 7.4 per cent in FY21 on better than projected recovery, said a SBI research report, upgrading its earlier forecast of (-) 10.9 per cent. The report also said it would take seven quarters from the fourth quarter of FY21 for GDP to reach the pre-pandemic level in nominal terms. It said the revised estimates are based on SBI 'Now-casting Model' with 41 high frequency indicators.

LPG price raised again by ₹50; ATF costlier by 6.3%



Cooking gas LPG price was increased by Rs 50 per cylinder, the second hike in rate this month following firming of international prices. Also, aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was raised by a steep 6.3 per cent. Non-subsidised LPG price was increased to Rs 694 per 14.2-kg cylinder from Rs 644 earlier, according to a price notification of state fuel marketing companies. On Dec. 1, price was hiked by a similar Rs 50 per cylinder.

Reforms window for states open till February 15

The finance ministry has extended the deadline till February 15 for states to implement reforms—one-nation one ration card, ease of doing business, urban local body/ utility and power sector reforms—to become eligible for additional borrowing this fiscal. To meet the extra fund requirements of states on account of Covid-19, the Centre in May had decided to raise the states' borrowing limit by 2 per cent of GSDP.

Kia Motors sells 1 L 'connected cars' in India

South Korea's Kia Motors said it has crossed 1 lakh cumulative sales milestone of its 'connected cars' in India within 16 months of starting operations in the country. One out of two Kia cars sold in India is a connected car—equipped with Kia's UVO connect system, an advanced and dynamic solution that seamlessly integrates smartphone or smartwatch with the car and its infotainment system into a single unit, the firm said.

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Guv's advice for raising credit-GDP ratio Lend by cash flow, not collateral: Das

FALAKNAAZ SYED MUMBAI, DEC. 16

Banks should rely less on collateral security for lending and instead focus more on cashflow-based lending to help improve the credit-to-GDP ratio in the country, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Shaktikanta Das said on Wednesday. The credit bureaus and the proposed public credit registry (PCR) are expected to improve the flow of credit as well as credit culture, the apex bank chief added. India is ranked amongst the most financially underpenetrated economies, which suffered from a bad loan problem with industrial credit while also having an underpenetration in last mile credit. As per RBI data, the scheduled commercial banks' credit as a per cent of GDP came down to 50.99 per cent in FY20 from 51.51 per cent in FY19. On the other hand, the credit-to-GDP ratio in advanced economies and China is in the range of 150 to 200 per cent. "To improve the credit to GDP ratio, access to credit and cost of credit need to be addressed by lesser reliance on collateral security and greater cash-flow based lending. Credit bureaus and the proposed Public Credit Registry (PCR) framework are expected to improve the flow of credit as well as credit culture," Das said in his keynote address titled the National Strategy on Financial Education 2020-



25 at the webinar on 'Investing in investor education in India: Priorities for action' organised by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). The views had earlier been put forth by former deputy governor Viral Acharya, who, in July this year, said that an estimated 50 per cent of Indians were employed informally and remained invisible to the banking system despite earning as much as their peers in the formal system. "When they want a loan, the bank denies them credit unless they provide a hard asset collateral, which is not easy to come by if you are the last mile and below the poverty line," Acharya had said. He said the average Indian could not provide collateral and hence resorted to informal finance which remained infamous for 'extraordinary high rates, onerous terms and inhuman collection policies'. Acharya had cited the example of micro entrepreneurs and said that "if the formal financing system can observe the cash flow patterns of

400 foundries stop work over high raw material price

Coimbatore, Dec. 16: About 400 small and tiny foundries in the district remained silent on Wednesday as part of their indefinite strike to draw the attention of the Centre to the spiralling price of raw materials in the last two months.

The foundries, affiliated to the Coimbatore Tiny and Small Foundry Owners Association (Cosmafam), stopped production indefinitely, resulting in a loss of Rs 30 crore daily, its president Shiva Shanmugakumar said. The increasing prices would not only affect the foundries but also related industries such as wet grinder, pump & motors, textiles and automobiles, who are the large-scale customers of foundry products, he said. The price increase ranged from 30 to 55 per cent compared to the pre-lockdown period, he said. Hoarding by the traders, thus creating artificial scarcity of the materials, also contributed to the price hike, he said, adding the entire industrial sector is seeking the intervention of the Centre to bring down the prices for its survival. The Coimbatore and Tirupur Medium Industries Association, with nearly 50,000 units, has also given a call to down shutters for a day on Wednesday to express solidarity with striking foundries. Nineteen SME associations had already staged a demonstration here on Tuesday. —PTI

