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Manish says the shopkeepers of Chatta Bazaar are surviving on their savings. No incentives have been given by the government and the ASI.



# Womenia



**SAKSHI AGARWAL**  
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You are more powerful  
than you know and  
they fear the day you  
discover it



## Feedback is the necessary element of successful relationship

Communication is one of the biggest issues in any relationship. And perhaps one of the most crucial aspects of communication is how to give effective feedback about something that's bothering you. Too often, we end up shouting at one other, each blaming the other for poor communication and not listening. But it doesn't have to be like that.

Feedback here is something that you say about someone else's behaviour, including both what they said and what they did. It's usually designed to lead to some change in their behaviour. For that feedback to be effective, it must be heard, absorbed and then acted upon.

There are whole courses devoted to giving feedback in the context of a management relationship, so why is it so hard in a personal relationship? The answer is that it doesn't have to be. By adopting some simple rules, you too can give effective feedback to your partner in a way that will be easy for them to hear.

### Rule No 1: It's about what you did

This is perhaps the most important rule of all in giving feedback. You need to focus on the behaviour, and not on what lies behind it. This means that you should not make any comment about their personality, for example, one that implies that your partner is or is not a particular type of person. It should only be about their behaviour.

### Consider the difference between:

"You are a selfish horrible person" and "You are behaving like a selfish horrible person".

Neither is exactly something that anyone wants to hear, nor would either be described as positive, or the recommended way to give feedback! But the first implies that there is no possible change, and you really dislike them. This is presumably not true, or



they wouldn't be your partner. You are just upset with them at the moment.

The second, on the other hand, says "I know you are a fundamentally nice person but, really, what you just did was not acceptable!" It is, therefore, much easier to hear and act upon.

### Rule No 2: It's about me, not you

You have no idea what your partner meant to achieve by what

they said or did. All you know is the effect that it had on you. Equally, unless you tell them, your partner has no idea what effect their behaviour had on you. Your feedback should therefore focus on what exactly they said or did, and what effect it had on you. You might say, for example,

"When you went out, and left me clearing up the other night, it made me feel taken for granted." "When you sent me those

flowers, it made me feel really valued."

You are not saying that your partner was right or wrong, only how it made you feel.

### Rule No 3: It's very specific

The more specific you can be about the behaviour, the easier it is for your partner to change it. Suppose you say:

"Everything you have done this week has made me feel really cross."

This makes it sound like the problem is with you, not them. Are you just having a bad week? Suppose instead

that you say:

"It makes me cross when you leave your shoes in the middle of the floor."

You might be having a bad week, a n d



NEWS ROUNDUP

## Tisca Chopra promotes her book 'What's Up With Me?'

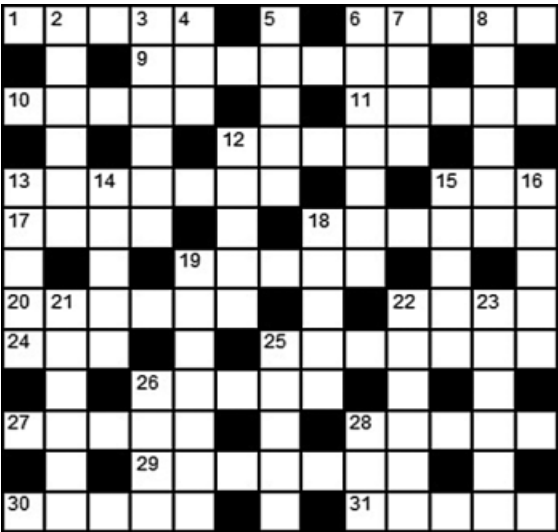
Actress Tisca Chopra took to social media on Tuesday and shared a couple of video clips promoting her book "What's Up With Me?" The book was released in March and is now available online.

In the first video Tisca is seen talking about teenage girl issues like puberty, periods and teenage emotions. In the second video she shared reactions of young readers of the book.

"It's 2021 and in some homes girls still can't enter the kitchen, some places of worship won't allow girls in and a few still believe that pickles will spoil if a girl is on her period. Don't you think it time to stop the crap?!" 'What's Up With Me' is for

girls but also for families to read together, so we can all be educated about the most normal of the female body's functions. Knowledge after all, is power," she wrote on her Instagram. Tisca, who is also a mother and filmmaker, penned down friendly, sensible and practical ideas on everything from changes in a girl's body to pimples and periods, health and hygiene to safety and self-worth, relationships and boys to emotions in the book. Dressed in an olive-green outfit, the actress said in the video, "The reason I wrote 'What's Up With Me?' is because even today when I go to a chemist shop in Mumbai, he will wrap my sanitary napkins or

Tampons in a brown paper bag or a newspaper. I am like why you are doing that are you selling me a bomb or a gun, what's so embarrassing. But that's the way we deal with periods. I can really imagine what young girls and pre-teens must be dealing with. It's a time of confusion when it comes to the right kind of bra or pimples and what kind products are available for menstruation? There is so much knowledge and information. So much has changed since we have been growing up. But, this information isn't easily available. So, I have tried to put all that information in 'What's up with me?' which is now available online."



SOLUTION TO JULY 6

### CROSSWORD

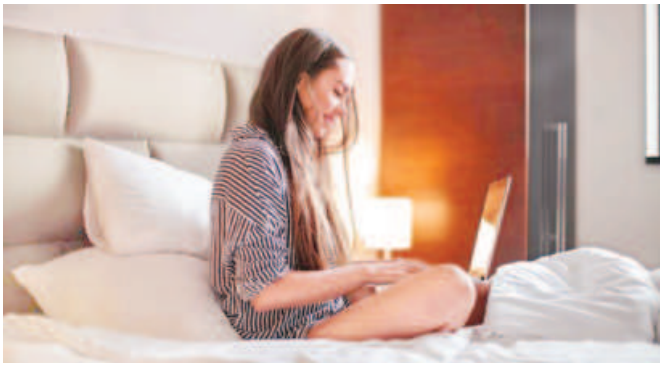
#### Across

- Scour (5)
- Funeral fires (5)
- Car of a balloon (7)
- Norwegian composer (5)
- Senior (5)
- Flower part (5)
- File of papers (7)
- To put in place (3)
- Kitty starter (4)
- Fool or deceive (6)
- Listened (5)
- Libertine (6)
- Old Gaelic (4)
- Talk at length (3)
- Ham it up (7)
- Room (5)
- Hindu sage or saint (5)
- Starbucks order (5)
- Like leftovers (7)
- Telling fibs (5)
- Lazes (5)

#### Down

- Non-metallic element (6)
- Discomfort (6)
- Purse or a satchel (3)
- More recent (5)
- Glad (7)
- Scream (4)
- Smoothed or levelled out ? (6)
- Break off (5)
- Loiter (5)
- Inventory (5)
- Collection of Hindu aphorisms (5)
- Dogma (5)
- Herd (5)
- Serving (7)
- Without difficulty (6)
- A trip to carry a message (6)
- Mowing tool (6)
- Group of eight (5)
- Avoid (4)
- Hawaiian adornment (3)

### SUDOKU



## Make the perfect online dating profile

N LOTHUNGBENI HUMTSOE

Visiting a bar, going for a picnic in a garden or drinking a coffee in a cafe are all nice ways to meet strangers in Hollywood and Bollywood movies but in real life, societal compulsions and constraints make the youth turn to dating apps, where they feel they can be themselves without being judged or elbowed.

Moreover, dating apps offer the option to display more than your face and physique. While using these apps, you can give people a glimpse into what you like, dislike, what your hobbies and passions are and probably what your personality is like- things which would elude a person in love at first sight.

Since dating app profiles go beyond just looks, it is essential that they have substance to them. Describing what kind of a person you are not just with pictures but also with your bio, by talking about your interests, etc. can give other users a more dynamic impression of you than the one based on just your appearance.

According to a survey conducted by QuackQuack, one of India's leading dating apps, users responded to questions on what makes for a perfect dating profile for them when they are liking and crushing on the app.

### What are the elements of a good bio for you

Most of the people in the age group of 18-30, 72 percent agree that an eye-catching bio is short, concise, and to the point. "Bios are supposed to be funny and attractive, not long and boring like autobiographies", said one of the QuackQuack users. With a short span of attention, the youth does not look forward to reading long paragraphs about one person when they could just simply skip their profile. For people above 30, 56 percent of the users prefer reading about the career, life achievements and goals of their matches as opposed to 44 percent of them who prefer quirky bios.

Men, 45 percent of them, agree that shorter the bio, the better in contrast to 64 percent of women who instead like longer bios. People from tier 2 cities like reading longer bios with more details to them and elements that demar-

cate them from the rest of the users whereas people from metros choose short and funny descriptions instead.

### What would you like to see in their pictures

When the question of pictures uploaded on dating apps was brought up, 67 percent of 18-30 year olds said that pictures should be a reflection of what a person does on a regular basis and how they are in real life. To put it simply, pictures of hanging out with friends, pictures of engaging in your favourite activities and sports and pictures that give a sneak peek into who you are. For 87 percent of men, full length body pictures of users without their entourage was a priority while 59 percent of women showed preference for pictures with pets. 40 percent of tier 2 city folks showed no aversion to the use of filters in the pictures uploaded by other users whereas 62 percent of metropolitan folks did.

Talking about the survey, Ravi Mittal, CEO of QuackQuack said, "Today, dating apps are the first choice of any person who wishes to make friends or look for a partner and it is imperative that the profile of users seems striking and attractive."

### What makes their profile unique for you

52 percent of people in the age group of 18-30 concur that honesty is what makes a person's profile unique and stand out from the rest. A bio that is written by a person himself is likely to get more likes than the one filled with cliches. Moreover, copied or similar bios are a huge no for the majority of young QuackQuack users. As for men, no mention of past relationships is what ticks all the right boxes for them. 59 percent of men agree that they wouldn't like a profile that talks about their ex(es). For women, humbleness was a key factor. A Mr. I. Me, Myself who is all about himself would have his profile skipped by 66 percent of women. For people in metro cities, good grammar was something that made a profile unique for 74 percent of them in contrast to 42 percent of people in tier 2 cities.

## Strawberry Sundae Day

We all love cooling down with a cold, fruity treat on a hot day and Strawberry Sundae Day honours a dessert loved by millions around the world. Created with sweet toothed people in mind, Strawberry Sundae Day is the perfect excuse to sit in the garden and cool down with a delicious delicacy.

Strawberries are loved by children and adults alike and are a refreshing, sweet fruit. Coupled with ice cream and whipped cream to form a sundae, they taste divine.

Making your own sundaes for Strawberry Sundae Day is a fun activity for the whole family to enjoy together. Older children can make them by themselves, choosing the quantities of strawberries, ice cream, cream and other ingredients as they see fit, and younger children can help make (and eat) the sundaes.





# Punjab, Haryana witness alarming dip in groundwater level

**NEW DELHI**

GROUNDWATER level in northwest India has dipped to alarming levels, especially in Punjab and Haryana, according to a new study.

The research paper published by IIT Kanpur has used more than 4,000 groundwater well data from northwest India to demonstrate that groundwater levels in the states of Punjab and Haryana have fallen to alarming levels in the last four-five decades. India is the largest user of groundwater in the world for irrigation, domestic and industrial needs.

The total annual groundwater abstraction in India is about 245 km<sup>3</sup>, out of which about 90 per cent is consumed for irrigation. Several

parts of the Ganga plains are currently suffering from similar over exploitation of groundwater and it may still be time to arrest the situation if proper strategies can be designed for groundwater management, it said.

