



# THE HANS INDIA

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Eco-friendly Ganesha contest gets all India response: **Results on Page 3**

## 'Mission Karmayogi' for major reforms in bureaucracy

**New Delhi (PTI):** The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved 'Mission Karmayogi', dubbed as the biggest bureaucratic reform initiative, aimed at capacity building of government employees to make them more "creative, proactive, professional and technology-enabled". The core guiding principles of the competency-driven programme will be to support a transition from "rules based to roles based" HR management to prepare the Indian civil servant for the future, according to a government statement. "This is the biggest human resource development programme in the government," Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said. To cover around 46 lakh central employees, a sum of Rs 510.86 crore will be spent over five years under Mission Karmayogi or the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building. A Council, comprising select union ministers, chief ministers, eminent public HR practitioners among others and headed by the prime minister, will serve as the apex body for providing strategic direction, while a Capacity Building Commission is also proposed to be set up.

## Fiscal deficit may rise over 8% of GDP

**New Delhi:** With economic disruptions set for a long haul due to Covid-19 pandemic, India could see its fiscal deficit this year to balloon to over 8 per cent of GDP, brokerages analysing the deficit numbers post release of August GST collection data have said. The Controller-General of Accounts on Monday said that country's fiscal deficit has expanded to 103.1 per cent of Budget Estimate in the April-July period primarily due to lower tax collection and higher expenditure for Covid-19 relief. According to a report on Indian economy by Kotak Institutional Equities, low economic activity and lower tax collections coupled with expanded Covid-19 related expenditure have created a scenario where the deficit would widen. ► **P6**



## GAME OVER

## India bans PUBG, 117 more Chinese apps

**New Delhi (IANS):** In yet another surgical strike on Chinese apps, the Indian government on Wednesday banned 118 apps, including the immensely popular PlayerUnknown's Battle-grounds (PUBG) Mobile, Baidu and several VPNs that allowed access to TikTok that was earlier banned. The action came after the fresh Chinese incursion at-

tempts in Indian territory at Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh. The PUBG game now has more than 600 million active players globally, not including the Chinese mainland where a re-branded version of the game is called 'Game for Peace'. PUBG has millions of users, especially young, in India. The ban on PUBG

came as it announced the arrival of a new gaming era with its 1.0 version, along with global mobile esports tournament PUBG Mobile Global Championship (PMGC) with a grand prize pool of \$2 million (about Rs 15 crore). Earlier, the government barred 47 Chinese apps from operating in the country, which were largely clones of the previously 59

apps banned in June. On June 29, the government banned 59 Chinese apps including TikTok, WeChat and UC Browser and Xiaomi's MI Community over national security concerns amid the border tussle in Ladakh which led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers in the Galwan Valley clash with Chinese PLA troops.

**Continued on Page 5**



## Rising Godavari creates panic among villagers

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Khammam:** People living along the banks of the Godavari river are worrying with rising of flood water and urging the administration to take steps to shift them to safer places. It is the third time that the Godavari river is rising with heavy inflows from the catchment areas. Water reached its first warning level of 43 feet and now it is at 41.54 feet at Bhadrachalam.

According to officials, the floods will increase further with heavy inflows from catchment areas and it will cross the first level warning by Thursday morning. In August, the water level has reached 64.6 feet crossing the third danger level of 53 feet. For the second time also, the water level crossed the second danger level of 48 feet. During the first and second time, the officials have shifted over 5,000 families to the shelters and crops in 50,000 acres damaged. Farmers and residents on both shores of Godavari river say that they will lose everything once again. District Collector MV Reddy alerted the mandal and village level sectorial officials for taking up rescue operations. Already the officials have shifted essential commodities to all mandal and remote areas and also kept launches for rescue operations. Police and revenue officials closed the bathing ghats as water is submerging the ghats. The District Collector said it is very unfortunate that Godavari is rising for the third time. "We are taking all precautions and steps. Fishing has been stopped," he added.

## No Question Hour or Zero Hour in TS Assembly this session?

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** The Telangana government is gearing up to hold the Assembly session from September 7 with a new set of business rules. Thanks to corona pandemic, the important Question Hour, Zero Hour and short debates on various local issues are unlikely to be taken up during the session.

Some relaxations to the legislators suffering from long-term health ailments and prone to corona infection from attending the session and special medical facility to those with multiple co-morbidity who want to attend the session are also being under consideration. The health profile of the legislators will also be compiled to provide safety arrangements in the Assembly.

Officials of the Assembly and Council said that this time the objective of the session is to discuss the development schemes launched by the government and adoption of a few bills, including the new Revenue Act and some legislations with regard to Greater Hyderabad.

The government is not keen to hold day-long sessions. Debates on selected subjects will not be long ones as in the past. These issues will be discussed at a meeting jointly convened by Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy and Council Chairman G Sukhendar Reddy on Friday.

The timings of the Assembly session will also be altered. In the past, the session used to begin at 10 am and the Council at 11 am. Now they may meet at 11 am and end by 1 pm.

Sources said that the major concern is the monitoring of the health condition of the legislators who are above 60 years during their presence in the House. The Assembly Secretariat is compiling the health profile of all MLAs and MLCs. Based on the report, safety arrangements would be made for the members.

**Continued on Page 5**

## No Question Hour, curtailed Zero Hour

### It is an attempt to stifle democracy, says Congress

**New Delhi (PTD):** There will be no Question Hour, a curtailed Zero Hour and no private members' bills during the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament, the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats have decided, prompting opposition leaders to accuse the government of trying to "murder the democracy" in the name of the COVID-19 pandemic and of reducing "Parliament to a notice board".

In separate notifications, the two secretariats also said there will be no breaks as well during the session to be held from September 14 to October 1, and both Houses will function on Saturdays and Sundays as well. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the session will be held in two shifts -- 9 AM to 1 PM and 3 PM to 7 PM. Except for the first day, the Rajya



Questioning the government is the oxygen of parliamentary democracy. This Govt seeks to reduce Parliament to a rubber-stamp for whatever it wants to pass

**Congress leader Shashi Tharoor**

Sabha will sit in the morning shift and the Lok Sabha will sit in the evening, according to the notifications.

"There will be no Question Hour during the Session. In view of the request of the government owing to

the prevailing extraordinary situation due to COVID-19, the Speaker has directed that no day be fixed for the transaction of Private Members' Business during the Session," the Lok Sabha Secretariat said in a notification.

A similar notification was issued by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat as well. On the move to dispense with the Question Hour, Trinamool Congress MP and Floor Leader in Rajya Sabha Derek O'Brien said opposition MPs will lose the right to question the government and alleged that the pandemic was being used as an "excuse to murder democracy."