Sebi relaxes norms for CIRP firms, MF sponsors

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, DEC. 16



The Sebi board on Wednesday made changes to the shareholding norms for corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) companies, relaxed mutual fund sponsor eligibility criteria and also decided to relax minimum promoter contribution in follow-on public offer. The regulator said firms that remain listed due to implementation of resolution plan under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code will be required to have at least 5 per cent public shareholding at the time of their admission to deal on a stock exchange. There is no such minimum requirement now. Further, such companies will be provided 12 months to achieve public shareholding of 10 per cent from the date shares are admitted for dealings on the stock exchange and 36 months to achieve public

shareholding of 25 per cent. For this, the current timelines are 18 and 36 months, respectively. The Sebi also decided to relax the profitability criteria for becoming a mutual fund sponsor, aiming to facilitate innovation and expansion in the sector. The regulator has also decided to segregate and ring-fence assets and liabilities of mutual fund schemes. This is in addition to the existing requirement of segregating bank accounts and securities accounts. On sponsor eligibility, the Sebi said sponsors that

are not fulfilling the profitability criteria when applying will also be considered eligible to sponsor a fund. "This is subject to having a net-worth of not less than Rs 100 crore for the purpose of contribution towards the net-worth of the Asset Management Company (AMC)." The net-worth of the AMC has to be maintained till it makes profit for five consecutive years. The new rules will open the gates for new players to come in as mutual fund-sponsors with high net-worth but no profitability. At present, a sponsor has to show profits in three out of the immediately preceding five years. The board approved the proposal to do away with the applicability of minimum promoters' contribution and the subsequent lock-in requirements for the issuers making a Further Public Offer of specified securities subject to conditions.

Covid steals 81 mn jobs in Asia-Pac

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 16

Covid-19 wiped out some 81 million jobs in the Asia-Pacific while 364-429 million casual workers were affected by the Indian lockdown measures, says the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in a study. The report estimates that in Asia and the Pacific, the Covid-19 crisis has led to a gap of 81 million jobs compared with the pre-crisis numbers. The regional jobs gap in 2020 is largely

driven by South Asia, where the employment estimate is nearly 50 million jobs below the pre-crisis baseline, corresponding to a 7.4 per cent drop in employment. "India implemented one of the strictest lockdowns among the large middle-income countries...An estimated 364-429 million workers have been adversely affected by the lockdown measures," the report said. While India's total Covid-19 fiscal response package as a percentage of GDP

was higher than the median among the Asia-Pacific countries, government support to income or revenue, as part of the Covid-19 policy expenditure, was on the lower side and lesser than countries like Pakistan, China and Australia. Overall, in Asia-Pacific, labour income is estimated to have declined by 9.9 per cent in the first three quarters of 2020. An additional 22-25.4 million persons could be added to working poor or those living on less than \$1.90 a day.

Market rally continues after consolidation

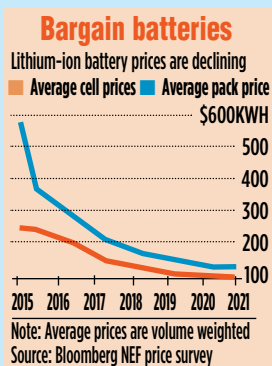
RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, DEC. 16

Sensex and Nifty-50 closed at new all time highs gaining close to one per cent on firm global cues and improving domestic macro-economic data. The Sensex gained 403.29 points, or 0.87 per cent, to close at a new all-time high of 46,666.46 while the Nifty-50 gained 114.85 points, or 0.85 per cent, to close at 13,682.70. The market rally was broad based with BSE Mid-cap index gaining 0.87 per cent and Small-cap gaining 0.88 per cent. "Nifty broke the last four sessions of consolidation with a gap-up and it rallied to almost test the 13,700 mark. The broader markets continued its up move, however the banking space looked tired and it underperformed," said Ruchit Jain, technical & derivatives analyst, Angel Broking. The sectoral gainers included the BSE Realty Index (5.03 per cent) and Consumer Durables (2.39 per cent).