The states of Punjab and Haryana are the worst affected region and the study led by Prof. Rajiv Sinha and his PhD student, Suneel Kumar Joshi, at IIT Kanpur shows that shallow groundwater fell from 2 metres below ground level (bgl) during 1974, to about 30 metres bgl in 2010. This translates to an average loss of groundwater of more than 50 km<sup>3</sup> (1.0 km<sup>3</sup>/yr) particularly after 2002. "The situation is equally bad for states like UP and Bihar which are agriculture domi-



nated states and where the groundwater management strategies are still quite primitive," the study said.

The study reveals that the rice cultivation area increased from 1,92,000 to 14,22,000

hectares between 1966-67 and 2017-18 for Haryana and from 2,27,000 to 30,64,000 hectares between 1960-61 and 2017-18 in Punjab. As a result, groundwater abstraction increased to fulfil the demand. Also, the most significant decline in groundwater levels is recorded along the Ghaggar-Hakra paleochannel (Kurukshetra, Patiala and Fatehabad districts), and in along the incised valley of the Yamuna River (parts of Panipat and Karnal districts).

The authors suggest that the rate of groundwater abstraction in the states of Punjab and Haryana, which make up the leading agricultural region of India, rose sharply since the mid-20th century to support a massive in-

crease in agricultural productivity, termed the "Green Revolution," which was aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in food production.

The Green Revolution has been cited as the primary cause behind the dramatic fall in groundwater levels in the region through uncontrolled pumping and groundwater abstraction by several workers before but this paper provides high resolution data on groundwater level change to validate this hypothesis. An important finding of this paper is that local geomorphology like positions of former channel paleochannels, control the groundwater availability in a major way and creates a strong spatial heterogeneity in depletion patterns over time.

## Adityanath pays floral tributes to Syama Prasad

**LUCKNOW**

UTTAR PRADESH Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday paid floral tributes to Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee on his 121st birth anniversary, saying he stood for the country's unity and integrity.

State BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh also garlanded the photograph of the Jana Sangha leader at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Civil Hospital here. Speaking on the occasion, Adityanath said, "Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee was a strong proponent of unity and integrity of India and he fought for this till his last breath. He also sacrificed his life for this cause."

Adityanath said Mookerjee was a member of the country's first cabinet and "parted ways from the cabinet and with the Congress-led government for its appeasement policies, started raising voice against those who were playing with the unity and integrity of the country". The UP chief minister said, "Today, Jammu and Kashmir is moving ahead with a new enthusiasm. This is due to the fulfilment of the dreams of Syama Prasad Mookerjee, who sacrificed his life in 1953." UP ministers Brajesh Pathak, Ashutosh Tandon, BJP MLA Suresh Tiwari, senior state party leader Govind Narayan Shukla, Lucknow Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia and others were present on this occasion, the Lucknow unit of the BJP said in a statement.

Mookerjee led a campaign



against Article 370, which gave a special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and died under detention in 1953. He was born in

Kolkata in 1901. The Jana Sangh was the progenitor of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which was founded in 1980.

## Adityanath visits Kalyan Singh at Lucknow hospital

**LUCKNOW**

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday visited Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences here to meet former state CM and Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh, who is getting treatment at the hospital.

"There is slight improvement in his sensorium today as he



opened his eyes and gave a very mild response when the CM enquired about his well-being. A

team of senior doctors is supervising his treatment. His vital parameters are under control," the hospital said in a statement here. Singh had been unwell for the past two weeks and was hospitalised on Sunday evening.

Earlier, the 89-year-old veteran BJP leader and former Rajasthan Governor was admitted to Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences.

## KHATTAR CONGRATULATES BANDARU DATTATRAYA

**CHANDIGARH**

CHIEF MINISTER Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday congratulated Bandaru Dattatraya on being appointed as the Haryana Governor, expressing faith that under his guidance the state will prosper. Dattatraya, who is at present the Himachal Pradesh Governor, has been shifted to Haryana in a latest reshuffle. Current Haryana Governor Satyadeo Narain Arya has been transferred to Tripura. In a Hindi tweet, Khattar said, "Hearty congratulations and best wishes to respected Bandaru Dattatraya ji on being appointed as the Governor of Haryana. We have firm belief that under your proper guidance, the state and people of the state will be more happy and prosperous." Among other appointments, Union Minister Thawarchand Gehlot was on Tuesday appointed as the Karnataka Governor and Mangubhai Chhaganbhai Patel was named as the Governor of Madhya Pradesh, according to a Rashtrapati Bhavan communique. The announcement comes amid reports of a Union Cabinet reshuffle. These appointments will take effect from the dates they assume charge of their offices.



## Uttarakhand Ministers given charge of different districts

**DEHRADUN**

THE 11 cabinet ministers of Uttarakhand were on Tuesday given charge of different districts to monitor their development.

Satpal Maharaj has been appointed as the minister in charge of Rudrapur and Chamoli districts, Harak Singh Rawat of Tehri, Bansidhar Bhagat of Dehradun, Yashpal Arya of Nainital, Bishan Singh Chulaf of Almora, Subodh Uniyal of

Pauri, Arvind Pandey of Chamavat and Pithoragarh, Ganesh Joshi of Uttarkashi, Dhan Singh Rawat of Haridwar, Rekha Arya of Bageswar and Yatishwaranad the minister in charge of Udham Singh Nagar. The order was issued by newly appointed Chief Secretary S S Sandhu. Pushkar Singh Dhami was sworn in as the 11th chief minister of Uttarakhand, along with an 11-member cabinet, in Dehradun on Sunday.

## Cong always at forefront of tackling challenges: Priyanka

**LUCKNOW**

CONGRESS general secretary and UP in-charge Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday asserted that the party has always taken a "leading role" in tackling the challenges posed before the country.

"The Congress has always been taking the leading role in tackling the challenges posed before the country. It very well knows how to discharge its role of sacrificing everything for the country," Vadra said while addressing a two-day training programme of party workers in Jhansi through video conferencing.

In a statement issued here by the UP Congress, she said, "Today, the situation of the country has become adverse owing to the anti-people policies of the government. Spiralling inflation, poverty, malnutrition, crime and challenges before the democratic values, Constitution and Constitutional institutions, can only be tackled by the Congress. For this, everybody has to play an active role."

Urging the Congress workers to understand the pain faced by the people, Vadra said, "The his-



tory of the Congress has been to reduce the pain of every section of the country. This is our present as well as the future. Hence, our first priority is the country and the people. Stand with them, share their pain, and work hard to help them get rid of the pain."

She also said that the BJP governments at the Centre and in UP have "committed the sin of pushing people into problems". The Congress will question the BJP government on inflation,

unemployment, increasing prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas, and also stage protests on these issues. The government jobs are falling prey to corruption and the candidates selected for jobs are moving from pillar to post to get their appointment, she said.

The Congress general secretary also said, "The BJP government has no vision. It is cheating the youth and the unemployed persons, and doing injustice. In-

stead of answering questions, it speaks lies, and avoids accountability." "Several crimes are taking place in Uttar Pradesh. The prominent agenda of the Yogi Adityanath government is exploitation of the Dalits, the deprived and the exploited (sections of the society). Silent support to the criminals is making the situation explosive. The government is as usual far from giving relief to the people," she further said.

## Rajnath flags off Covid relief materials for HP

**NEW DELHI**

ACCOMPANIED by Union Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday flagged off 900 oxygen concentrators from here for Himachal Pradesh. "The oxygen concentrators will cater to 1,400 beds in Anurag Thakur's Hamirpur Parliamentary constituency. Anurag Thakur has transformed Hamirpur into an oxygen bank," Singh said on the occasion.

"A total of 1,000 oxygen concentrators, 3 PSA plants and lakhs of Covid supplies make Hamirpur fully equipped to fight Covid-19," Thakur said. Singh further said, "I applaud Anurag Thakur for setting up an oxygen bank for Himachal Pradesh. This bank will be big enough to cater to 1,400 beds and help in our fight against Covid. He had previously sent multiple consignments, in-



cluding lakhs of Covid relief materials, and his efforts are immensely admirable. "This is a big effort put in by Anurag Thakur and I encourage him to continue his social efforts for his constituency and the state. He has taken this endeavour with the intent of 'seva' and followed the BJP's mantra of 'Seva hi Sangathan'."

Speaking during the flag off ceremony, Thakur said, "I express my gratitude to Union Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh for flagging off 900 oxygen concentrators on my request for Himachal Pradesh. Since the Covid pandemic began, I have provided over 1,000 oxygen concentrators and 3 PSA plants for Himachal Pradesh. I've also regularly strengthened the hands of the local administration by providing lakhs of masks, PPE kits, surgical gloves and other Covid resources.

"I am constantly monitoring the Covid situation in my constituency. I would also like to add that we had dispatched 17 Aspal mobile medical units carrying Covid relief materials for 12 districts in Himachal Pradesh. My endeavour has been to strengthen the relief efforts in Himachal by providing timely resources to help save lives. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, all efforts have been made to ensure that we avert the third wave and save lives."

## CASE AGAINST RSS LEADER

### BJP delegation seeks Raj Guv's intervention

**JAIPUR**

A BJP delegation on Tuesday met Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra, seeking his intervention over an FIR against a senior RSS leader in a graft case involving the alleged demand of Rs 20 crore "commission" from a firm engaged in door-to-door garbage collection here.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has booked RSS leader Nimbaram in the case, under which it had arrested suspended Jaipur Greater Municipal Corporation Mayor Somya Gurjar's husband Rajaram Gurjar and a representative of BVG company.



The case was lodged after a video clip surfaced on social media, in which Rajaram Gurjar and the company representative are allegedly seen engaged in a conversation related to the Rs 20 crore "commission" from the firm for getting its payment released from the municipal body. RSS regional pracharak Nimbaram is also seen sitting with them in the video. The BJP delegation led by Satish Poonia alleged that the case against Nimbaram was lodged to "tarnish the image of a nationalistic organisation to divert attention from real issues".

"There is no complainant and despite that a case was registered and the leader of the organisation was named in the FIR," Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore said.

They demanded from the Governor that the file of the case against the RSS leader be called, he get a legal examination done and issue instructions to the state government, Rathore told reporters at the party office. Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria, Rajasamand MP Diya Kumari, former BJP state president Arun Chaturvedi and other leaders were also present

# Promise of free power has no meaning until PPAs annulled: Sidhu

**CHANDIGARH**

CONGRESS MLA Navjot Singh Sidhu on Tuesday made a fresh demand for nullifying the power purchase agreements in Punjab through a law, saying "hollow promises" of free power have no meaning until these pacts, signed during the erstwhile SAD-BJP regime, were annulled.

In a series of tweets, the cricketer-turned-politician also said the cost of power can be cheaper if the fixed charges being given to private power plants under the PPAs (Power Purchase Agreement) were not paid.

Sidhu has been raising the issue of electricity especially the PPAs for the past few days, amid a power crisis in Punjab. "Hollow promises of Free power have No meaning until PPAs are annulled through a 'New Legislation in Punjab Vidhan Sabha' ... 300 units of free power is merely a fantasy, until the faulty clauses in PPAs are keeping Punjab bonded," said Sidhu in a tweet.

The AAP had promised up to 300 units of free electricity if it is voted to power next year. On



July 4, Sidhu had also pitched for providing up to 300 units of free electricity and round-the-clock power supply to consumers in the state. "PPAs bind Punjab to pay fixed charges for 100% production, whereas other States pay No more than 80% ... If these fixed charges being paid to Private Power Plants under PPAs were not paid, it would directly & immediately decrease cost of Power in Punjab by Rs. 1.20 per unit," claimed the Amritsar East legislator.