In the past, he said, the Question Hour was dispensed with during sessions of Parliament called for special purposes but the upcoming monsoon session is a "regular session". According to sources, the government has reached out to the Opposition, sharing its compulsions to not hold the Question Hour in wake of the pandemic.

Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh has called up several opposition leaders, including Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, Chowdhury, Biju Janata Dal's Pinaki Misra and O'Brien.

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor tweeted that he had said four months ago that "strongmen leaders would use the excuse of the pandemic to stifle democracy and dissent. The notification for the delayed Parliament session blandly announces there will be no Question Hour. How can this be justified in the name of keeping us safe? Questioning the government is the oxygen of parliamentary democracy. This Govt seeks to reduce Parliament to a notice-board and uses its crushing majority as a rubber-stamp for whatever it wants to pass. **Continued on Page 5**



Metro trains parked at Khyber Pass Metro Depot, in New Delhi on Wednesday. Metro services will be resumed from Sept 7 with certain restrictions

## Healthier options make their way to kitchens

RANI DEVALLA

**Visakhapatnam:** Ever since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, there is a huge shift in the food consumption patterns of people across the world.

With 'immunity' being the buzzword in the present pandemic situation, it did contour our eating

habits to a large extent.

For the health-conscious, the focus is now more on enhancing the body's natural defence system. This has led to an extensive research on the available spices and essentials in the kitchen shelf.

As a majority of people are under constant fear of being attacked by the novel

coronavirus, they are now opting for healthier replacements that add value to their daily diet.

This has resulted in not only bringing home a bunch of supplies that enhance the immunity but also incorporating them liberally in the day-to-day cooking. For instance, the use of tamarind has been

reduced and replaced with other ingredients. Those who could not stop themselves from consuming red meat are now confining themselves to eggs and plant-based food. Black pepper has taken a prominent place in the kitchen shelves instead of red chilli powder.

**Continued on Page 5**

## Railway sleuths bust ticketing racket powered by Pak tech

**Bengaluru (IANS):** Railway Protection Force (RPF) sleuths from the South Western Railway (SWR) zone have busted a complex web of illegal operators and hackers who used Pakistani software to compromise the IRCTC Tatkal system to stealthily book reserved tickets, bypassing the Indian Railways as well as the banks OTP safeguards, an official said on Tuesday.

"In September last year, intelligence agencies alerted on the use of illegal software for bypassing the IRCTC and bank security systems deployed in booking Tatkal tickets throughout India," said a railway zone official.

Following multiple raids after the alert, RPF officials arrested a person who provided a lead about the mastermind behind the illegal software used for booking the tickets in stealth, to charge oblivious customers up to five times the price of a normal railway ticket.

Incidentally, the ar-

rested person had fled Bengaluru in October 2019 and was on the run since then, whose whereabouts have been traced to Kendrapara in Odisha. "In January 2020, his whereabouts were tracked to Kendrapara in Odisha where he was arrested and brought to Bengaluru for further investigation by Bengaluru RPF team," the official said.

To the railway police officials' shock, the arrested person's investigation revealed that he was using Pakistani software of high-level hacking calibre, employing Linux-based systems to break into the applications of ISRO, Railways and other government organisations.

He was found to be using 3,000 bank accounts, Bitcoin and crypto currency links. "He was further interrogated and the entire black market of 25,000 hackers and touts with a high command in India and abroad were detected," said the official.

**Continued on Page 5**

## Drill in Srisailem power plant triggers panic

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** There was another 'fire' in the Srisailem Hydel Power Project in Nagar Kurnool district on Wednesday. This is the 'second fire' in the last 12 days. People are running out from the power unit in panic. Loud sounds of blasts are being heard at the project site. All media channels gave breaking news and aired a video showing workers running out of the power house. This triggered concern and panic among the people. But finally it turned out to be much ado about nothing. TS Genco Chairman and Managing Director D Prabhakar Rao said it was nothing but part of the mock drill. He said the power house which had witnessed a major fire in which nine people lost their lives was undergoing repairs. When the fire broke out in the power plant on August 20, the fire alarm did not work. Hence, the officials said as part of the repair works they wanted to ensure that all precautionary measures were in place. They said no damage to the property took place in the mock drill. Rao said that the restoration works were in full swing and efforts were on to restore power supply at the earliest and make it absolutely safe.

## China eyes Pak, Lanka, Myanmar for military logistics

**Washington (PTI):** China is seeking to set up more robust logistics in about a dozen countries, including three in India's neighbourhood, to allow its army to project and sustain its power at greater distances, a Pentagon report has said.

In addition to the three Indian neighbours -- Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar -- the other countries where China is considering to base its military logistics and infrastructure are Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia,

United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola, and Tajikistan, the report said on Tuesday.

In its annual report "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China (PRC) 2020" that was submitted to the US Congress on Tuesday, the Pentagon said these potential Chinese military logistics facilities are in addition to the Chinese military base in Djibouti, which is aimed at supporting naval, air and ground

## India, China talks remain inconclusive

**New Delhi:** Military talks between India and China on Wednesday remained inconclusive over Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops' fresh incursion attempts into India territory. The dialogue between both countries' militaries will continue, sources said. Both the countries were engaged in talks for the last three days after China made provocative military movements in an attempt to change the status quo at Pangong Tso (lake) in eastern Ladakh. The agenda of the deliberation was the fresh developments at three contentious areas at the south bank of Pangong lake. India has raised concerns about increased Chinese deployment in areas near Black Top and Helmet Top. India also asked China to completely withdraw its troop deployment close to Thakung base in Indian territory.

forces projection. "A global PLA (Peoples Liberation Army) military logistics network could both interfere with US military

operations and support offensive operations against the United States as the PRC's global military objectives evolve,"

the Pentagon said in the report. China has probably already made overtures to Namibia, Vanuatu, and the Solomon

Islands, it said, adding the known focus areas of PLA planning are along the Seal Lines of Communication from China to the Strait of Hormuz, Africa, and the Pacific Islands.

Similarly, the Pentagon said, Beijing uses One Belt One Road (OBOR) to support its strategy of national rejuvenation by seeking to expand global transportation and trade linkages to support its development and deepen its economic integration with nations along its periphery and beyond.