Electric cars to get cheaper as battery costs plunge

DAVID R. BAKER DEC. 16

Electric vehicles may cost about the same as their fuel-guzzling brethren in just three or four years—and only get cheaper from there, shows a new report from Bloomberg-NEF. Electric cars and buses have long been saddled with bigger up-front costs than those burning petrol or diesel, due to the cost of batteries. But researchers say that price premium will disappear once battery packs reach \$100 per kilowatt-hour—a tipping point BNEF expects to occur in 2023, according to its Battery Price Survey. Battery costs have



plunged nearly 90 per cent in the last decade, from \$1,100 per kilowatt-hour in 2010 to \$137 this year. Packs built for cars—as opposed to home solar arrays or pieces of the

power grid—cost even less. They now average \$126 per kilowatt-hour. The survey also found examples of batteries for electric buses in China selling below \$100 per kilowatt-hour, said lead author James Frith. China's average pack price for electric buses is only slightly higher, at \$105. "Within just a few years we will see the average price in the industry pass this point," said Frith. "What's more, our analysis shows even if prices for raw materials were to return to the highs seen in 2018, it would only delay average prices reaching \$100/kWh by two years." —Bloomberg

WHATSAPP TO HELP BUY 'SACHET-SIZED' HEALTH POLICIES

New Delhi, Dec. 16: WhatsApp on Wednesday said it expects to facilitate the purchase of 'affordable sachet-sized' health insurance through its platform by the end of the year as part of its efforts to provide users in India with

greater access to financial solutions. The Facebook-owned company noted that its 'Payments' feature is now available to users across the country (having 20 million users) with support from banking partners

State Bank of India, HDFC, ICICI and Axis Bank. "WhatsApp is deeply committed to India with over 400 million active users, this is our largest market," said WhatsApp India head Abhijit Bose at an event. —PTI

Double-digit dip in growth likely: Acma

MICHAEL GONSALVES PUNE, DEC. 16

The Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India, or Acma, on Wednesday said the sector will see a double-digit decline in growth this fiscal, after a 34 per cent drop in the first half of the year due to coronavirus-induced disruptions. The industry body said it would take two to three years, depending on how steep the recovery is, for the component makers to work out a whole-sector capex planning. In the first half of the fiscal, Acma said, the turnover of the automotive components industry stood at Rs 1.19 lakh crore (\$15.9 billion), registering a de-growth of 34 per cent as compared to Rs 1.82 lakh crore (\$26.2 billion) in the first half of the previous fiscal. The performance was mainly affected by the first quarter when the auto sector had almost "zero revenue" due to the nationwide lockdown, with restrictions continuing in

the second quarter as well. "Going forward, obviously this year as well, because of the lockdown and the challenges we continue to face, we will have a double-digit contraction. As you know 34 per cent, we have already contracted in the industry in H1. "Although we are optimistic about our H2 performance, we will not be able to completely recover from the Q1 and Q2 fiascos," Deepak Jain, president at Acma told reporters in a video conference. The auto components sector has been set back by three to four years due to the pandemic and it could take two to three years for the sector to reach the peak levels of 2018-19. Jain, however, said the performance of the industry during the festive season has been heartening and there are indications the vehicle demand would be sustained. According to Acma, exports of auto components declined by 23.6 per cent to Rs 39,003 crore (\$5.2 billion) in H1 FY21.

Term plan purchases taper down from July



SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, DEC. 16

In the initial months of the pandemic the fear for life was higher among Indians, especially the youth. The term insurance buying pattern shows this fear tapered down as the country started coming out of the lockdown. Between March and July, when the country was under the lockdown, the purchase of term insurance policies surged 60 per cent year-on-year. However, after July when the country started opening up, the growth came down to 30 to 40 per cent, as per data from Policy Bazaar. "When the pandemic was spreading fast in China, Europe and the US, the fear was higher in India. The lockdown further increased the fear. This saw people rushing to secure their lives. However, the lower mortality rate in India alleviated the fear among the citizens and the country also had started opening up by July," Amit Garg, business head, term insurance, PolicyBazaar told Financial Chronicle. The trend was largely seen in metros and tier-I cities, which have a larger share of educated and employed people. Tier II cities also saw 40 per cent growth between March and July and then it fell to 20 to 30 per cent post-July. Term insurance purchases by self-employed people saw the highest surge, accounting for 30 per cent of the term insurance buyers. The number has now gone up to 40 per cent.