Questioning the clauses of the power purchase pacts, Sidhu claimed that PPAs, which were signed during the previous

regime were based on a "wrong calculation" of power demand in the state "Peak Demand of 13,000-14,000 MW is only for four Months whereas Non-Peak power demand falls down to 5000-6000 MW. But PPAs have been designed & signed to pay fixed charges at the peak demand," he claimed. He also pointed out that there was no provision for mandatory supply of electricity during the paddy transplantation. "Even more alarming! There is No Provision for mandatory supply of power from these Private Power Plants during the peak season under the PPAs... Thus, they have shut down two power plants in this



# Indian startups set for big leap

INDIAN startup ecosystem has come of age. With Indian market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) giving green signal to Zomato's big bang initial public offering (IPO), the dynamics of the startup world is going to significantly change in coming months. Zomato's much-awaited IPO is expected to open for subscription on July 19. The online food delivery company eyes raising around Rs 8,250 crore through this initial share sale. If the offer goes through, it will be one of the largest IPOs in recent years. In March 2020, SBI Cards and Payment Services raised Rs 10,355 crore through an initial share sale. Similarly, General Insurance Corporation of India raised Rs 11,176 crore through its IPO in October 2017.

However, Zomato's IPO is unique in many ways. It is one-of-its-kind when a startup firm with a unique business model will be going public. Here, the usual parameters of profit and profitability are not considered that much as compared to the scalability factor.

For instance, Zomato's net losses stood at Rs 2,451 crore in FY20, while its revenue from operations was at Rs 2,336 crore. This indicates a wave of new companies have come where the business concept is more important than the traditional parameters of margin and bottom line.

Apart from Zomato, there are many startups which are also planning to go public in coming months. One97 Communications, which owns and operates online payments firm Paytm, is planning to go public on Indian exchanges. The company, which aims to go public by November, is expected to file its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with markets regulator next week. Founded by Vijay Shekhar Sharma, Paytm is currently valued at around \$16 billion making it one of the most valued Indian startups. A whole host of Indian startups like Delhivery, and Nykaa are also heading for IPO in coming months.

Meanwhile, the market regulator Sebi's role through

easing IPO regulations has played a major role in attracting domestic startups to Indian bourses. The regulator has reduced the period of holding of 25 per cent of pre-issue capital of the issuer company by eligible investors to one year from the current requirement of two years. Sebi has allowed for startups that are headed for an IPO, to allocate up to 60 per cent of the issue size to any eligible investor with a lock-in of 30 days on such shares. Earlier, an issuer company wasn't allowed to make discretionary allotment. Sebi has also officially allowed differential voting rights for listed companies. With such rights, companies can allocate shares to promoters with higher voting rights.

Interestingly, Indian startups are slowly maturing as they acquire established firms to drive growth. Byju's acquisition of Aakash Educational Services, payment startup BharatPe bidding for PMC Bank, PharmEasy buying a majority stake in diagnostics service chain Thyrocare are examples of this maturity.

Indian startup ecosystem is at an inflection point now. From raising a record amount of funds from investors to going public to being the largest job creators in Indian economy, these young founders represent the true entrepreneurial spirit of Indian society.



## Will Afghan ancient historical sites again face Talib threats?

S RAVI

WHILE there is a widespread speculation as to what awaits Afghanistan after the departure of the US-led foreign troops in the country, historians and heritage experts globally, are keeping their fingers crossed as to the fate of cultural legacy of the embattled nation.

The concern is justified since Afghanistan's rich historical and cultural heritage dates back to several centuries. From being part of Indus Valley Civilisation to being invaded by Alexander, several empires including Greco-Bactrians, Kushans, Saffarids, Ghaznavids, Timurids, and Mughals among others have started from this region.

According to an article in National Geographic some cultural heritage experts are hopeful; others are growing anxious with the forthcoming departure of US and European forces.

The fear on the part of those who are tasked with taking care of the nation's uniquely diverse cultural heritage is not unfounded. It is still fresh in their memory, as it is of others, when the Taliban in 2001, destroyed the planet's largest statues, the Bamiyan Buddhas. They also vandalised the National Museum in Kabul and looted antiques from ancient sites. Their attitude towards the past relics, especially the pre-Islamic ones, portrayed them in a bad light at the international level.

This time, however, there appears to be a change as Taliban have given their word to respect the nation's history. In a statement they commanded their followers to "robustly protect, monitor and preserve" relics, halt illegal digs, and safeguard "all historic sites." But time will tell whether the commitment is only tactical, to reduce the resistance of the world community to their re-emergence or a genuine change of heart born out of the bitter experience of the past.

Interestingly, they have forbidden selling of artefacts in the art market. Their statement said: "No one should try to disturb such sites or think about using them for profit."

According to the NG article, the statement did not come as a surprise to Cheryl Benard of Washington-based Alliance for the Restoration of Cultural Heritage (ARCH). The write-up states that she told her group last fall that both sides need to address the issue.

Not everyone shares this optimism. Afghanistan's Institute of Archaeology's Noor Agha Noori is not convinced. He told NG: "To be honest, we are very worried about the future of cultural heritage were the Taliban to come into power," he said while informing that Islamists were indulging in looting historical sites in order to raise finances.

Speaking in the same vein, Mohammad Fahim Rahimi, Director of Kabul's National Museum observed: "Unfortunately the statement is not clear, especially concerning the pre-Islamic heritage. You know what happened to the collection during the civil war and in 2001."

The museum conservators over the years painstakingly pieced together many wooden and stone sculptures which were broken deliberately.

There are many who pin their hopes on the US brokered talks between the Taliban and the Afghan Government hoping that the region's past will be protected. Last year, the Government had said yes to discuss "ensuring the security of historical and Islamic sites" during their talks while the statement of February gives an indication on part of Taliban to do so as well.

Nasratullah Hewadwall of the Kabul branch of ARCH remarked: "It's a great and positive step." He shared that last year the Taliban had distanced itself from the destruction of Bamiyan Buddhas in 2001 while blaming it on al Qaeda.

The fear on the part of those who are tasked with taking care of the nation's uniquely diverse cultural heritage is not unfounded. It is still fresh in their memory, as it is of others, when the Taliban in 2001, destroyed the planet's largest statues, the Bamiyan Buddhas. They also vandalised the National Museum in Kabul and looted antiques from ancient sites. Their attitude towards the past relics, especially the pre-Islamic ones, portrayed them in a bad light at the international level. This time, however, there appears to be a change as Taliban have given their word to respect the nation's history

According to Hewadwall, the leadership of the group has realised the economic significance of ancient heritage and sites as tourist attractions while perceiving that destroying them damages their image.

In terms of historical significance, there is much to be lost in case Afghanistan's cultural heritage is not preserved. Being at the geographical crossroads of Central Asia, the region has attracted traders, merchants, scholars, pilgrims, and armies since the arrival of Islam in the 7th Century AD.

Also as part of the Silk Road which connected India with China and Iran, it boasts of remains of several ancient cities, monasteries, and sarais, which housed travellers.

Besides the threat of the Taliban, a greater fear which grips cultural conservators is that of chaos that will follow after the departure of American and NATO troops that has already begun.

According to Jolyon Leslie, who is working as a preservationist at an ancient Buddhist stupa

outside Kabul: "Our fears are less about a possible threat posed by the Taliban than the prospect of a breakdown in law and order."

Chaos already exists, informs Hewadwall, especially in rural areas. The twin factors of lack of security and shifting alliances, has enabled poverty-stricken villagers, gangs, different militia and Taliban to steal artefacts for smuggling them.

Many place their hopes on the Afghan officials who have so far done well to preserve the sites, museums and artefacts from decay and destruction. The article quotes NG's archaeologist Fredrik Hiebert, who talking about Afghan officials said: "They will be good caretakers. I have total confidence in them." According to him, they have braved arrest and even death in their call of duty.

It also finally boils down to normalcy returning to Afghanistan ravaged by civil war and battles for years. Murtaza Azizi, a senior Ministry official averred: "Once lasting peace comes to our country, we are eager to share this heritage with the world. We hope our tourism industry -- and with it, the economy -- will grow, not only in Balkh, but all over Afghanistan." But given the Taliban's idiosyncrasies of the past, and the strong connection of some of powerful factions, such as the Haqqani network with Pakistan's ISI, few will guarantee that the Taliban's basic DNA has changed.

# Phew, the caste conundrum!



**MOOT POINT**  
It was a pleasant surprise for my beloved journalism professor, a scholar in every sense of the word a couple of months back, as she received the list of the 10 new Vice-Chancellors appointed by the Telangana govern-

ment, albeit after an inordinate delay. Even before the news could sink in, she was flabbergasted to see that every appointee's name was followed by a mention of the individual's caste in brackets. All medias—print, electronic, online and social—unhesitatingly mentioned about the caste of the new VCs in an attempt to highlight the government's astuteness in maintaining 'social equilibrium.' While two VCs are BCs, and an equal number are from Reddy community, there are one each from SC (Mala), ST, Brahmin, Vysya, Velama and Sindhi communities they mentioned.

Should all Osmania University's faculty members, students and staff belonging to BC category celebrate the appointment of the VC of their community? Similarly, should all non-Brahmins working in Dr BR Ambedkar Open University be dismayed that their VC is from a different caste? Caste polarisation begets groupism only to further vitiate the already rancid atmosphere on university campuses as well as workplaces.

Is it absolutely necessary to indicate the caste of an official, a people's representative, or that of a candidate in the electoral fray? Is it wise to link every action or decision to caste? Does it indicate progression or regression? are the moot points.

A new Pew Research Center report (Titled: Religion in India: Tolerance and Segregation) on the religious and cultural attitudes of Indians, based on a face-to-face survey of 29,999 Indian adults conducted between late 2019 and early 2020, throws light on the religious and caste feelings prevalent in our society. The first-of-its-kind survey, conducted by local interviewers in 17 languages covering nearly all States and Union Territories, was published on June 29 amid the Covid-19 crisis.

Though the 42nd amendment to the Constitution appended 'secular' in the country's description in the Preamble way back in 1976, the Pew Center survey categorically shows the importance the society attaches to religion. A good outcome is that Indians value religious tolerance, though they also live religiously segregated lives. In contrast to a key element of the fundamental duties of the citizens ('To promote harmony and the spirit of brotherhood amongst all Indians

transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities') added to the Constitution through the same amendment, Indian caste system is here to stay.

The survey revealed that "regardless of whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist or Jain, Indians invariably get identified with their caste." A majority of Dalits in the Northeast and South say that they have been subjected to discrimination in the last 12 months because of their caste. This needs to be pondered about as this barbaric social victimisation has been reported by 38 per cent of Dalits in the Northeast and 30 per cent in the South. In North and Central India, it is 22 percent and 13 percent respectively.

An astounding 70 percent of respondents disclosed that most of their close friends share a common caste. When a group of friends flock together solely based on the caste equation and the caste is the only binding factor for a section of people, societal unity is at stake. The Pew survey examined various dimensions of caste under the title, 'Attitudes about Castes in India.'

By the way, do we really need a mega survey to understand the role of caste in our lives? Isn't it all-pervading? In fact, it runs in the veins of a vast majority. Like it or not, our folks are habituated to view everything from the caste prism. It is proved beyond doubt that people don't waste time in approaching search engines to find out the caste of an award winner (case in point, Olympic Silver medalist PV Sindhu) or a new celebrity (Say, Jaatiratnaalu-fame Naveen Polishetty).