# Womenia

TWEET PATROL


**RAKUL SINGH  
@RAKUL PREET**

Happy birthdayyyy to the one and only  
@Pawankalyan Garu wishing the  
PokerStars the most powerful year. Have  
a fantastic day



**Dr Meghana Reddy, Senior Consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Columbia Asia Hospital, Whitefield, Bangalore shares how one can deal with miscarriage at home**

TEJAL SINHA

After testing positive for pregnancy, coping up with the sad news of miscarriage can be quite difficult for a parent to absorb the fact. Even though it's been just a few weeks or months, parents tend to emotionally bond themselves with the growing child. And abruptly knowing that the child is no more, will be tough to handle. This news can actually trigger many emotions like anger, disheartenment with the loss, anger of not being careful, blaming oneself for the loss, crying hours together to deal with it, all these are quite normal ways to vent out or to take in the reality. In these unprecedented times, where virus scare is always in mind, many are avoiding clinical check-ups. Along with this handling miscarriage all by yourself

at home can be quite painful. But it necessary for the mother, that she takes required measures which will help her in dealing with her miscarriage at home and to do so, she can opt the below mentioned tips-

#### Go for routine e-checks

Since it's Covid, avoid going to the hospital for check-ups, instead opt for immediate e-checks. So that you keep a tab on your health in a safe way. If going to the hospital is unavoidable, then take advance appointments and all necessary precautions before you step out.

#### Take rest

Do not overburden yourself with workload. You need a lot of rest to deal with the loss. You may also suffer with severe cramps and body pains, so resting well will help you recover faster.

#### Talk to a therapist

Along with the help from your dear ones, talk to a therapist to deal with the grief. So that you can recover in a better way.

#### Take medications as prescribed

Follow your doctor's advice and take all the required medication including pain killers, antibiotic, multivitamins.

#### Bleeding out

Pain like abdominal cramps and bleeding is very normal during a miscarriage. Bleeding is a sign of miscarriage. Use sanitary pads until the bleeding stops, avoid using tampons.

#### Eat healthy

Consume foods that will help you in regaining the lost blood. More of iron based food items. Avoid oily, spicy, sugary and unhealthy foods.

#### Avoid intercourse

Strictly avoid intercourse with your partner. With intercourse, the healing of vaginal bleeding will take longer.

#### Emotionally low

You might trigger feelings like anger, loss, guilt, grief, hopelessness, jealousy (looking at other expecting mothers). These feelings are quite natural, instead of blaming yourself and pulling

your morale down, deal with it. Take family and friends support so they can cross through this rough patch.

#### Future pregnancy

Take some time to deal with the loss before planning your next pregnancy. Ensure that you take a gap of at least 6months before you plan your next pregnancy.

#### Change in period cycle

Since you have lost a lot of blood during your miscarriage, as per the health you have gained, you might get your period cycle after 2-3 months post the miscarriage. Do not panic, it might take longer than this for a few.

Remember, your body undergoes millions of changes when you are expecting a child. And your body needs to fall back to normalcy post the loss too, and this may take time. Give yourself undivided attention so that your recovery happens in a healthy way.

## Do you have scalp related problems?

N LOTHUNGBENI HUMTSOE

Scalp related problems can be difficult to identify and address. These issues can lead to a multitude of problems like itchiness, hair fall, rough texture etc. Hair expert Sareena Acharya, Artistic Head, Enrich Salon shares tips on how you can identify your scalp type and what recommended course of action could be taken.

#### Dry scalp

Dry Scalp Is when your skin produces or holds less or no Sebum, Sebum is the natural lubricant/moisturiser of your skin. Dry Scalp can cause itching, flaking, irritation and redness. It might also cause the hair to look dry. These flakes are smaller in size and white in colour. A dry scalp if not treated in time, may cause dry dandruff in some cases.

Using a moisturising, cream-based scalp treatment and shampoo will help control dryness and irritation. Using a scalp conditioner or mask will deeply moisten the scalp surface. One should also avoid shampooing frequently. Massaging the scalp with oil once in a fortnight will increase blood circulation and stimulate oil-producing glands.

#### Dandruff

The scalp, like the rest of the skin on your body, sheds dead skin.



**Hair expert Sareena Acharya shares tips on how you can identify your scalp type, and the course of action to take in case of any problems**

In the case of Dandruff, treat it with anti-dandruff treatment once in a fortnight and use an anti-dandruff shampoo twice a week. A shampoo must-have ingredients like Zinc pyrithione, salicylic Acid or selenium sulfide. Anti-dandruff shampoo may cause dryness in hair and scalp both. Make sure to rotate shampooing with other mild shampoos to balance it. Avoid using hair styling products on the scalp.

#### Oily scalp

Excessive production of Sebum causes oily skin and the scalp being

an extension of skin turns out to be oily/greasy. A little oil on the scalp protects the scalp and supports healthy hair, but abnormally oily scalp may cause trouble. The oil attracts dirt more easily, produces dandruff, and makes the hair stick together and creates a flat and limp appearance. In the worst cases, the sebum glands clog the hair roots and may cause excessive hair loss and dandruff. Scalp hygiene and care is very important in case of oily scalp. Following a dry shampoo method will help remove oil build-up easily.

## WEAR SAREE IN DIFFERENT WAYS

After wearing one saree on occasion twice or thrice we feel bore to wear again and again. And many of us can't buy a saree for each and every occasion. Here are some different ways, to wear one saree in different styles to look new also proffers your stylish look.

#### Jacket blouse with saree

Inspired from the Mughal outfits this beautiful way of draping saree style is not new but looks amazing. You can wear a long jacket with saree gives you perfect formal party look.



#### Shirt blouse with saree

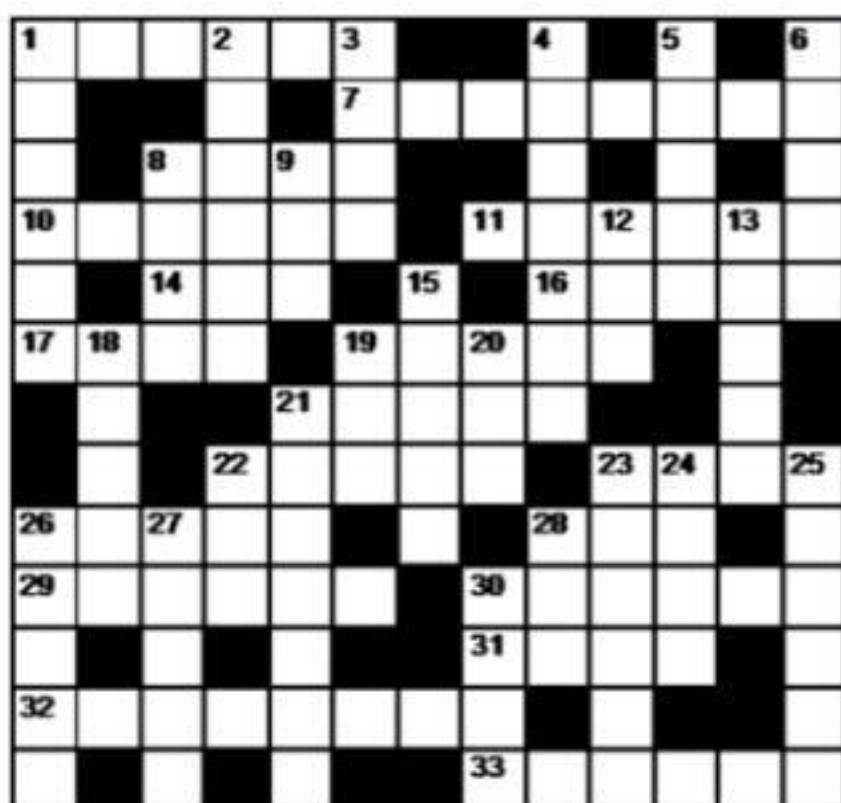
Ace that style game by pairing a saree with a shirt. Five traditional a touch of your quirk and modern personality. Better, you can wear the saree with a shirt at parties. It is a perfect enviable silhouette for festive parties.