Beware of these pests coming to eat your crops

AGNIESZKA DE SOUSA & MICHAEL HIRTZER DEC. 16

Climate change is opening up new habitats to old pests, transforming them from a nuisance into a growing menace and placing unprecedented threats on the global food supply. Here are bugs to keep an eye on.

■ Fall Armyworm—Spodoptera frugiperda Found in: Africa, Australia, East and South Asia, and North and South America Eats: Corn, rice, sorghum, sugar cane, wheat Native to tropical areas of the Western Hemisphere, this invasive species has spread rapidly, causing "major damage to economically important cultivated grasses," according to CABI, the non-profit Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International. The pest infested about 15 per cent of Zambia's corn crop this year. It also contributed to a 4 per cent decline in China's corn harvest—a difference of about 11 million tonnes—sending prices skyrocketing and

forcing the country to open its strategic stockpile, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

■ Coffee Berry Borer—Hypothenemus hampei Found in: Tropical climates—i.e., almost all coffee-producing countries Eats: Coffee These tiny beetles make their home inside the fruit of coffee plants, eating them from the inside out. The bug used to stick around lower, warmer elevations, but rising temperatures have coaxed them higher uphill. That's affecting the more expensive arabica coffee varieties, which prefer to grow on the slopes. Controlling the beetle population requires careful, labour-intensive monitoring. And farmers, who are already seeking higher ground because of climate change-coffee plants are particularly sensitive to temperatures—are running out of room. ■ Desert Locust—Schistocerca gregaria Found in: Africa, Asia, and the Middle East; plus a few cases in Europe Eats: Pretty much anything



This pest has a Biblical appetite. In the past year it's ravaged crops in regions as far-flung as East Africa and northern India. Both outbreaks were made possible by warmer seas, which generate more hurricanes and typhoons, which in turn create the perfect breeding ground for locusts. Ample rains moisten the soil, helping eggs thrive and encouraging vegetation growth in typically arid regions. As the climate gets more volatile, locust swarms are expected to become both more frequent and more severe. ■ Soybean Gall—MidgeRessel-iella maxima Found in: US Great Plains, creeping into the Midwest Eats: Soybeans This tiny up-and-comer has been appearing in soybean fields in some US states. Its larvae attack the stems of soy plants that are in flower. There's no known effective defence. "Nothing was significant enough to suppress the larvae," says Erin Hodgson, associate professor of entomology at Iowa State University. "Plants can experience straight-up death."

■ Spotted wing drosophila—Drosophila suzukii (Matsumura) Found in: Asia primarily, but increasingly in the Americas and Europe Eats: Summer fruits, such as berries, cherries, and grapes The flying pest's small larvae feast on soft, expensive fruit varieties, rendering them non-saleable and costing farmers millions of dollars. Although it showed up in North America only a decade ago, it's already wreaked havoc on US berry farmers. Rising temperatures will expand the drosophila's potential habitat, allowing it to push farther north each year. —Bloomberg

SHORT TAKES

Moody is SRH director of cricket

New Delhi: Australian Tom Moody has been appointed director of cricket at Indian Premier League side Sunrisers Hyderabad, who are captained by his compatriot David Warner. Moody, 55, was the Hyderabad coach for seven years and led them to their only IPL title in 2016. He was replaced by another Australian, Trevor Bayliss, last year and late on Tuesday the franchise announced that Moody would be returning. The former batsman switched to coaching and TV commentary after retiring in 2001 and helped Hyderabad reach the play-offs five times during his stay as coach. Hyderabad, who also have New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson and Afghanistan spin ace Rashid Khan in their ranks, failed to reach this year's final when they lost to DC in the playoffs in November. —*AFP*

Shutter Foo Kune banned for doping

Geneva: Mauritian badminton player Kate Foo Kune, her country's flag-carrier at the 2016 Rio Olympics, was banned for two years for doping on Wednesday after failing to prove her drink was spiked. Foo Kune tested positive for a banned steroid last year but she escaped a ban when the Badminton World Federation's anti-doping panel accepted her explanation that she was the victim of sabotage. But after a BWF appeal against its own panel's decision, the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sport said there was no evidence of foul play. "The CAS panel found the athlete's assertion of intentional spiking during the 2019 African Badminton World Championships devoid of supporting evidence," said a statement from the court, announcing a two-year ban from December 15. —*AFP*