Caste equation is a key criterion for political parties to field candidates in elections, freebies are doled out on the basis of caste, and caste-based hostels and function halls are easily identifiable landmarks in any Indian city and town. Many outlawed practices like untouchability and discrimination based on caste are very much in vogue in our villages.

More than any institute, politics should take the blame for institutionalising caste. If it is a TDP government, you find Kamma leaders getting a lion's share in key positions. A big slice of the cake goes to Reddys in the YSRCP or Congress rule. Kapu community pinned a lot of hopes on actor-politician Chiranjeevi and now they see a messiah in Pawan Kalyan. The TRS government is accused of according priority to Velamas while the BJP is considered as pro-upper caste, especially Brahmin-dominated, outfit. Having grown up with an overriding influence of socialism and communism, I am aghast at the caste politics that prevails within the two top Communist parties. There was a talk about the caste war among Maoists too.

This 'mera apna' syndrome that tortures real talent to death is wreaking



The survey revealed that "regardless of whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist or Jain, Indians invariably get identified with their caste." A majority of Dalits in the Northeast and South say that they have been subjected to discrimination in the last 12 months because of their caste. This needs to be pondered about as this barbaric social victimisation has been reported by 38 percent of Dalits in the Northeast and 30 percent in the South. In North and Central India, it is 22 percent and 13 percent respectively. An astounding 70 percent of respondents disclosed that most of their close friends share a common caste

havoc in every sector. A dominant caste had held sway over Bollywood till recently but inter-caste marriages within the fraternity has apparently brought down the talk of caste conundrum in the industry. The caste-centric honour killings rock our society with a spine-chilling regularity. The advanced technology-propelled social media platforms and personal messaging Apps are unfortunately used left, right and centre to propagate caste ideologies.

Some real-time instances forced me to believe that there are two more powerful tools than caste: sycophancy and money. Massaging ego, boot-licking in a crude sense, is the key to win the heart of a leader or boss. If you are filthy rich, a red carpet is readily laid for you.

The 3,000-year-old caste system can't be weeded out overnight. The social hierarchy passed down through generations is deep-rooted. The latest survey also indicates that achieving a caste-less society is impossible. As long as our political class is ruled by short-sighted and selfish crooks, our lives revolve around caste unwittingly.

They make every effort to stoke caste fire, covertly or overtly, and keep caste issues alive for their political and individual benefit. Making it all the more reason for us to find a civilised way to live with the ground realities. The educated citizens with democratic and secular spirit should shoulder the responsibility to find an amicable solution to this nagging issue.

First of all, a concerted collective effort is needed to remove the feeling of supremacy, the deadly trait that led Hitler to holocaust. The superiority complex led to gruesome mass murders across India and the holier-than-thou attitude of some casteist forces is still causing trauma in a large portion of our society. People from the so-called upper castes are discontinuing the tradition of proclaiming caste names by way of suffixes even as some castes are deliberately indicating their caste as part of Dalit assertion.

It is indeed a personal choice. Suppressed castes have every right to demand fair deal to make up for the exploitation. The upliftment of the marginalised sections is the national duty of every citizen to undo the yesterday's stupidities.

A modern medicine is the need of the hour for the age-old ailment. For the sake of a harmonious society and peaceful human relations, we all need to take simple steps, which I call a six-point formula.

- Realise the fact that every person has the right to life (Article 21) and every citizen is a useful human resource in this wonderful world. Make it a habit to imbibe and practice the essence of universal brotherhood. Liberty, equality and fraternity should be our guiding forces.
- Eschew religious bias and caste prejudices and avoid preconceived notions while dealing with fellow-human beings.
- Resist discussions at home and workplaces that revolve around one's religion and caste and their supremacy.
- Leave all caste-based social media platforms and personal messaging Apps to send a strong signal to your brethren that you are a world citizen.
- Discourage your family, especially the next generation, and friends from laying emphasis on religion and caste in their conversations.
- Don't be a supine spectator on the issues of caste subjugation. We need to act now for an equitable, happy society. (The author, a PhD in Communication and Journalism, is a senior journalist, journalism educator and communication consultant)

has waived 25 per cent with the promises to do the same in the subsequent years till the entire one lakh is completed but the govt has not done any after the first 25 per cent. From then on, the remaining amount is on the name of individual farmer and the banks have no information.

Hence the banks have calculated the interest on the balance amount kept on the name of the farmers. Now the accumulated amount is a heavy burden to the farmers. The farmer is being forced to pay much more than he has taken. Thus KCR farm loan scheme (2018) has made all farmers poorer by the Banks demanding to pay along with interest. This is highly disappointing and sad on the part of the Govt and KCR loan farm scheme. This aspect has to be noticed by all the elite and learned people.

V Vijayakumar, Warangal

### Mithali's magic moments

VETERAN captain and batter Mithali Raj on Saturday became the first Indian woman cricketer and second internationally to complete 10,000 runs across all formats. The 38-year-old Mithali surpassed former England skipper Charlotte Edwards' tally of 10,273 runs. Mithali now has 10,337 runs in her kitty. No other batswoman has more than 6,000 runs in women's ODIs.

She lived with criticism all her marathon with sagalike cool. These qualities have remained the foundation of the Indian Captain's great stature in international women's cricket tournaments. She added certain dimensions to her batting to enable her to reach the milestone of 10,000 runs which is quite remarkable. Well played Mithali. Congratulations on reaching the milestone. You deserve a place among the legends.

K S Rao, Thane

## LETTERS

### Sad farewell to Stan Swamy

THE arrest, imprisonment, denial bail, denial of a sipper for days on end and death were not just Stan Swamy's story; they, more significantly, demonstrated what 'the powerful' can do to 'the powerless'. Those who are imbued with a desire for justice and work to advance the cause of justice may look weak in worldly terms, but they are morally strong. Stan Swamy has said while undergoing extreme suffering that 'a caged bird too can sing'. Those who die for a cause never die; they are immortal. Father Stan Swamy was a martyr to the cause of human rights; he has become an inspiration for all those who cherish and champion human rights.

G David Milton, Kanyakumari Dt

### II

IT'S sad that the 84-year-old Father Stan Swamy, an activist of tribal rights and accused in Bhima Koregaon conspiracy case died in a hospital, while his application for interim bail is yet to be considered by the court. The irony is that the fighter for rights of under trials has to die as under trial. He could have got his bail in time as he was not able to flee the country or influence the case. His case should draw attention of the society and justice delivery apparatus on the plight of countless under trials, who are languishing in jails for longer times.

D V G Sankararao, Nellimarla

thehansreader@gmail.com

### III

IT is matter of national shame that an octogenarian Jesuit priest and lifelong tribal activist Fr. Stan Swamy has been jailed on false charges, denied basic human rights, bail, and eventually led to cruel death in custody. (Nothing less than murder, 6 July). Evidently, the deaf government and the blind judiciary are directly responsible for tragic death of Father Stan Swamy in custody. The nation and the world has lost a great patriot cum warrior for the human rights of the oppressed poor tribals. Hope his martyrdom will open the eyes of the Goddess of Justice.

P H Hema Sagar, Secunderabad

### IV

THE death of tribal rights activist, Stan Swamy, who was imprisoned in a Mumbai jail under UAPA without any clinching evidence can be described, to say the least, as "murder by the State." The Government was waiting for an opportune time and he was, like many other activists, implicated in the Bhima-Koregaon caste violence case. Though suffering from many age-related health problems, the Jesuit pastor never lost his vigour for fighting for the underprivileged. Stan Swamy died of a massive heart attack, but one is tempted to see only a thin line of difference between his demise and the violent doing away of Gauri Lankesh some years ago.

Matam Somasekhar Prasad, Hyderabad

### Farm loan travails in TS

THE farm loan facility given by TRS in 2018 and its waiver is yet to be implemented even after three long years causing hardships to all the farmers who have availed this scheme. In the initial years the govt



BID TO WOO BACCHUS' LOVERS

# Liquor to flow free in TS!

PATAN AFZAL BABU  
HYDERABAD

LIQUOR lovers in Telangana will soon have a free bash. Liquor will be served free of cost to the consumers for one day in a week in the licensed bars. In a bid to revive torpid liquor trade in bars and restaurants, which were worst hit by the first and second waves of corona pandemic, for the past two years, the State government has proposed to encourage bars to serve free liquor and also offer big discounts in the week-ends.

Bar managements would be given freedom to serve liquor free either beer, whisky, vodka, gin, etc, in a specific quantum to woo the customers to come to the liquor lounge, sit and have a sip of their favorite drink. The customers who visit bars will also be offered big discounts on liquor after having the free drink. 'Buy one and get one' on beer and

Govt advises bars to offer freebies in a big way

whisky and free chicken snacks are some of the offers to be extended to the customers.

Special discounts on liquor parties organized on the eve of birthdays and friends and family gatherings will also be introduced in bars to improve liquor trade from this month, a senior official of the Excise and Prohibition department told The Hans India that at a high level meeting held by top officials with some bar managements discussed the challenges being faced by the trade to improve liquor sales. "The authorities instructed the managements to launch the free drink scheme to encourage consumers to visit the bars first. Once they start coming, liquor business would grow, and the revenue generated from bars will improve. Both the government and the bar managements would

be freed from the financial constraints once liquor sales picked up in the bars," the official said, adding that the bar managements were ready to offer free drink depending on their financial viability. Some are ready to give big discounts on selected liquor brands and some keen to introduce free snacks on buying liquor worth more than Rs 300. As many as 1,100 bars and restaurants have been permitted to serve liquor with variety foods and snacks in the state. After imposing the lockdown - 2 in May this year, all the bars shut their businesses.

Though the state was unlocked recently, many of the bars remain closed due to poor response from the customers. The State was incurring a loss of nearly Rs 500 crore revenue from the closure of bars every month. Last year,

the government waived six months' licence fee for all bars due to the lockdown between March and June. This time, the government is not ready to write off the fee.

Officials predicted free liquor offer would also attract the consumers from the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh where liquor prices are high. As there is no need of e-pass to enter Telangana, the visit of liquor consumers from AP to the bars at the border districts of Telangana would also go up.

Bar Association leader Pavan Goud said that the government was giving free hand to the bars to revive liquor sales and the managements are also making all efforts to provide a healthy atmosphere in bars where the visi-

## DELHI BARS OPEN TILL 3 AM

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has finally made its new excise policy public, permitting hotels, clubs and restaurants in the national capital to serve Indian or foreign liquor in any area within the licensed premises, including the terrace, balcony or lower area till 3 am.



tors should feel comfortable amid the fear of the third wave of corona. All Covid safety protocols would be enforced and the bar workers will also be vaccinated before the opening of bars in a full capacity with big discounts soon.

## Hari Babu appointed Mizoram Governor

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AMARAVATI: Former MP Prof Kambhampati Hari Babu was appointed Governor of Mizoram by President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday. He succeeds P S Sreedharan Pillai, who is transferred and appointed Governor of Goa.

The reshuffle and new appointments to the Raj Bhavans come amid the imminent Union Cabinet Reshuffle ahead of the Assembly elections to some key States like UP, Punjab, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand next year.

Hari Babu was a former State Executive member of the BJP and the party's general secretary too. Hari Babu was born in Prakasam district in 1953 and completed his B.Tech in Electronics and Communi-

cation Engineering from Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. He went on to complete his Ph.D later and worked as a Professor in the same university. But his passion for politics made him quit the academic world and take a plunge into electoral politics. He was elected to the united Andhra Pradesh Assembly from Visakhapatnam-1 constituency in 1999 and was made the floor leader of the party in the state Assembly in 2003.