#### Kurti blouse with saree

Yeah, the best of both worlds. Don't skimp down on the comfort or style. Instead of a normal blouse, opt the Kurti with saree style. Lighter fabrics – such as linen, georgette, and cotton-silk work well with this style. It is the perfect look for a night out.

#### Draping dupatta with saree

If anything, that deserves a spot in your event now, it is a beautiful dupatta pair with saree. Because this style looks pretty in silk, keep the dupatta in front and tie belt around your waist, let the gorgeous saree belt make the case for your avant-garde sartorial choice. This is very much simple and sober style saree draping.



INCAS I POACH  
O SHINDIG O  
PROSY E GRAFT  
W I WROTE F  
LAUGHAT A SEE  
HYMN G LISTEN  
A I MORAL O J  
SEAMAN S SOSO  
ASK L STROPY  
C EASES I R  
FARSI C FREAK  
P SKITTLE W  
MEDEA S YELLS

SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER 2

### CROSSWORD

#### Across

- Bear (6)
- An unlimited view (8)
- The Abominable Snowman (4)
- Mushroom (6)
- Commenced (3,3)
- Regret (3)
- Spiritualists' board (5)
- Makes a play on words (4)
- Throw or toss (5)
- Greek island (5)
- Power of decision; mere assertion (3-2)
- Become dim (4)
- Flower part (5)
- Slack (3)
- Boxes (6)
- Capital of the Republic of Ireland (6)
- Fearsome giant (4)
- Tunes (8)
- Greek geometer (6)

#### Down

- Bivouac (6)
- Womb (6)
- Heroic story (4)
- Any human being (7)
- Asian city (5)
- Seaport in NW Israel (5)
- Story (4)
- Bind (3)
- Delved; teat (3)
- Rocky inlet (5)
- Consecrate (5)
- Below, nether (5)
- Pan-cook (3)
- Skater Midori (3)
- Date in Rome (7)
- Filled a chair (3)
- Material (6)
- Spindle (4)
- Group of nine (6)
- Rogue or rascal (5)
- Buckets (5)
- Pull laboriously (3)
- Prescribed amount (4)

### SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER 2



### NEWS ROUNDUP

#### FLO supports Cheriya artisans

FLO Hyderabad launches Tirumani - Cheriya Nakashi Chitrakala, a social outreach program, to support the 400 years old craft.

FLO Hyderabad Chapter announces a major initiative, 'Tirumani', a social outreach initiative to promote 400 years old craft form, unique to Telangana State. But, today it is under threat of extinction, because of declining popularity and just left out with 16 artisans.

The FLO Community Outreach, Tirumani not only helps revive dying art form but also to lend its organisational skills to the local artisan community, guide them in creating lifestyle-oriented product range, establish marketing channel, to get the visibility and promotion that the craft deserves.

Towards this end as well as part of Tirumani, FLO on Tuesday virtually launched a logo, brochure, catalogue, website and social media campaign for the Tirumani initiative.

Sharing about the vision through Tirumani, Usharani Manne, FLO Hyderabad Chairperson said, "It is to ensure that more traditional artisans come back to the fold, throughout sustained efforts to create better market linkages and assistance in product innovation. Tirumani is our small offering to the artisan community of Cheriya, Usharani she declared while launching the logo. Besides this, FLO has also adopted Cheriya Village as part of Adopt a Village, a national initiative, says Usharani."





# Muted at Justice Mishra's farewell: Bar chief Dave complains to CJI

**New Delhi:** Senior advocate and Supreme Court Bar Association President Dushyant Dave on Wednesday shot off a letter to the Chief Justice expressing disappointment at being allegedly deprived of an opportunity to speak at the farewell ceremony of Justice Arun Mishra. Dave wrote to the Chief Justice S A Bobde expressing "strong disappointment and condemnation" and said he will never again participate in any function being organised by the Supreme Court till his term as SCBA is over in December.

"I must confess, the Supreme Court has come to such levels where the Judges are afraid of the Bar. Please do remember, Judges come and go but we the Bar remain constant. We are the real strength of this

great Institution because we are permanent."

"I must say, I am personally deeply saddened by the event and will never again participate in any function being organised by the Supreme Court till my term is over in December," Dave said.

He alleged that he got a link at 10.06 am to join the Ceremonial Bench of the Chief Justice of India at 12.30 pm from the Team SCI VC and which was sent on WhatsApp by the concerned Registrar. "I responded at 10.16 am accepting it which was acknowledged by the Registrar at 10.18 am. I joined through the link around 12.20 pm and was confirmed by the Team saying Video and Audio were perfect. I then had conversations with the At-



Attorney General K K Venugopal, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, President SCORA Shivaji Jadhav, amongst others. Once the Court assembled, I



saw and heard all the proceedings clearly. At the end Mr Mukul Rohtagi bid farewell," he said.



Mishra, who is superannuated on September 2, had earlier declined farewell invitations of bar bodies citing "severe situation and suffer-

ings the world over" on account of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dave further wrote that after Court work, Attorney General was requested to speak. "When he ended, I thought that I will be requested to speak, instead Mr Jadhav was requested knowing full well I was present. For some unknown reasons, I was being disconnected again and again but I persisted and rejoined each time. I saw and heard Shri Jadhav fully and at the end of his address again I was not requested to speak though Shri Jadhav has acknowledged my presence in his address," Dave said.

He further wrote that after an address by the CJI, Justice Mishra was invited to speak. "At that stage realising the game plan I exited in the

larger interests of the dignity of the Bar and Myself. But what is most important is that I messaged the Secretary-General on WhatsApp at 12.49 pm and again at 12.53 pm asking why I was kept on mute and why was I at all invited.

"Only at 1.02 pm, he responded saying he is instructing Registrar to look into it, by which time it was too late and so I messaged him informing that I had exited. The entire episode leaves much to be desired on the part of this great Institution. The whole attempt was to prevent me from addressing on behalf of the SCBA and its Executive Committee, after having invited and invitation having been accepted. This was clearly an affront to the Bar and to me personally," he said.

## MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OF ACTOR

# WhatsApp chat refutes SSR family's claims

**Mumbai:** Adding a new twist to the already complicated case of Sushant Singh Rajput's death, a WhatsApp chat emerged which refutes Rajput's family's claim that they were unaware of his mental health conditions. The chat reveals that his sister Priyanka Singh, knew about the actor's mental health conditions and was suggesting him to take medications.

K K Singh, father of SSR in his complaint to the Bihar police, had said in the past that they were not aware of Rajput suffering with any mental illness before 2019. He had accused Chakraborty of giving his son an overdose of drugs, according to Outlook report.

The chat is from June 8, the same day his ex-manager Disha Sallian allegedly died by suicide. Sushant's friend had earlier claimed that after Disha's death, Sushant had started getting anxiety attacks.

The chat shows Priyanka telling Sushant to take drugs like Librium, Nexito and Lonazep for his anxiety attacks. The three drugs are prescribed for



depression and anxiety. The chat thus stands in stark contradiction to what Singh's family had earlier claimed. Priyanka Singh also appears to tell her brother that she can help him connect with the "best doctor in Mumbai, all confidential." In fact, in the chat SSR has mentioned that it is difficult to get the drugs without prescription. Replying to which, her sister sends a prescription to him from Delhi.

When Rhea Chakraborty's

lawyer, Satish Maneshinde, was contacted by media, he said, "The family knew about Sushant's condition since the beginning. They have deliberately chosen to make false statements, before the Bihar police and even the courts. If Rhea had anything to do with the incident, why didn't they make these allegations in the beginning? The truth is coming out now. Those who make false statements before courts should be prosecuted."

## Indian economy reeling under 'Modi-made disasters': Rahul

**New Delhi:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the state of the economy, rise in COVID-19 cases and "external aggression" at borders, alleging that India is reeling under "Modi-made disasters".



His attack comes after official data showed on Monday that the country's economy suffered its worst slump on record in April-June, with the gross domestic product (GDP) contracting by 23.9 per cent as the coronavirus-related lockdown weighed on the already declining consumer demand and investment.

"India is reeling under Modi-made disasters: 1. Historic GDP reduction -23.9% 2. Highest Unemployment in 45 yrs 3. 12 Crs job loss 4. Centre not paying states their GST dues 5. Globally highest COVID-19 daily cases and deaths 6. External aggression at our borders (sic)," Gandhi tweeted.

Rebutting Gandhi's attack in a video earlier this week on the state of the economy, the BJP had mocked him saying he should release a video about the "G-23", a reference to the 23 leaders who wrote to the Congress chief seeking the party's overhaul.

## LINK BETWEEN FACEBOOK AND BJP

# TMC writes to Zuckerberg

**Kolkata:** The Trinamool Congress has written to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg raising the issue of alleged bias of the social media giant towards the BJP, and claimed that there is enough evidence in public domain to substantiate this charge.

Party MP Derek O'Brien, who has written the letter to Zuckerberg, also makes a reference to an earlier meeting between the two, where some of these concerns were raised. Sources in the party said that O'Brien met Zuckerberg in October 2015 in Delhi.

"We, the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), India's second-largest opposition party, have had serious concerns about Facebook's role during the 2014 and 2019 general elections in India," O'Brien wrote in the letter.

"With the elections in the Indian



state of West Bengal just months away, your company's recent blocking of Facebook pages and accounts in Bengal also points to the link between Facebook and the BJP. There is enough material now in the public domain, including internal memos of senior Facebook management, to substantiate the bias," he wrote.

Recently, a Wall Street Journal

report alleged that Facebook's content policies favoured the ruling party in India. Since then, the ruling BJP and opposition Congress have been trading barbs over social media giant's alleged bias. The Congress and other opposition parties have attacked the social media giant after a US media report alleged that Facebook did not apply its hate speech rules on BJP leaders.

## US to stay away from global Covid vax effort led by WHO

**New York (IANS):** The United States will stay away from international efforts to develop and distribute Covid-19 vaccine due to its association with the World Health Organization (WHO), the White House has said.

The decision on Tuesday not to participate in the "COVAX" initiative marks further deterioration of the Donald Trump administra-

tion's relations with the UN health agency. "The United States will continue to engage our international partners to ensure we defeat this virus, but we will not be constrained by multilateral organizations influenced by the corrupt World Health Organization and China," Judd Deere, a spokesman for the White House, was quoted as saying in a statement by Forbes. The COVAX

initiative was formed with the aim of working with vaccine manufacturers to provide countries worldwide equitable access to safe and effective vaccines, once they are licensed and approved. More than 170 economies are now engaged in discussions to potentially participate in the initiative which currently has one of the world's largest Covid-19 vaccine portfolios -- including nine candidate vaccines, with a further nine under evaluation and conversations underway with other major producers.



## '51% of deaths in 60+ age group'

### India continues to breach 78K-mark, Covid-19 tally crosses 37 lakh

**New Delhi:** The Union Health Ministry said on Wednesday that 54 per cent of the Covid-19 cases reported in India are in the age group of 18-44 years, while 51 per cent deaths are among people aged 60 and above. Presenting an analysis of COVID-19 cases and mortality on the basis of age, it also said that 36 per cent of the fatalities reported are in the age group of 45-60 years, 11 per cent in the age group of 26-44 years and 1 per cent each among people aged 18-25 years and those below 17 years. The same figures were shared by Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan during a press briefing on August 25. He had also said that 69 per cent of Covid-19 deaths have been reported among males and 31 per cent among females. The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities. As far as cases of coronavirus infection are concerned, 54 per cent are in the age group 18-44 years, 26 per

cent among those aged 45 to 60 years, eight per cent among those below 17 years and 12 per cent among those 60 years and above, it stated. India's COVID-19 tally of cases galloped past 37 lakh on Wednesday with 78,357 new instances of the disease reported in a day, while the number of recoveries crossed 29 lakh pushing the recovery rate to 76.98 per cent, the Union health ministry data showed. The unabated surge of COVID-19 is maintained as the country reported 78,357 fresh coronavirus cases in the past 24-hours mounting the national tally to 37,69,523, revealed Health Ministry data on Wednesday. With 1,045 more deaths, the toll has climbed to 66,333 so far.

Out of the total confirmed cases, 8,01,282 are active cases, while a total of 29,01,908 have recovered from the virus so far. With 60,868 recoveries in a day, the recovery rate stood at 76.98 per cent while the fatality rate is 1.76 per cent.