Floyd, Laila voted to Hall of Fame

Canastota, New York: Floyd Mayweather, who captured 11 world titles in five weight divisions and retired unbeaten, former heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko, and Laila Ali have been elected to the International Boxing Hall of Fame and Museum. The Class of 2021 announced Tuesday also includes former Olympic champion Andre Ward, Ann Wolfe, Marian Trimira, and Dr. Margaret Goodman. Elected posthumously were: Davey Moore, Jackie Tonawanda, cut man Freddie Brown, manager-trainer Jackie McCoy, journalist George Kimball, and television executive Jay Larkin. Honorees were selected by members of the Boxing Writers Association and a panel of international boxing historians. Induction day is scheduled for June 13 and also will include last year's class. —*AP*

Prez candidate wants Leo to stay

Barcelona: Barcelona presidential candidate Jordi Farre said on Tuesday he would work to make sure Lionel Messi stays at the Catalan giants should be elected next month, and hinted at a improbable bid for Neymar by the cash-strapped club. Farre was promoter of the motion that led to previous club chief Josep Maria Bartomeu's resignation and with elections set for January 24 has been trying to attract support for his candidacy by offering free tattoos and pizzas with the Barca crest to fans who supported his bid for the top job. —*AFP*

Live on TV

CRICKET
Australia vs India: First Test — Day One from 9.30 am on Sony Ten 1, 3, Sony Six, HD
Big Bash League: Hobart Hurricanes vs Melbourne Renegades from 5.40 am (Friday) on Sony Ten 2, HD
FOOTBALL
Indian Super League: Odisha vs Bengaluru from 7.20 pm on Star Sports 2, 3
English Premier League: Aston Villa vs Burnley from 11.30 pm on Star Sports Select 1, HD

Regd. No. H/SD/509/2018-20

Printed and Published by **K. Sudhakar** on behalf of Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited. Printed at Deccan Chronicle Press situated at Plot No. 9 Alwal Village, Vallabh Nagar Taluk, Medchal Malkajgiri Dist. Telangana and Published at 36, S.D. Road, Secunderabad-3. RNI Registration No. 3081/1957. Editor: **Kaushik Mitter**

IT'S SHOWTIME

Tough India face Australian might in Pink Ball affair

Adelaide, Dec. 16: A peerless Virat Kohli and his "fearless" India would look to unleash their might on an Australian team which is ready for revenge but not exactly in 'pink of health' ahead of the first Day/Night Test starting here on Thursday.

Media mogul Kerry Packer, while promoting his path-breaking 'World Series Day/Night Test matches' on Channel 9 back in late 1970s, had an unforgettable caption "Big Boys Play At Night".



Even in 2020, there couldn't have been a more appropriate catch-line for a series where Kohli's magnificence meets its match in Steve Smith's manic consistency. Cheteshwar Pujara's doggedness challenged by a much younger Marnus Labuschagne, ready to show the world that he isn't a one-season wonder. All this would be under lights at the Adelaide Oval.

And then there are those mean fast men on both sides aiming to instill the fear of pink ball in twilight zone, creating all sorts of doubts in the batsmen's minds.

A Josh Hazlewood versus Mohammed Shami will be as enticing a sub-plot as Jasprit Bumrah bowling those yorkers in reply to Pat Cummins' barrage of bouncers. —*PTI*



Shubman Gill of India dives to catch a ball during a practice session in Adelaide on Wednesday ahead of the first Test against Australia. —*AFP*

INDIA TO PLAY 1ST DAY/NIGHT TEST AWAY FROM HOME

● The first day/night Test match of the four-match Border-Gavaskar series between India and Australia will be played at Adelaide Oval from Thursday (December 17). It will be the 99th Test match between the two teams and on 49th Test match on Australian soil.

● Australia have a good record against India in previous Test matches played between the two teams. They have won 42 and lost 28 in 98 previous encounters between the two

NUMBERS GAME

sides. The remaining 27 matches ended with out a result which include one tied match. They have won 29, lost seven and drew 12 in 48 Tests played against India at home.

● India have a better record against Australia since 2000. They have won 17, lost 15 and draw 10 in 42 Test matches from January 2000 to January 2019.

● Australia have won seven, lost two and draw three in 12 Test matches played against India at Adelaide Oval.

India's victories here came in 2003-04 and 2018-19.

● Adelaide Oval is hunting ground for Indian skipper Virat Kohli, who has scored 431 runs at 71.83 in six innings of three Test matches with three hundreds at this ground.