He worked as a member of the task force on interlinking of rivers of the Union Water Resources Ministry and was a member of the national disciplinary committee of the BJP. In the 2014 general election, Hari Babu defeated YSRCP's Y S Vijayamma, wife of former Chief Minister, late Y S Rajasekhara Reddy.



## Govt may put GO No 64 on hold

- The order transfers several powers of DMHOs to joint collectors
- Doctors' associations are up in arms against the GO saying that only those having knowledge of Medical and Health Department can take suitable decisions
- Sources say the govt is likely to elicit opinions of doctors' associations before either keeping the order in abeyance or making amendments

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

THE state government is likely to keep the controversial GO No 64 in abeyance following the protests by Government Doctors Association (GDA) and Indian Medical Association, it is learnt.

The doctors have even boy-



cotted the International Doctors' Day celebrations and sent a memorandum to the Chief Minister's peshi and submitted petitions to health minister demanding that the government to withdraw the GO immediately.

The government issued GO No 64 transferring some powers

of the district medical and health officials to the joint collectors sparking protests from doctors.

The doctors' associations have threatened to launch agitation against the GO which they say, is against their interests as service and other matters can only be decided by department

officials who have knowledge of health and medical issues, not the IAS officials.

It is reliably learnt that the government will take suggestions and advice of the Government Doctors Association and IMA either to withdraw the orders or to amend the directives.

The AP Government Employees Association (APGEF) and AP Non-Gazetted officers' Association (APNGOs) have extended their support to the Government Doctors Association in opposing the order.

According to the sources, the government invited the GDA leaders for talks and later cancelled the meeting due to unknown reasons. The GDA is expressing confidence that the government will withdraw the GO.

The GO reduced the powers of the district medical and health officers and transferred to the joint collectors. The DMHOs don't have either an association or union. Against this backdrop, the GDA and IMA took up protests on behalf of DMHOs.

all tribal families. The ongoing employment generation programmes of both the State and the Central governments could provide adequate livelihood to tribals, she opined.

## Vaccinate all tribals: Guv to TS govt

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
SAIFABAD

GOVERNOR Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan on Tuesday advised the State government to draw an action plan for

ensuring 100 per cent vaccination of tribals living in secluded and other remote areas in the State in a time-bound manner. She stressed the need for 100 per cent vaccination of tribals who live

in remote areas. "There is an urgent need to cover all tribals well before the onset of widely predicted third wave," she said. Dr Tamilisai also advised the government to provide adequate livelihood to

## KTR blasts Centre for non-cooperation on skyways

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
BALANAGAR

MUNICIPAL Administration and Urban Development Minister KT Rama Rao on Tuesday alleged that the Central government was not cooperating with the State on construction of skyways in different parts of the City by denying to give defence lands from Patny to Suchitra junction and Jubilee bus station to the Outer Ring Road (ORR), Turkapally. Rao said that if the Centre doesn't come forward, the State government will take up the skyway work at Suchitra Junction with its own funds and also the expansion of roads at Bachupally and Quthbullapur. A worker, Shivamma of Wanaparthy, inaugurated a six-lane flyover at the busy Balanagar Crossroads in the presence of KTR. Speaking on the occasion, he said the junction was famous as Narasapur Crossroads, which gets a relief



from the present traffic snarls. The HMDA built the flyover by spending Rs 385 crore in 1.13 km stretch, 26 pillars and 24 metre width, KTR said. The flyover gives a joy ride with lighting effects, and green cover, he hoped.

Balanagar Crossroads is one of the busy areas with more traffic woes in the City. The bridge gets a reprieve, he felt. "It is to address such issues that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao is developing infrastructure under the Strategic

Road Development Plan (SRDP). On August 21, 2017, KTR had laid the foundation for the flyover under SRDP. It has been completed after three years.

He announced the new flyover is being named after former Deputy Prime Minister Babu Jagjivan Ram. KTR paid floral tributes to the leader. Ministers T Srinivas Yadav, Ch Malla Reddy, MLAs Madhavaram Krishna Rao, Vivekananda, Mayor Vijayalaxmi and officials were present.

## KCR No 1 Drohi of Telangana: Bandi

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

BHARATIYA Janata Party State chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar mounted a vitriolic attack on Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao and called him "No 1 Drohi (traitor)" for selling Telangana share of river waters to Andhra Pradesh which would spell doom to southern Telangana.

Addressing the media here on Tuesday, Bandi said that Telangana Chief Minister and the then Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu have signed an agreement in the first Apex Committee meeting, where KCR had agreed for 512 tmc ft Krishna water to Andhra Pradesh and 299 tmc ft to Telangana.

He asked K Chandrashekar Rao to rub his nose to the ground if he had agreed to 299 tmc ft Krishna water to Telangana. "In case my charges are wrong, then I will not hesitate to jump into Srisailem dam and end my life," Bandi said.

The BJP leader accused the chief ministers of AP and Telangana enacting dramas to hoodwink people in the name of river water sharing for political gains. Rolling out details in support of his stance, the BJP State chief said that both the States have met thrice during 2014-15, and the Telangana had agreed for 299 tmc ft as its share and signed on the same before the Centre.

Further, he accused the TRS chief and YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy of entering into a secret pact on water-



BJP State president and Karimnagar MP Bandi Sanjay Kumar addressing the media at the party office in Hyderabad on Tuesday

sharing and the construction of illegal projects in Andhra Pradesh.

Both the chief ministers have been amassing thousands of crores of public money in the name of construction of projects. The Karimnagar MP questioned whether it was not a fact that CM KCR had given his word to extend cooperation for the expansion of Pothireddypadu and the construction of Sangameswaram projects in AP?

He said K Chandrashekar Rao compromised with YS Jagan Mohan Reddy agreeing to Krishna waters sharing between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the ratio of 34: 66, respectively.

Further, the Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has convened the Apex Committee meetings

twice to do justice for both the Telugu states. However, CM KCR made them postpone.

Even when he attended the Apex Committee meeting on October 6, 2020, the Chief Minister remained silent on the illegal construction of projects by AP, Bandi pointed out.

Filing petitions in National Green Tribunal, delaying tactics in withdrawing the petition filed in the Apex court was a political drama to influence people of Telangana ahead of Huzurabad bypoll.

The BJP State chief also questioned the deployment of police forces at Srisailem, Jurala and Nagarjunasagar irrigation projects. Police deployment at a time when people of both the Telugu states were living peacefully were meant to stir passions by making the po-

lice of both States fight for political agenda of TRS ahead of Huzurabad bypoll.

Responding after meeting the leaders of BJP SC Morcha national secretary S Kumar and BJYM state leader Kalyana Naik, he demanded Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao to deliver on his promise of promotions and other issues regarding the empowerment of Dalits in the State.

In a letter to KCR, he highlighted how the SC and ST employees in the State secretariat waiting for their promotions for the last seven years. Raising objection for not implementing the Supreme Court's judgment of December 11, 2018, Bandi also demanded implementation of rule of reservation and fill the SC, ST backlog vacancies.



## Two term exams for Class 10 and 12

## Principals, experts hail CBSE's plan for 2021-22 exams

NEW DELHI

THE plan by the CBSE to split the class 10 and 12 board exams into two terms has been hailed by school principals and education experts who believe the decision taken in view of the COVID-19 pandemic may become the foundation of similar examination reforms in the future.

Bifurcating the academic session, holding two term-end exams and rationalising the syllabus are part of the special assessment scheme for class 10 and 12 board examinations in 2021-22 announced by the CBSE. "Critics may argue about the lack of seriousness students display in internal tests and assignments or how reflective are internal assessments of a student's capability?"

However, given the circumstances, this is the best option and will go a long way in ensuring that students

study throughout the year. If this formula is a success, the board could implement it when life returns to normal," said Madhav Deo Saraswat, Principal, The Scindia School.

Sangeeta Hajela, Principal, DPS Indrapuram said this is going to be a first ever "flexible" management of board exams which will usher a new era of examination reforms in the country.

"A well-thought-out move, it has provided for the unpredictability of the 'waves' and the last minute cancellation of examinations, changes and hurried decision-making. It is a complete plan, mapping what would be done in various situations arising out of conditions prevalent at that time, hitherto unforeseen," she said. "The plan will surely encourage children to study throughout the year and not leave serious study for the final examina-



tions. The digital profile maintenance of each child, though challenging at the grass root level, is also a more holistic tool of evaluation. This first ever flexible management of examinations is surely a welcome move amongst the academic community. We are optimistic this will usher in a new era of examination-reforms in our country and open another door for all times to come," she said.

Pallavi Upadhyaya, Principal, DPS RNE Ghaziabad believes the new assessment policy has addressed all permutations and combinations of situations and has shown the schools the best way to conduct the assessments in a fair manner whatever the prevailing conditions be. She, however, is apprehensive about the competency based question papers and said the rationalised syllabus should be shared immediately so that teachers do not

waste their time teaching deleted portions.

"The conduct of two board exams with 50 percent of the reduced syllabus is quite brilliant and will definitely ensure a more reliable result. This being said, what concerns me most is the so-called competency based question paper. The competency based questions we have come across in some subjects had questions that had parallels drawn to it. Most of these questions are confusing even for children studying in urban areas and one can imagine how a child from a rural area would fare. "Their answers would be based on pure guess work. So what competency is being tested here? I feel that pandemic is not the time to conduct such experiments on them. Many of these students are traumatised due to the death of their close relatives and also due to their own weak constitution.

## WINDOWS

## ED summons Mehbooba Mufti's mom on July 14

SRINAGAR: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday summoned Gulshan Nazir, the mother of former J&K Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti, for a personal appearance in Srinagar on July 14. Confirming the news, Mehbooba Mufti said that the Enforcement Directorate has summoned her mother Gulshan Nazir to appear in person in Srinagar on July 14, and linked it to PDP's decision not to meet with the Delimitation Commission. "On the day the PDP chose not to meet the Delimitation Commission, the ED sent a summons to my mother to appear in person for unknown charges."

"In its attempts to intimidate political opponents, the government of India doesn't even spare senior citizens. Agencies like NIA and ED are now its tools to settle scores," Mehbooba said in a tweet

## 28 dead in Russian plane crash

MOSCOW: There are no survivors after a plane carrying 28 people crashed in the far east of Russia on Tuesday, news agencies cited rescue officials as saying. The Antonov An-26 twin-engined turboprop was en route from the regional capital Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky to Palana, a village in the north of the Kamchatka peninsula, when it lost contact with air traffic control, the emergencies ministry said. Citing sources, Interfax reported that the plane was thought to have crashed into a cliff as it was preparing to land in poor visibility conditions. Russia's civil aviation authority confirmed that the plane's crash site had been found after the emergencies ministry dispatched a helicopter and had deployed teams on the ground to look for the missing aircraft.

Stan's death devastating: UN Oppn leaders write to Prez for his intervention  
An 'institutional murder', says family, friends

UNITED NATIONS/LONDON

TOP UN and EU human rights officials have termed the death of Jesuit priest and activist Stan Swamy as "devastating", saying the 84-year-old defender of indigenous peoples' rights in India was imprisoned on "false charges of terrorism".