# Eco-friendly Ganesha contest gets all-India response

Winning entries	
Hemant Powar	Mumbai
Jaya Vyshnavi Vurimi	Vijayawada
Vedika Saha	East Singhbhum
Upasana Chourasiya	Bilaspur
Navni Jumrani	Gwalior
Jishnu Sivasai Yadavalli	Hyderabad
Nithya Dongeti	Nizamabad
Aaradhya K	Hyderabad
Ashish Devkar	Satara
Swaroop Deshpande	Pune



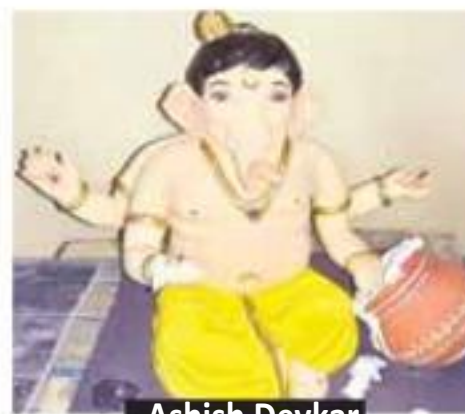
Hemant Powar



Jaya Vyshnavi Vurimi



Aaradhya K



Ashish Devkar



Upasana Chourasiya



Vedika Saha



Navni Jumrani



Jishnu Sivasai Yadavalli



Nithya Dongeti



Swaroop Deshpande

The eco-friendly Ganesha contest held by The Hans India received an overwhelming response from participants all over India. The winning entries, which were sent from various corners of the country, from East Singhbhum in Jharkhand at one end and Pune at the other saw young talents creating beautiful and cute 'green Ganesha' idols. Thank You for participating in the competition.

# UP double murder: Minor allowed to stay home in police custody



**Lucknow (IANS) :** The 15-year-old girl, accused of killing her mother and brother, is staying with her father, a senior railway officer, under medical supervision.

Women police personnel in plain clothes have been deployed at the officer's residence.

The Juvenile Court, where the girl was produced, had sent her to 14-day judicial custody under medical supervision since she was suffering from acute depression and hallucination.

"The court said she will be kept under medical supervision in King George's Medical University (KGMU) during the period of the custody," said ACP Hazratganj Raghendra Singh.

The girl's father submitted an application requesting that she may be allowed to stay at home while in custody since she is mentally disturbed and needs emotional support from him.

"As a result, while seeking custody, we also told the magistrate that since the case comes under the rarest of rare

category, the police has no objection if the court considers father's request on humanitarian grounds," the officer said.

The girl was also taken to the KGMU for examination by a child psychiatrist.

It may be recalled that the girl had reportedly shot her 47-year-old mother and 17-year-old brother while they were asleep with a .22 bore pistol, killing them on the spot. The incident had taken place on Saturday.

The girl had then reportedly confessed in the presence of

her grandparents that she shot the two. She had also inflicted several cuts on her arms with a razor.

The police later found several grotesque items, including a toy skull. She had written 'disqualified human' with jam on the mirror of her bathroom.

Police officials have also approached the doctors and experts of the King George's Medical University (KGMU) to understand the behavioural pattern of the minor girl.

Meanwhile, sources said that the girl was being provided emotional support by her father and was calm.

"Her father does not make her feel responsible for what she has done. She seems comfortable in his presence and even asks him to play the piano for her," said a woman police personnel posted at the minor's residence.

Incidentally, the FIR lodged by the railway official, following the murder of his wife and son, named an 'unidentified' person as the accused.



# Rahul's loss, Modi's gain

India is reeling under Modi-made disasters: 1. Historic GDP reduction -23.9% 2. Highest unemployment in 45 years 3. 12 crore job loss 4. Centre not paying States their GST dues 5. Globally highest Covid-19 daily cases and deaths 6. External aggression at our borders, the worst in Independent India's history. Unfortunately, the government ignored the warnings, says Rahul Gandhi, the former AICC president. His angry outburst is understandable and in fact such criticism is necessary to ensure that there are checks and balances in the democratic system. But then there are two issues that need to be pondered over by the Congress party. One, it should not criticise just because they are the major Opposition party but should come out with an alternate solution. Secondly, it would have been more effective if Rahul who has so much of foresight had taken over as AICC president before warning the Centre. That would have given greater credibility and weightage to his words. Another important aspect is the timing of criticism. We are seeing that there is

hectic movement on borders with Pakistan, China and Nepal indulging in cartographic aggression in a bid to gain precise location of Indian Army camps across the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir. News agencies said that Pakistan had purchased China's Jilin-1 satellite data, comprising high definition video, optical and hyperspectral imagery, for 2020.

The Jilin constellation comprises a network of ten satellites in orbit with the capability of global coverage and it can revisit any location twice a day. "Resolution of panchromatic image provisioned by Jilin-1 is 0.72 m and the multi-spectral image is 2.88 m." On the other hand, there are reports that the BSF had detected a tunnel just beneath India-Pakistan international border fence in Jammu to infiltrate in the border of India. The timing of the Nepali cartographic aggression also reflects the Chinese hand. On May 20, 2020, the Nepal government launched its own map showing Kalapani, present in eastern corner of Uttarakhand State of India as part of Nepal's territory.

On 10 June 2020, the Nepali parliament moved to approve a new map which included territory in India's Uttarakhand. The new map shows Kashmir shares a clear border with China which reflects the intentions of Dragon to push back India so that it will not have any obstacle in controlling the Karakoram Pass and strategic route to the Indian Ocean, experts aver. Dragon has been indulging in the cartographic aggression in all its periphery - East China Sea, South China Sea, Indo Tibetan border and against Tajikistan. However, Dragon's plans do not end with the cartographic aggression. It is aligning its PLA's moves with Pakistani strengthened deployment. Pakistan is reported to have moved about 20,000 soldiers near the LAC to match the Chinese forward move in Ladakh. This is a well-calculated Chinese machination to keep India under pressure. Against the backdrop of this scenario, young leaders like Rahul Gandhi should have shown greater maturity and should have taken the initiative to rock the Parliament on issues like GST, alleged failure in handling Covid-19 pandemic, highest unemployment, instead of making off the cuff remarks on his twitter handle. It would have greater impact and would have earned him new name and fame. Seems he lost yet another chance to impress the people.

## PART-I

# Those little houses of many mirrors

## TALKING OF MANY THINGS



Dr Mohan Kanda

As one rides away (gracefully one hopes!) into the sunset of life, thoughts come to mind about the manner in which the years have treated one. Certainly, there is much to rejoice about and feel contented. Yes, there is the occasional regret, but nothing compared to the way it has been overweighed by the compensating pleasant events, a wide vista of experiences and a range of sensations; from academic pursuits to professional experiences, through areas such as personal, sports, social, philosophy, culture and religion.