● India are in third place in the Test Team rankings with 114 points, whilst Australia top the rankings with 116.46 points. New Zealand follow closely in second with 116.37 rating points. India will feel the pressure as the race to the World Test Championship final heats up. —*S. PERVEZ KAISER*

Less niggles, more respect, says VK I am representation of new India, says Kohli

Adelaide, Dec. 16: India captain Virat Kohli vowed a "high-voltage" Test series against fierce rivals Australia Wednesday but also predicted a more respectful era between the cricketing powers, saying grudges and tensions were "pointless".

The superstar batsman, who has a reputation as one of the sport's most aggressive players, said this week's opening Test in Adelaide would be highly competitive, but would not get personal.

"It's going to be high-voltage cricket because we have quality players on both sides and they are all hungry and eager to perform... it's definitely going to be as competitive as it has always been," he said. "There's going to be tension, there's going to be

stress, there's going to be emotions flaring every now and then, but I don't foresee anything getting personal anymore. I think all of us are getting smarter and a few more years into our careers so we want to make better choices," he added.

"I think this year has made people realise a lot of things which might not have been necessary in the past, where you hold grudges or you have unnecessary tensions between teams or individuals, which is absolutely pointless," he said.

"It could be a combination of playing a lot of IPL cricket together, Australia changing their approach to an extent and also just the way things have panned out this year," Virat further added. —*PTI*

Adelaide, Dec. 16: India captain Virat Kohli on Wednesday declared himself a "representation of new India", forever ready to take up challenges with optimism, as he responded to Greg Chappell's view that he is "the most Australian non-Australian cricketer of all time".

On the eve of the first Test against Australia, Kohli was asked about his aggressive brand of cricket coupled with a fighting attitude that the former Australia captain, who also served as India coach, found similar to the mindset of his countrymen.

"I would like to say that I have always been myself," the skipper said during a virtual media conference ahead of the



I would like to say that I have always been myself. The way my personality and character is, I am the representation of new India. For me, that's how I look at it. —**VIRAT KOHLI**
India cricket captain

opening Test against Australia here starting Thursday.

"The way my personality and character is, I am the representation of new India. For me, that's how I look at it," he asserted.

"In my mind, it's not (about) being compared to the Australian mindset as such. It's how we have started to stand up as the Indian cricket team and my personality has been

like this from day one" he added.

The new India, according to one of the country's most followed sporting icons, is the one that's not afraid to take up challenges.

"The new India takes up challenges and is filled with optimism and positivity. We make sure that we are ready for any challenges that come our way," he added. —*PTI*

Snehit, Sreeja reign supreme

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

SFR Snehit and Akula Sreeja won the men's and women's titles respectively at the 7th Telangana State District & State Table Tennis Championship held at Anandnagar Welfare and sports Association in Khairatabad, Hyderabad, on Wednesday.

It was double delight for Snehit, who had won the Youth boys championship as well, on Tuesday. Snehit, a final year journalism student of St Joseph's Degree and PG College, was the men's champion last year too.

Both Snehit and Sreeja were in terrific form. Snehit defeated Mohd Ali (LBS) 6-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-8; sailed past Swarnendu (AVSC) 11-7, 11-5, 11-8; annihilated Amaan Balgu (RSCB) 11-8, 11-3, 11-1; zapped Zubair Farooqui (LBS) 11-9, 14-11, 11-3; prevailed over Ali Mohd (AVSC) 11-4, 9-11, 11-1, 11-6; crushed Chandra Chud 11-6, 11-6, 11-3; and silenced Sashwat Samal (MLR) 11-7, 16-14, 12-10 to wrest the title.

Sreeja laid low V. Laasya (AWA) 11-8, 11-8, 11-4; beat N. Bhaavitha (GSM) 9-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-4; stunned V. Saasya (AWA) 11-6, 11-8, 11-8; made short work of M. Monica (GSM) 11-9, 9-11, 11-13, 11-9, 11-5; rapped Raaga Niveditha

Akula Sreeja (left) and SFR Snehit (right) pose with the trophies alongside their coach Somnath Ghosh on Wednesday.



(MLR) 11-9, 11-3, 11-7; and vanquished Varuni Jaiswal (GSM) 11-6, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8 on her way to the top honours.

Varuni Jaiswal (GSM), N. Bhaavitha (GSM) and Monica (GSM) finished second, third and fourth respectively among women while Amaan Balgu (RSCB), Mohammed Ali (LBS) and Chandra Chud took the second, third and fourth spots in the men's section as the tournament drew to a close.