"The news from India is devastating. Human Rights Defender and Jesuit priest Fr. Stan Swamy has died in custody, nine months after his arrest on false charges of terrorism. Jailing Human Rights Defenders is inexcusable," said Mary Lawlor, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

She had earlier expressed concern about the deteriorating health condition of Swamy and sought possible specialist treatment for him. She had described the charges against him as "unfounded." European Union Special Representative for Human Rights Eamon Gilmore echoed similar sentiment in a tweet in which he tagged Lawlor's tweet. "India: I am very saddened to hear that Fr #Stan-Swamy has passed away. A defender of indigenous peoples' rights. He was held in detention for the past 9 months. The EU had been raising his case repeatedly with authorities," Gilmore tweeted.

Leaders of 10 Opposition parties on Tuesday wrote to President Ram Nath Kovind seeking his intervention in holding accountable those responsible for "foisting false cases" on tribal rights activist Father Stan Swamy, his continued detention in jail and "inhuman treatment" allegedly meted out to him. The letter comes a day after Father Stan Swamy died at a Mumbai hospital during treatment. The signatories include Congress president Sonia Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin. Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren (JMM), former Prime Minister and JDS leader HD Deve Gowda and NC leader Farooq Abdullah, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, D Raja (CPI) and Sitaram Yechury (CPI-M) have also signed the letter. "We the undersigned leaders of major opposition parties are writing to you in deep anguish expressing our intense grief



**"Father Stan did not deserve to die in this manner, far from his beloved Jharkhand, falsely imprisoned by a vindictive State"**

and outrage at the death of Father Stan Swamy under custody," they said in their letter to the president.

"We are urging your immediate intervention as the President of India to direct your government to act against those responsible for foisting false cases on him, his continued detention in jail and inhuman treatment," they said.

Terming activist Stan Swamy's death an

"institutional murder", the family members and friends of the other accused arrested in the Elgar Parishad case said on Tuesday that they held the "negligent jails, indifferent courts and malicious investigating agencies" responsible for it.

In a statement, they said it was "unconscionable" that someone as old as Swamy and who was suffering poor health was put in jail amid a pandemic. They also said that they feared for the lives of their family members and colleagues in jails who were facing "similar injustices" in jails.

Swamy was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) from Ranchi in October 2020 under the stringent Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) in connection with the Elgar Parishad case and lodged at the Talaja Central Jail in Navi Mumbai.

"We, the friends and family members of those accused in the Bhima Koregaon conspiracy case, are deeply pained and shaken to the core by the loss of Father Stan Swamy. This is not a natural death but the institutional murder of a gentle soul committed by an inhuman state," the statement said.

"Having spent his life amongst the 'Adivasis' in Jharkhand, fighting for their right to resources and lands, Father Stan did not deserve to die in this manner, far from his beloved Jharkhand, falsely imprisoned by a vindictive state," it said.

"Even his Covid disease was not diagnosed in jail and could only be detected after he was moved to the hospital on orders of the (Bombay) high court," it added. Swamy was the last of the 16 people to be arrested in the Bhima Koregaon case.

Suffering from Parkinson's disease, he was the oldest and the frailest among those arrested, the statement said. "While we grieve at the passing away of Father Stan Swamy, we unequivocally hold the negligent jails, the indifferent courts and the malicious investigating agencies firmly responsible for his unfortunate death. We fear for the health and lives of our family members and colleagues, who are facing similar injustices in the same jails, under the same unaccountable system," it added.

## 70-yr-old woman 'regains' eyesight after Covishield jab

IN what appears to be a scene straight out of a Bollywood movie, a 70-year-old woman from Maharashtra has claimed that she partially regained her lost eyesight after taking the Covishield jab. Even as vaccine hesitancy persists in the country, a large portion of the population has already taken the jab against Covid-19 and in the process, some bizarre instances such as this have shown up from time to time.

The woman in question, Mathurabai Bidve from Maharashtra's Washim district, lost her eyesight to cataract nine years ago. The disease caused her iris to turn white, and she lost sight in both eyes. However, the very next day after she took the first dose of Covishield on June 26, she claimed that she got back thirty to forty percent of her sight in one eye, Zee News reported.

Bidve, a native of Partur in Jalna district, lives with her relatives in Risod tehsil, the daily reported. Her claims regarding gaining her eyesight back after the Covishield dosage or any vaccine out there for that matter have no scientific backing.

Earlier, in June, an elderly man from Maharashtra had made a bizarre claim, saying he developed magnetic powers after taking both doses of Covishield. Arvind Sonar, 71, made a video demonstrating this, which went viral on social media.

A similar incident was reported from Surat, where two family members, residing in Shubhashnagar Society in the Parbat Patiya area have allegedly become magnetic. Poonam Jagtap, whose mother and son have reportedly shown magnetic characteristics, initially didn't believe in such occurrence. However, following her family members' magnetic states, she too has been left confused. Every member of the Jagtap family, except for the child, has been vaccinated. A video later claimed that magnetism was added to the vaccine in order to make the messenger RNA move throughout the body. The Press Information Bureau's (PIB) fact-checking arm, PIB Fact Check said these claims about Covid-19 vaccines were "baseless".



## Twitter will be in trouble if it fails to comply with India rules: HC

NEW DELHI

IN a major setback for Twitter in India, the Delhi High Court on Tuesday pulled up the micro-blogging site for failing to appoint resident grievance officer (RGO), saying, "How long will your process take place? This cannot be allowed", even as the court free pass to the central government to act against the social media firm.

A bench of Justice Rekha Palli told Twitter's counsel, "Come up with a clear response, otherwise you will be in trouble", and sought information on Twitter's compliance with other provisions of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021) by the next date of hearing.

The high court told central government counsel: "We are not stopping you from taking action, court has not granted any protection to Twitter. If they are in violation, you know what to do."

The Centre submitted that Twitter India is in clear violation of IT Rules, 2021.

The Centre had informed the Delhi High Court that Twitter has failed to comply with the IT Rules, 2021 as on July 1, on four counts:

Chief compliance officer not being appointed; The position of the resident grievance officer being vacant; The position of the nodal contact person (even on an interim basis) being vacant; and The physical contact address, which was shown to be there on May 29, was not available on Twitter's website.

The central government counsel submitted before the court that Twitter was given three-month

window to comply with IT Rules, but they did not.

The counsel added that they are most welcome to do business in India, but they have to comply.

The bench said, "I am not giving them any protection. I have already made it clear that they have to comply."

Senior Advocate Sajjan Poovayya, representing Twitter India, submitted that an interim grievance officer was appointed, but he had withdrawn

his candidature on June 21. The bench responded that after June 21, and till July 6, the least it could have done was appoint another person.

"How long does your process take? If Twitter thinks it can take as long it wants in our country, I will not allow that," said the bench.

Poovayya sought time to seek instructions on the new appointment, which was allowed by the court, and it passed over the matter. Later, Poovayya submitted that he needs more time to obtain detailed instructions from San Francisco-based Twitter.

The bench observed that these rules are binding but Twitter has not appointed anyone till now. The court posted the matter for further hearing on Thursday, and asked Twitter to inform by when it will appoint an RGO and other officials.

On May 31, the Delhi High Court had issued a notice to the microblogging platform on a plea by advocate Amit Acharya. The plea had urged the high court to issue directions to the Centre to pass necessary instructions to Twitter India and Twitter Inc to appoint a resident grievance officer under Rule 4 of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 without any delay.

## 'Ready to appear before UP Police if guaranteed I won't be arrested'

BENGALURU: Twitter India Managing Director Manish Maheshwari on Tuesday told the Karnataka High Court that he is ready to appear before the Uttar Pradesh Police in-person if it guarantees that it won't arrest him.



The high court was hearing a plea filed by Manish Maheshwari against the notice issue to him by the UP Police over tweets posted after video of an elderly Muslim man being assaulted in Loni, Ghaziabad went viral on Twitter.

Earlier, a single-member bench of Justice G Narender had passed an interim order restraining the Uttar Pradesh Police from taking coercive action against Manish Maheshwari. The UP Police then challenged the interim order in the Supreme Court.

"If the court records the submission of the respondent (UP Police) that they are not going to lay their hand upon me, then I am willing to appear before the police personally, provided they give an undertaking," Manish Maheshwari's told the court through his counsel CV Nagesh.

## 80% new cases reported from 90 districts; Maha, TN on top

NEW DELHI

ALMOST 80% of the new cases in India are being reported from 90 districts, with Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu topping the chart.

As many as 15 districts from both the states are contributing to the country's coronavirus caseload, said the government at a press briefing on Tuesday.

Total lockdown was declared in 7 districts namely Goalpara, Golaghat, Jorhat, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Biswanath & Morigaon from July 7 till further notice. Round-the-clock curfew; commercial setups, restaurants, shops will remain shut. A ban will be imposed on public & private transport while Inter-state movement will be suspended. India reports 34,703 new cases in the last 24 hours; the lowest in 111 days. Active cases decline to 4,64,357 while the recovery rate rises to 97.17%.

The second wave is still existent in a limited way, in some areas, said Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Health Ministry on Tuesday. He added that gross violations of COVID Appropriate behavior can nullify the gains made in tackling the second wave. Seventy-three districts in India are reporting more than 10% positivity for the week, June 29 to July 5, he warned.

Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar met Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan here on Tuesday and demanded that the central government supply more COVID-19 vaccine doses to the state. Karnataka has administered nearly 2.4 crore doses of vaccine so far, which is the highest among all south Indian states, the minister said in the meeting. Sudhakar is on a two-day visit to the na-

tional capital.

Tamil Nadu has reported 3,300 black fungus cases and 122 related deaths so far, state minister for Medical and Family Welfare Ma Subramanian said on Tuesday.

## Lowest daily deaths in 3 months

New Delhi: With 553 fresh fatalities, India recorded the lowest daily death toll in around 90 days while 34,703 new cases of coronavirus were reported, the lowest in 111 days, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday. With the fresh cases, the total tally of COVID-19 cases climbed to 3,06,19,932, while the death toll climbed to 4,03,281. The active cases further declined to 4,64,357, the lowest in 101 days, and comprise 1.52 per cent of the total infections.



## Pfizer yet to apply for license

Indian drug regulator DCGI has urged Pfizer twice in writing to apply for emergency use authorization for its COVID vaccine so that application is processed well in time but Pfizer has not applied for the license yet, says ANI. A month after the US announced it was donating 80 million anti-covid19 vaccines, countries such as Bangladesh, Taiwan and Pakistan have got consignments of US made vaccines, but India is yet to get its doses from the US. The Centre did not give a clear indication of how many vaccines India would get, or the timeline of their arrival in the country.



## TODAY'S QUOTE

### Rolls-Royce developing fastest all-electric plane

ROLLS-ROYCE and Jaguar are UK pioneers who are focused on advancing electrical technology for their respective sectors. We are delighted that Jaguar Land Rover are loaning us I-PACE vehicles as we bid to develop the world's fastest all-electric plane


— Rob Watson, Director, Rolls-Royce Electrical



## CYBER THREATS

### Airtel launches 'Secure Internet' for users

AIRTEL Xstream Fiber has launched 'Secure Internet' for its customers, a tool offering real-time protection against malware to all connected devices, amid a surge in cyber threats. As customers in India spend more time online for Work from Home, e-commerce, and entertainment, they are becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyber threats the company said

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	75.33	South	
Euro	89.36	African Rand	5.54
UAE Dirham	20.64	Hong Kong Dollar	10.06
Thai Baht	2.43	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.45	New Zealand Dollar	53.36
Australian Dollar	57.07	Saudi Riyal	21.81
Canadian Dollar	61.08	Swedish Krona	9.23
Swiss Franc	81.7	Singapore Dollar	56.35

DELHI WEDNESDAY 7 JULY 2021

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Amazon's initiative

Amazon has announced the launch of two all-women delivery stations in Kerala. These stations are situated in the towns of Aranmula and Kodungallur and operated by Delivery Service Partners (DSPs) who will provide job opportunities to more than 50 women in the region. The launch of this initiative complements Amazon India's efforts to increase the opportunities for women in the logistics sector whilst strengthening its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) commitment. Prakash Rochlani, Director, Last Mile Operations, Amazon India, said: "At Amazon India, we are committed to providing women with equal access to work, growth opportunities and resources that enable them to expand their horizons. The launch of these two all-women delivery stations in Kerala is an extension of our continuous efforts to provide women with safe and fulfilling opportunities."