At 3.41 am tomorrow I shall be 75 years old, having been born a premature seventh month delivery baby, in a small house in a narrow lane in a busy part of Madras (now Chennai) having, as its address, 20, Chengalneer Pillayar Kovil Street, Mylapore, Madras. It was in that house that my mother had delivered ten children out whom three survived, my brother Murty, my sister Kalpakam and I. That was the house in which I spent my early childhood and, while casually attending school as a minor pastime, vigorously participated in the activities of Balananda Sangham (a well-known and popular children's organisation that organised cultural activities), and acted in some 28 movies in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi. As part of a trip down memory lane, I went to the house a few years ago, and found it largely unchanged, except that it had been turned into a shop.

I have known many people fortunate enough to have been born, brought up, educated, employed and, finally, retired peacefully and settled down in their old age, in the same State

of the country. Some others were lucky enough to do all that in one city and, a very small number of those, in the same house! And I? Thirty houses in five States so far, and, thank God, not counting anymore! I feel confident we have finally settled down.

We have seen, in recent times, how successive Chief Ministers, of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh State, in earlier years and now of the two Telugu speaking States, have frequently altered the orientation and structure of buildings serving as their residences and offices, largely for alleged reasons of 'Vastu'.

I remember one Chief Minister building an entire new block as he felt that it would be propitious for his tenure and, a few years later, another abandoning that building altogether and moving into the earlier one vacated by his predecessor. I cannot, however, remember how the apparent compliance with the prescriptions of 'Vastu' helped their cause!

I have also seen people affecting major changes to the structures of their dwellings (and, in some cases even their offices!), on the advice of one Pundit or the other in order to overcome the impact of some evil or to propitiate a supernatural power which is expected to bring them prosperity.

All this is not to decry the value of the science of 'Vastu'. Yes, that is what it was originally meant to be – a science. However, superstition, abandonment of common sense and irrational fears and temptations have altered its fundamental prescriptions to the extent of the whole thing becoming a farce. And those who profess to practise it use either as a threat or a lure to make their clients undertake totally unscientific alterations.

Such mindless observation of exaggerated versions of were originally scientific prescriptions abound in such a large number, especially in India (no matter what religion the people belong to), that it is not possible to deal with them here in detail.

Suffice it to say that the most well-meaning and rationally designed prescription can be twisted out of shape, thanks to



ignorance, fear or temptation and the role of unscrupulous middlemen.

I must mention at this stage that the original number of thirty referring to the house in which I stayed in my life, included many in which I stayed with my parents before I was married.

After Mylapore, we moved to a house in Lloyds Road Madras. One thing that comes to mind about the stay in that house is my dropping nephew Sitaram Yechury on his head (as a 10-month-old baby!), when I was asked to look after him for a little while! I still cannot help wondering how much damage that fall had done him!

It was then that the State of Andhra was formed and the High Court was established at Guntur, while the seat of the government went to Kurnool. And in Guntur where, initially, father was still an advocate, we stayed in a small house in Pat-tabhupuram Colony. It was there that, one day, I had come into the house to have a snack while my friends were playing cricket. Accidentally, a bottle filled with soda fell down and burst into pieces. One shrapnel went into my foot. My brother-in-law Yechury had to carry me upside down, to prevent the bleeding from becoming excessive, and took me to the hospital to get the wound stitched up. I still carry an ugly scar on my right ankle as a proof to that incident! We then moved to a big bungalow, in a large estate soon after father

was elevated as a judge. While staying in that house I learnt the rudiments of raising a kitchen garden and also had my first pet at home, a dog called the Lassie. She had a strange habit of barking only at khaki clad postmen and lady political leaders who came dressed in white!

Very soon thereafter, the new State of Andhra Pradesh was formed and father moved to an official residence at Marredpally in Secunderabad. For quite some time, in the beginning, we had no radio at home. Every Wednesday evening, precisely at 8 PM, I used to walk some distance away to a friend's house to listen to the weekly 'Binaca Geet Mala' composed by the legendary and inimitable Ameen Sayani. New to Hyderabad and its way of life, I had many things to learn, including such fundamental things as having to wear slippers to school! I joined halfway through the 7th standard in Mahbub College High School, Secunderabad. And, I experienced my first slap from a teacher's hand, for failing to recite a poem correctly in Telugu!

After a few months, father moved to a house Gaddian-naram, where he bought a huge mansion of over 10,000 square meters in area, situated in a large farm of over 6 acres. And I shifted to All Saints High School, Hyderabad. We stayed there until 1960 when father retired. I had, by then, finished my schooling and also the Pre-University Course at Nizam College, Hyderabad. One distinct recollec-

tion of the stay in that house is the number of fruit bearing trees there were in the compound, and how scary it was to return on foot at night, from a distant bus stop in pitch darkness, and with the rumour of ghosts raging in my head!

Another unforgettable incident was the way I caused an unintentional explosion in chemistry laboratory I used to maintain in a corner of that house. A friend of mine and I were doing an experiment. By mixing hydrochloric acid, with sulphuric acid we produced hydrogen dichloride, which explodes instantaneously on contact with the atmosphere. I still remember how, one moment we were in the lab, and the very next, on the other side of that big house not knowing how we got there!

Father then shifted to Delhi to practise in the Supreme Court and I joined Hindu College to pursue an Honours degree in Mathematics. We stayed in houses in Nizamuddin and Defence Colony. College days were heady and filled with youthful exuberance some interesting experiences relating to which I have described elsewhere in this column. On account of circumstances described in there, and for the first time in my life, I failed to secure a first division in my graduation exam.

(To be continued)

*(The writer is former Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh)*

Gandhi-Ambedkar-JP, hence this allegation against Bhushan; hence the political imprisonment of this land's conscience with the arrest of Anand Telumbde and others.

Ramesh VV, Hyderabad

## Rift in Congress shows it is time to change

Whether it leads to a good beginning or not, the Congress rebel group's attempt to bring in organisational reforms began on a sour note with the release of the letter's contents to a media house a day before the CWC meeting. The leaders were well within their rights to raise concerns, but the leak took the focus away from the issues being raised. Instead, at the meeting, they had to face questions on the motive and timing of the letter. Some hinted at a conspiracy being hatched in collusion with the BJP. Even those who usually measure their words came down heavily on the "letter writers". Beyond the unpleasant exchanges, what this episode unravelled is the sharp divide that has emerged within the party over the past couple of years. At the centre of it is Rahul Gandhi. In fact, the letter bomb is being seen as a response to a new Congress executive team that had been planned more than two months ago, primarily with leaders who are "in sync with Rahul's vision of the Congress". Party insiders claim that Rahul is unwilling to return to the Congress helm until a team of his choice is installed and the party is rid of "self-serving" leaders.