THE RESULTS

Women

■ Sreeja Akula (RBI) bt V. Laasya (AWA) 11-8, 11-8, 11-4; N. Bhaavitha (GSM) 9-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-4; bt V. Saasya (AWA) 11-6, 11-8, 11-8; bt M. Monica (GSM) 11-9, 9-11, 11-13, 11-9, 11-5; bt Raaga Niveditha (MLR) 11-9, 11-3, 11-7; bt Varuni Jaiswal (GSM) 11-6, 11-6, 8-11, 11-8. ■ Varuni Jaiswal (GSM) bt M. Monica (GSM) 11-6, 9-11, 11-8, 9-11, 11-5; bt V. Laasya (AWA) 11-4, 11-5, 11-8; bt V. Saasya (AWA) 10-12, 11-9, 13-11, 9-11, 11-2; bt Raaga Niveditha (MLR) 9-11, 11-3, 10-12, 11-4, 12-10. ■ N. Bhaavitha (GSM) bt Raaga Niveditha (MLR) 11-13, 5-11, 11-7, 11-6, 11-5; bt M. Monica (GSM) 11-6 (12-14, 11-8, 11-7; bt Varuni

Jaiswal (GSM) 13-15, 9-11, 11-9, 11-9, 11-8. ■ Monica (GSM) bt V. Laasya (AWA) 9-11, 11-5, 7-11, 12-10, 11-4; bt V. Saasya (AWA) 11-9, 11-8, 12-10; bt Raaga Niveditha (MLR) 11-9, 17-15, 8-11, 11-8. ■ Raaga Niveditha (MLR) bt V. Laasya (AWA) 11-8, 5-11, 11-5, 11-4; bt V. Saasya (AWA) 3-11, 11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 11-4. ■ V. Saasya (AWA) bt V. Laasya (AWA) 11-8, 11-6, 8-11, 12-14, 11-7; bt N. Bhaavitha (GSM) 11-8, 11-5, 8-11, 11-9. ■ V. Laasya (AWA) bt N. Bhaavitha (GSM) 6-11, 11-6, 11-9, 13-11. ■ G. Pranitha (HVS) bt V. Saasya (AWA) 7-11, 11-8, 11-9, 12-10.

Men

■ SFR Snehit (MLR) bt Mohd Ali (LBS) 6-11, 11-7, 11-7, 11-8; bt Swarnendu (AVSC) 11-7, 11-5, 11-8; bt Amaan Balgu (RSCB) 11-8, 11-3, 11-1; bt Zubair Farooqui (LBS) 11-9, 14-11, 11-3; bt Ali Mohd (AVSC) 11-4, 9-11, 11-1, 11-6; bt Chandra Chud 11-6, 11-6, 11-3; bt Sashwat Samal (MLR) 11-7, 16-14, 12-10. ■ Amaan Balgu (RSCB) bt Sashwat Samal (MLR) 11-9, 11-7, 11-7; bt Swarnendu (AVSC) 11-6, 12-10, 11-8; bt Mohd Ali (LBS) 11-6, 13-11, 11-9; bt Chandra Chud 11-3, 11-4, 11-7; bt Zubair Farooqui (LBS) 11-9, 11-5, 6-11, 11-9. ■ Mohd Ali (LBS) bt Swarnendu (AVSC) 11-8, 11-7, 11-2; bt Sashwat Samal (MLR) 11-8, 11-7, 11-6; bt Ali Mohd (AVSC) 11-1, 11-7, 11-8; bt Chandra Chud 11-3, 8-11, 11-5, 11-7; bt Zubair Farooqui (LBS) 11-6, 3-11, 11-9, 11-5. ■ Chandra Chud bt Zubair Farooqui (LBS) 11-7, 11-7, 11-8; bt Sashwat Samal (MLR) 11-6, 11-7, 10-12, 11-8; bt Ali Mohd (AVSC) 11-9, 9-11, 4-11, 11-8, 11-5; bt Swarnendu (AVSC) 13-11, 11-4, 11-8. ■ Ali Mohd (AVSC) bt Zubair Farooqui (LBS) 11-7, 11-13, 12-10, 6-11, 12-10; bt Amaan Balgu (RSCB) 11-3, 11-7, 5-11, 6-11, 11-2; bt Sashwat Samal (MLR) 9-11, 10-12, 11-4, 14-12. ■ Zubair Farooqui (LBS) bt Swarnendu (AVSC) 11-6, 11-7, 11-7, 11-9, 11-9. ■ Sashwat Samal (MLR) bt Swarnendu (AVSC) 8-11, 11-8, 11-6, 11-8.