### Haier unveils new products

Haier has unveiled 17 new variants of top-mounted refrigerators in the three-star range. The new products come with the convertible feature that allows temperature to be controlled between a wide range of +7°C to -24°C and helps in converting the refrigerator into more than 10 different modes, to cater to the distinctive storage requirements of different food items. The range is powered by company's advanced triple inverter technology that allows more energy savings and reduces noise along with protection from voltage fluctuation. Eric Braganza, president, Haier Appliances India, said: "Different food items require different storage temperatures to maintain their original flavor, texture and nutrients. Keeping this in mind, we have launched new variants of big top mounted refrigerators that will enable our customers to choose from various modes."

### Vivo fastest 5G brand

Vivo has said that it emerged as the second-fastest growing 5G smartphone brand globally in Q1 2021, jumping 62 per cent quarter-on-quarter to 19 million units shipped, while its 5G smartphone strongholds are China and Europe, according to a new research from Strategy Analytics. As a fervent advocate of 5G development, the company has made remarkable progress in 5G standards and core technologies, committed to providing users with a growing range of 5G mobile phones and an improved experience. The company has said that it continues to be a strong advocate of 5G development and the brand has made 5G standards and core technologies. It stressed that it is committed to providing users with a growing range of 5G mobile phones.

### Karix offers new solution

Karix Mobile, a subsidiary of Tanla Platforms Limited, has announced the deployment of a conversational solution for Panasonic India Limited using the WhatsApp Business solution platform. The solution will facilitate one-to-one conversations between Panasonic's customers and the brand. Building strong, personalized connections with its end-users helping them connect with the brand is one of the primary objectives of this solution. However, the other service channels, specifically SMS and email, will remain available and active. Jia Lal Koundal, Group Head- Trade Marketing, Panasonic India, said: "Through WhatsApp Business, we are offering an enhanced customer experience as customers can now scan a QR code and immediately start exploring multiple features on the go."

# GST mop-up slips below ₹1 lakh cr on 2<sup>nd</sup> wave

Indirect tax collections decline to ₹92,849 cr in June, a 10-mth low; Uptick in e-Way bills holds recovery mode

NEW DELHI

GST collection slipped below Rs 1 lakh crore in June for the first time in eight months as the second wave of the Covid pandemic and the resultant lockdowns hit businesses and the economy. At Rs 92,849 crore, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection is the lowest in 10 months since August 2020, when it was Rs 86,449 crore, official numbers released Tuesday showed.

The GST collections in June 2021 are primarily for supplies made in May - a month when most States were under different levels of lockdown, reducing business activity. With significant relaxations in lockdown and business supplies picking up, the collections should see a definite uptick in the coming months, experts said. The gross GST revenue collected in the month of June 2021 is Rs 92,849 crore, of which Central GST is Rs 16,424 crore, State GST is Rs 20,397, Integrated GST is Rs 49,079 crore (including Rs 25,762 crore collected on import of goods) and Cess is Rs 6,949 crore (including Rs 809 crore collected on import of goods), the finance ministry said.

The mop-up in June 2021 is 2 per cent higher than Rs 90,917 crore collected in June 2020. GST collection had remained above the Rs 1 lakh crore mark for eight months in a row and was Rs 1.02 lakh crore in May. However, the

## COVID 2.0 CARNAGE

● Lockdowns, alarming number of Covid cases took a toll on business, industry

● GST collections remained above ₹1-lakh cr mark for 8 months in a row till May

● e-Way bill generation in June 2021 gone up to 5.5 crore, indicating recovery of trade and business, up from 3.99 crore in May, but less than 5.88 cr in Apr



₹1.02L cr GST revenue in May  
● However, it's better than Covid impact in 2020

2% higher than ₹90,917 cr collected in June 2020

● GST collections in Q1/FY22 nearly twice as high as Q1/FY21



collection in June 2021 dropped below Rs 1 lakh crore.

"The GST collection for June 2021 is related to the business transactions made during May 2021. During May 2021, most of the states/UTs were under either complete or partial lockdown due to Covid," the ministry added. It said that e-Way bill generation data for the month of June suggests that

uptick in revenue is expected in the coming months. The e-way bills generated during June 2021 has gone up to 5.5 crore, indicating recovery of trade and business, up from 3.99 crore in May. As many as 5.88 crore e-way bill were generated in April.

"With reduction in caseload and easing of lockdowns, it is expected that while the GST revenues have

dipped during the month of June, the revenues will see an increase again from July 2021 onwards," the ministry added. ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said despite declining to a 10-month low, the June 2021 GST collections provided a positive surprise. "Overall, the GST collections in Q1 FY2022 are nearly twice as high as Q1 FY2021, highlighting the narrower impact of the State-wise restrictions necessitated by the second wave of Covid-19 in India, as compared to the stringent nationwide lockdown last year. This will buffer the revenue situation of the Centre and the States, which should support a ramping up of expenditure going ahead," Nayar added.

Deloitte India Senior Director MS Mani said while the collections are lower than Rs 1 lakh crore which had become the norm for the past few months, considering the fact that it relates to transactions in May 2021 which was badly impacted by the pandemic, it would be considered as a very satisfactory collection." EY Tax Partner Abhishek Jain said the collections are for the supplies made in the month of May, where several parts of the country were under the lockdown, so this dip is on the expected lines. With significant relaxations in lockdown and business supplies picking up, the collections should see a definite uptick in the coming months."

## Hyd warehousing activity falls 30% in FY2021

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD recorded warehousing transaction activity of 2.4 mn sq ft in FY2021, a 30 per cent YoY decline, according to the report titled 'India Warehousing Market Report 2021' by Knight Frank India, an International Property Consultant. This fall in warehousing absorption in the city is largely attributable to the pandemic-induced economic slowdown.

The e-commerce sector was the primary driver of warehousing demand in Hyderabad in FY2021 with a 54 per cent share in the total transactions pie. 3PL players accounted for 24 per cent of the FY2021 transactions followed by the FMCG sector with a 20 per cent share.

In terms of geography, with a 51 per cent share in the FY2021



total transactions pie, the Shamshabad cluster has seen a significant spike in activity compared to its 5 per cent share last year. Two transactions by Amazon totalling 0.1 mn sq ft (1.1 mn sq ft) i.e. 46 per cent of the total FY2021 transaction activity is the reason for this huge jump in this cluster's demand share. The more popular Medchal cluster accounted for 48 per cent of the FY 2021 warehousing demand, a fall from its share of 87 per cent last year. The fall is a result of the skew caused by the two Amazon transactions in the Shamshabad cluster.

## INDIA'S LARGEST DEBUT

### Paytm set for \$2.2-bn IPO launch

SARITHA RAI

INDIA's Paytm will seek shareholders' approval next week for an initial public offering (IPO) with a fundraising target of over Rs16,000 rupees (\$2.2 billion), according to people familiar with the plan, setting in motion the process for the India's largest ever debut.

If green-lit during a shareholder meeting slated for July 12, the digital payments startup will have the option of raising that target to as much as roughly \$2.6 billion, per regulatory guidelines. The board has decided to start smaller and could increase the size depending on investor momentum, the people said, asking not to be named as the deliberations are not public. Formally known as One97 Communications Pvt Ltd, Paytm is backed by SoftBank Group Corp, Berkshire Hathaway Inc. and Ant Group Co. (Bloomberg)

## Mkt snaps 2-day winning run

MUMBAI

MARKET benchmarks closed modestly lower on Tuesday after two days of gains, weighed by profit booking in Reliance Industries (RIL), IT and auto stocks amid lack of fresh buying triggers.

A depreciating rupee and lacklustre global cues further weighed on sentiment, traders said. After a positive opening, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained momentum through the session, but succumbed to a lag-end selloff to end at 52,861.18, down 18.82 points or 0.04 per cent. On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty fell 16.10 points or 0.1 per cent to 15,818.25 points.

"Indian market was led by financial stocks. Business updates of major banks and NBFCs for the quarter of June which showed improvement in business activity, minimising concerns over second wave

Key indices in red on profit booking; Lacklustre trading amid weakening rupee, lack of fresh triggers

impact. But profit-booking breached the overall market by the end of the day. Globally, oil prices surged after OPEC called off talks to boost production despite rising global demand," said Vinod Nair, head (research) at Geojit Financial Services.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital market on Monday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 338.43 crore, as per exchange data.

Tech Mahindra was the top loser among the Sensex constituents, shedding 2.30 per cent, followed by TCS,



Maruti, Reliance Industries, Sun Pharma, Infosys and M&M. On the other hand, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Kotak Bank and IndusInd Bank were among the gainers, spurring up to 3.22 per cent. In the Sensex pack, 11 stocks advanced, while 19 closed in the red. Meanwhile, GST tax collections slipped below Rs 1 lakh crore in June for the first time in eight months as the second wave of coronavirus lockdowns hit businesses. At Rs 92,849 crore, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections were the lowest in 10 months since August 2020, official numbers released on Tuesday showed. Sectorally, BSE auto, IT, tech, energy and industrials tumbled up to 1.85 per cent, while bankex, finance and power led the gainers' list.

## COVID 3RD WAVE FEARS LURKING

# Hyd IT cos still undecided on ending WFH mode

DINESH MACHARLA HYDERABAD

THE work from home or for that matter work from anywhere mode has become the new normal for employees per se and more so for IT employees, thanks to the prolonged spells of the Covid pandemic. However, most of the employees are not sure till when they have the flexibility to work in this mode instead of going to office in person.

Many IT companies are mass vaccinating their employees to make sure they are protected against Covid and at the same time they are preparing the employees to come back to office the situation becomes normal or at least the pandemic impact is less severe. As of now, most employees working with MNCs have received their first dose of vaccination; some have completed their second dose as well.

However, with the onset of new Covid variants and then the stalking fear of the third wave, the com-

## Work from anywhere is the new normal, thanks to pandemic



panies are uncertain about the situation and waiting for the pandemic impact to soften. As of now, only critical staffs are allowed to office, even they are made sure to have shift rotations with all the Covid protocols in place.

"The work from home mode will continue further, whether the Covid is going to be intense or not. I expect that companies will not allow work from office mode for the next 6 to 12 months. Everyone should be vaccinated, or the herd immunity should be achieved. Until then we need to

take precautions and continue to work from home." MR Manohar Reddy, Hyderabad chapter president, The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE), Founder and CEO, Feuji, told Bizz Buzz.

Though the large companies have made their employees to work from home, the small companies and startups are finding it a challenge, due to limited resources and technologies, to follow the work from anywhere mode of operating and hence are making it compulsory for their employees to work from office.

There are a few companies which have asked their employees to return to office after the Covid first wave and the government eased lockdown curbs at end of the last year. At that time many companies planned to reopen offices with full strength but with the second wave striking and further lockdowns announced, these companies had to postpone their plans for a long time.

"Though most of the companies are continuing WFH mode for now, many companies can't afford that luxury barring large companies in long run," Manohar Reddy said. Most of the software employees are fine with the WFH culture as they do not need to travel to office when everything can be done from home. However, a few want to return to office as they are missing their friends, colleagues and the networking and several other activities associated with the physical office location. "We see early indications for

The work from home mode of working will continue further, whether the Covid is going to be intense or not. I expect the companies will not allow office work for the next 6 to 12 months, that is, when everyone is vaccinated or the mass immunity is supposedly achieved

— MR Manohar Reddy, Hyderabad chapter president, The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE), Founder and CEO, Feuji

some offices to reopen with reduced staff strength from October or November, but to work with full strength, I suspect that it would probably be towards first quarter of next year or more likely mid of the next year," said Viveck Varma, Founder, UpSurge Enterprise Solutions.

## IIFL Home Finance to raise ₹1,000 cr via bonds

MUMBAI

RETAIL focussed housing finance company IIFL Home Finance will raise up to Rs 1,000 crore by issuing non-convertible debentures (NCDs).

The tranche-1 issue includes a base issue size of Rs100 crore and a Greenshoe option of Rs 900 crore aggregating up to Rs1,000 crore. The issue will open for subscription on July 6, 2021, and close on July 28, 2021, with an option of early closure or extension. The NCD has a tenor of 87 months and offers various options for subscription with coupon rates ranging from 9.60 per cent to 10 per cent per annum. The fund will be utilised for onward lending, financing, and for repayment/prepayment of interest and principal of existing borrowings of the company and the balance will be used for general corporate purposes. "Last year, our asset under management grew by 12 per cent. We have seen a good recovery in June," the company's Executive Director and CEO Monu Ratna said.



# 7 England squad members test Covid+, entire team in isolation

LONDON

TWO days before their opening day-night One-day International against Pakistan on Thursday, England cricket was thrown into a tizzy after seven members -- three players and four management team members - tested positive for Covid-19.

"Following PCR tests administered yesterday [Monday] in Bristol, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) can confirm that seven members -- three players and four management team members-- of the England Men's ODI party have tested positive for Covid-19. The remaining members of the party have been deemed close contacts and will also isolate," the ECB said in a statement on Tuesday.

The development means that the ECB will have to select a new squad for the Pakistan series, which will go ahead as scheduled.

"The ECB have confirmed the Royal London ODIs and the Vitality IT20s against Pakistan will go ahead. Ben Stokes will return to England duties and captain the squad -- which will be named in the next few hours," the ECB said.



"In collaboration with Public Health England, Public Health Wales, and Bristol Local Health Authority, those impacted will now observe a period of self-isolation from July 4 following the UK Government's protocol on quarantine."

The ECB said that incoming squad and support team members would follow PCR tests and bridging protocols to ensure safe entry to camp.

"We have been mindful that the emergence of the Delta variant, along with our move away from the stringent enforcement of bio secure environments, could increase the chances of an outbreak. We made a strategic choice to try to adapt protocols, in order to support the overall wellbeing of our players and management staff who have spent much of the last 14 months living in very restricted condi-

tions," ECB CEO Tom Harrison said. "Overnight we have worked swiftly to identify a new squad, and we are grateful to Ben Stokes who will return to England duties to captain. We also recognise the impact this news will have on our first-class counties and their men's playing squads and thank them, along with our partners Sky and Royal London, for their ongoing support in dealing with this pandemic," he said. (IANS)

## New venues for 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup in India named

NEW DELHI

THE Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and the AFC Women's Asian Cup India 2022 Local Organising Committee (LOC) on Tuesday confirmed two new venues and host cities for the premier continental competition.

The new venues are the Mumbai Football Arena, Andheri Sports Complex in Mumbai and the Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Balewadi, Pune. The DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai will remain as the third venue for the tournament, scheduled to take place from January 20 to February 6. The tournament had earlier been awarded to Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, and Navi Mumbai. But due to the travel involved and with the Covid-19 pandemic still raging, the venues have been changed and the matches will now be played at venues in close proximity.

"As the situation evolved, we had to adapt and the need was to create a bio-secure bubble. Hence, we chose Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Pune, venues in close geographical proximity with stadiums that have previously hosted major football competitions," said Praful Patel, president of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and chairman of the LOC in a statement.

"Japan, Australia, China and hosts India have already sealed their places in the finals and the race to join the quartet will take centre stage from September when 28 teams across eight groups begin their quest to clinch the eight remaining places in the newly-expanded continental women's showpiece," said the statement. (IANS)

## Mithali's 3 successive 50s take her to No.1 spot in ICC rankings

DUBAI

MITHALI Raj's three successive half-centuries in the three-match ODI series against England helped her grab the No.1 position in ICC Women's ODI Player Rankings for the eighth time in her 22-year-old international career.

The 38-year-old, who made 72 in the first ODI, struck 59 in the second match and then guided India to a four-wicket victory in the final match of the series with an unbeaten 75, gaining four spots to sit atop the latest weekly rankings.

Mithali had started the tour in eighth position but her series aggregate of 206 runs - the best by a batter on either side -- has helped her reclaim the top position, which she last occupied



in February 2018.

"The first time she reached No. 1 position was in April 2005 after scoring an unbeaten 91 against New Zealand in ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in Potchefstroom and the difference of more than 16 years at No.1 is the largest for any woman batter," said the International Cricket Council (ICC) in its statement.

In other gains for Indian

women players, opener Shafali Verma's scores of 44 and 19 in the last two ODIs of the series saw her gain 49 places to reach 71st position while Jhulan Goswami is up four places to 53rd. In the bowlers' list, all-rounder Deepti Sharma is up one place to 12th after finishing with figures of three for 47 in the final match.

For England, opener Lauren Winfield-Hill has advanced 14 places to 41st position with scores of 42 and 36 while Sophia Dunkley has soared 80 places to 76th after scoring 73 not out and 28.

Left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone continues her ascent, gaining four places to reach a career-best sixth position among bowlers after returns of three for 33 and two for 36.

## COPA AMERICA

# Paqueta sends Brazil into final

RIO DE JANEIRO

A first-half strike from Lyon midfielder Lucas Paqueta fired Brazil to a 1-0 win over Peru as the Copa America hosts booked a place in the final at the Maracana Stadium.

Just as he did in Brazil's 1-0 defeat of Chile in the quarterfinal, Paqueta showed predatory instincts by combining with Neymar to deadly effect on Monday. The latter skipped around two defenders before squaring the ball for the former Flamengo playmaker, who coolly sent a first-time shot past Peru goalkeeper Pedro Gallese, reports Xinhua.

"Paqueta is a great player and improving with every game for the national team," Neymar said after the match. "He had a great season for his club and now he's showing that he can be important for Brazil too."

Peru enjoyed brief periods of dominance in the second half but were unable to break down a Brazil backline that has conceded just twice in six games this tournament.



The result at Rio's Olympic stadium means Brazil will meet either Argentina or Colombia -- who will clash in the other semifinal -- in the decider at Brazilian football's spiritual home on July 10.

Brazil are now unbeaten in their past 13 outings and will be favourites to lift their second Copa America trophy on home soil in three years.

Neymar made no attempt to hide a desire to face Argentina in the final, citing friendships with several Albiceleste players, including Lionel Messi and Angel Di Maria. "I want to play against

Argentina because some of us are good friends but I want Brazil to win, of course," Neymar said.

Brazil midfielder Casemiro said a gruelling schedule was beginning to take its toll on the Selecao, who have played eight matches -- including two World Cup qualifiers -- in the past month.

"We know that as footballers we are privileged but I haven't seen my family in around 35 days," the Real Madrid player said. "We are now playing with our hearts and we're going to give our all to get one more win." (IANS)

## Messi 'one step ahead of all of us'

BRASILIA

ARGENTINA midfielder Rodrigo De Paul has hailed Lionel Messi's genius as the Albiceleste seek their first major trophy in almost three decades at the Copa America in Brazil.

Messi has been the tournament's outstanding player, scoring four goals and providing four assists in Argentina's march to the semifinals. Victory against Colombia at Brasilia's Mane Garrincha stadium would set up a tantalising final against hosts Brazil at the Maracana Stadium on July 10, reports Xinhua.

"(He is) one step ahead of all of us," De Paul told a virtual news conference on Monday. "For the first goal

against Ecuador (in July 3 quarterfinal), for example,

he saw me alone and luckily, it helped us to win."

Argentina's last major tournament triumph came at the 1993 Copa America in Ecuador, where Gabriel Batistuta fired them to a 2-1 win over Mexico in the final.

Argentina have come agonisingly close to ending the drought in the past decade, finishing runners up at the 2014 World Cup and the 2015 and 2016 editions of the Copa America.



COLOMBO

ALL-ROUNDER Hardik Pandya is bowling in the nets in Sri Lanka although the decision to make him bowl in the upcoming limited-overs series will be taken by him and the Indian team management, ahead of the first ODI on July 13, said batsman Suryakumar Yadav on Tuesday. "He has been

bowling at the nets and he also bowled in the intra-squad match [on Monday]. But it is his and team management's call how they want to go about it. But yes, he is bowling and it is a very good sign," Yadav told media during a virtual interaction.

"Pandya bowled in the England series. During Indian Premier League (IPL), he didn't bowl because it was the team management and Hardik's call," added Yadav.

Even though Pandya didn't bowl for Mumbai Indians during IPL, he rolled his arm over in the limited-overs games for India against England in March this year. He bowled 17 overs in the five T20 Inter-



### Pandya bowled in intra-squad game, final call yet to be made

nationals, picking three wickets and conceding runs at 6.94 an over which was the second best on either side after Bhuvneshwar Kumar.

Pandya also bowled in the third and final ODI against England and was quite economical, conceding runs at 5.33 in nine overs.

"I started bowling in the IPL and my focus is on the World Cup. I want to make sure that I will be able to bowl in all the games at the T20 World Cup. I am just trying to be smart and make sure that I don't miss that. On the bowling front, what matters is how fit I am," Pandya had recently told Times of India SportsCast.

## Assam spinner, who once bowled to Ganguly, now sells tea for survival

SILCHAR (ASSAM)

LEFT-ARM spinner Prakash Bhagat, who was once called to bowl to the Indian team at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru because his action resembled that of New Zealand cricketer Daniel Vettori, is today living a hand-to-mouth existence, selling tea and fast food here. In 2003, Bhagat received a call from the NCA asking him to report immediately in Bengaluru where Sourav Ganguly and his team were preparing for the New Zealand tour. Ganguly wanted a left-arm spinner whose action resembled that of Vettori to bowl to his teammates.

"I will never forget my experience of bowling to Sourav Ganguly. He was eager to face the challenges I'd put forward with my bowling. He gave me many tips also," Bhagat, 34, told barakbulletin.com



Bhagat's NCA invitation was after he had made an impact in the under-17 Vijay Merchant Trophy. Playing for Assam against Bihar, he picked up seven wickets, including a hat-trick.

Bhagat continued representing Assam in almost all age-group tournaments. He finally went on to play Ranji Trophy for two seasons -- 2009-10 and 2010-11 -- besides being picked in the squad for the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

When his father died in 2011, the family's responsibility came on him and his elder brother, who ran a tea shop in Silchar. But as the Covid pandemic raged that source of income too dried up as people started avoiding street food.

"What do I say? The fact is that we have always been living hand to mouth but now it has gone even worse. Whatever we earn from the stall is hardly enough to even manage two meals a day," says Bhagat. "My teammates from the state with whom I shared the dressing room have all got government jobs and are well-settled while we struggle every day." (IANS)

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