HCA | LEAGUE

Varun starts with a double century Aniket, Qureshi, Swachith and Owais also do well

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16



Varun Goud



Ela Qureshi

Varun Goud hogged the limelight with a double century on the opening day of the Hyderabad Cricket Association's A-1 Division three-day league matches on Wednesday.

The Deccan Chronicle batsman blasted 227 in 257 balls with the help of 22 boundaries and eight sixes to boost his side to 437 for 6 in 90 overs against EMCC. T. Ravi Teja (50) and captain C. V. Milind (72) too contributed to the mammoth total. For EMCC, Ajay Dev Goud took 4 wickets while giving away 56 runs.

G. Aniket Reddy of Evergreen, Abdul Ela Qureshi of Gemini Friends, Swachith Kumar of Zinda Tilismath and Owais Abdul Wahed of Ensconce were the other performers of the day.

Aniket took 5 for 20 with his left-arm spin as Concorde crashed to 124. Evergreen had already made 135 for 2 in reply by close of play.

Off-spinner Qureshi got 5 for 25 to bundle Cambridge XI out for 182. Gemini Friends were sitting pretty at 146 for 1 when stumps were drawn for the day.

Right arm mediumpacer Swachith snared five wickets while conceding 53 runs as Continental were all out for 237. However, Zinda had slipped to 11 for 2 by close.

In another match, Owais hit an unbeaten 104 to help Ensconce to 358/8 against MP Colts. The left-hander played 218 balls, sending 14 of them to the boundary. He was well-supported by V. Sahasra (53), Syed Mehdi Hasan (92) even as Abhinav Tej took 4/59 for the Colts.



Members of the St John's Cricket Academy pose after winning the RVM Cup LIL Masters U-14 tournament held at the Mahalakshmi Ground in Aziz Nagar.

John's Academy win cricket cup

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 16

St John's Cricket Academy won the RVM Cup LIL Masters U-14 tournament held at the Mahalakshmi Ground in Aziz Nagar. They beat Prathap Cricket Academy by 12 runs in the final.

Batting first in the final, St John's made 158/1 in 25 overs riding on good knocks by Aditya Anand (55 n.o.), Arhan Satwalekar (45) and Nishanth Reddy (41 n.o.).

In reply, Prathap CA man-

aged 147/9 despite a valiant 82 by captain Pranav. Sparsh took three wickets while conceding 31 runs while Arhan followed his batting exploits with a 2/21 to be adjudged Player of the Match.

Brief scores: St John's Cricket Academy 158/1 in 25 overs (Aditya Anand 55 n.o., Arhan Satwalekar 45, Nishanth Reddy 41 n.o., Yathendra Charyulu 1/31) Prathap Cricket Academy 147/9 in 25 overs (Pranav 82, Arhan Satwalekar 2/21, Sparsh 3/31, Nishanth Reddy 1/17).

City held; Wolves peg back Chelsea

Manchester, Dec. 16:

Manchester City's faltering Premier League title challenge suffered another setback on Tuesday as lowly West Brom held out for a 1-1 draw at the Etihad.

City could have moved to within three points of leaders Tottenham and Liverpool, who face each other on Wednesday, but threw away two points against the side sitting second bottom of the table.

Ilkay Gundogan opened the scoring for Pep Guardiola's men but Ruben Dias's own goal just before half-time proved costly.

Meanwhile, Chelsea blew a lead to lose 1-2 at Wolves. Daniel Podence produced a moment of magic as he twisted and turned inside

THE RESULTS

Manchester City (<i>Wundagon 30</i>)	1
West Bromwich Albion (<i>Dias 43-og</i>)	1
Wolverhampton (<i>Podence 66, Pedro Neto 90+5</i>)	2
Chelsea (<i>Giroud 49</i>)	1

the Chelsea box to find space for a shot and his effort deflected off Reece James and inside Edouard Mendy's near post. Neto scored deep into stoppage time as he accelerated past Koumbi and drove low into the far corner. Oliver Giroud scored for Chelsea in the 49th minute. —*AFP*



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