Ashok Kumar S, Hyderabad

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# The GST fix: Centre Vs States

M SOMASEKHAR

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi famously described GST as the 'Good & Simple Tax' which would usher in economic glory at the stroke of midnight on July 1 in 2017, experts saw more hope than pragmatism and hurdles in practise.

In August 2020, driven by a slowing economy and hammered down GDP due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has been pitchforked into a major fix between the Centre and the States. The utterances of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that the downside in the economy, the huge contraction in GDP for the April-June quarter by 23.9 percent as the country was in the thick of the Covid-19 pandemic as an 'Act of God', has not gone down well either.

With over 36 lakh cases and the Centre and many States 'all but at sea' in controlling the spiralling cases and a fast sliding economy with huge job losses, the situation is anything but challenging. According to the Centre, the shortfall in collections through GST stood at around Rs 2.35 lakh crore in fiscal 2020-21 so far. The compensation sought by States is estimated to be Rs 3 lakh crore of which Rs 65,000 crore has to be met through chess levied in the GST regime. While the shortfall in GST is Rs 97,000 crore, the balance is due to the impact of Covid-19, the Centre says.

To make matters worse, the Centre is pushing both the 'blame and onus' to meet the bleak fiscal situation onto States, and trying to abdicate its sworn duty to rescue them in the event of a crisis as agreed to at the time of pushing the controversial Bill through in Parliament in 2017.

During the UPA rule led by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, several BJP-ruled States, including Gujarat by the then Chief Minister, Narendra Modi had not just opposed but vociferously demanded a compensation mechanism to be statutory. That the GST was never going to be a smooth affair was a foregone conclusion.

By asking States to devise their own strategies to bridge the shortfall in GST compensation like borrowing, the Centre has attracted justifiable backlash. The Chief Ministers of Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab, Telangana, Delhi, Chhattisgarh etc have openly come out in criticism and demanding that the Centre act more responsibly and borrow. K Chandrasekhar Rao, CM of Telangana argued that "it is clearly stipulated in the GST Compensation Act that full compensation for the loss of revenue shall be paid on a bi-monthly basis. Despite, such mandatory provision, delays have been common, and States have not been paid GST compensation since April 2020".

The best way forward is for the Centre to borrow and compensate States if it is unable to fulfil its obligation, say experts. It will translate into a lower interest rate burden on the States and be more advantageous.

Further, the Central government has the ability to raise resources through means that are not available to States. The exercise of borrowing money will be more efficient and cheaper. In the national context, monetary measures are the monopoly of the Centre at present. The government too has the sovereign right to print money to cover a good part of the deficit. In addition, it should use this opportunity to put more money in the hands of crores of poor, who desperately need for sustenance and which in turn will push up the consumption, argues, former Finance Minister, P Chidambaram.

One more, but sparsely used, short term solution is to dip into the Consolidated Fund of India to come to the rescue of the States. But what the NDA government is trying to do is to extend two options to the demanding States. First, it will provide a special window to States to borrow the Rs 97,000 crore in consultation with the RBI at a reasonable interest rate and term of 5 years to repay. The second option is to borrow the entire, estimated Rs 2.35 lakh crore shortfall under a special window.

By doing so, the Centre is conveniently shifting the responsibility entirely onto the States. In a way, it means asking States to mortgage their financial future to get over the present crisis. This is akin to asking States to mortgage their future to sustain the present. Further, under the ruse of or pretext of Covid-19, pushing States to act, the NDA government is trying to assert its assumed might in a federal set up and shielding its own shortcoming by transferring the problem and saving its image.

That the financial health of most of the States is bad is no secret and it only further complicates the financial relationships between Centre and the States. Sample this for example, the public outstanding debt of Andhra Pradesh is Rs 3,04,500 crore, West Bengal's stood at Rs 4.75 lakh crore, Telangana it is Rs 2.29 lakh crore, Uttar Pradesh, about Rs 6 lakh crore and Maharashtra about Rs 5 lakh crore. Given this reality, what does more borrowing mean is anybody's guess.

Against this background, States are wary about borrowing since it poses multiple hurdles like – FRBM limits, existing and high outstanding loans to service and contend with different and higher rates of interests.

One of the instruments used by States to compensate fiscal deficit and meet revenue shortfalls to fund their projects is to resort to State Development Loans (SDLs). These are basically securities issued by States to raise funds from the open market with approval from the RBI. They are bought by banks, mutual funds, insurance firms and in some instances, foreign portfolio investors.

The RBI had in its report indicated a limit of Rs 1.27 lakh crore for States' market borrowings for the Apr-June quarter for fiscal 2020-21. This is more than 50 percent of borrowings during the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. Available data up to July shows a steep rise already in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic as States resorted to cut in salaries, austerity measures etc. This can push up the debt to GDP ratio, which is a negative factor for ratings.

Market borrowings through issue of short-term and long-term bonds is routinely resorted to by some States. According to CARE rating, from April to July 23 States and a Union Territory have raised Rs 1.8 lakh crore via market borrowings which is 75 percent higher for the comparable period during fiscal 2019-20 at Rs 1.03 lakh crore.

Tamil Nadu tops with a market borrowing of Rs 30,500 crore during this fiscal, followed by Maharashtra (Rs 25,500 crore). Rajasthan and AP too have made substantial borrowings while Telangana resorted to a combination of advances and overdrafts, ways and means and market borrowings.

When we look back at the chequered history of the GST, its loud and clear that the persuasive, lawyer- Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley could push through the Bill based on the promise that if States faced revenue deficits post GST's introduction, the Centre would step in and make good the shortfall in the first five years. The NDA government, though stubborn in relationships with non-cooperating States, showed immense flexibility in bringing about scores of changes in the GST as implementation hurdles raised their head very often.

If the economy was booming, perhaps the lacunae would have been addressed better and ticklish issues of implementation ironed out slowly. But, with the slowdown in GDP, consequent to controversial decisions of demonetisation, global issues and finally Covid-19 impacting businesses all round, the Centre and States have pitchforked themselves into a potential 'eyeball to eyeball' confrontation on revenue sharing.

## LETTERS

## Revival of economy should be 'act of government'

The GDP of India has reduced to a negative value of 23.9%. In the last 40 years, it was for the first time that the economy faced contraction and showed negative growth. The Finance Minister of India in the Council meeting stated that the current GDP is the result of "act of God". The predictions were already made about the worst GDP of all time, but India's GDP hit worst in the whole world. When compared to the UK (a country with a similar economy), the lockdown imposed by the government in India is 15% more stringent than that of the UK. The drastic contraction is and will affect the poor directly or indirectly. Now, the revival of economy should be the "act of government".

Prateek Gothwal, Visakhapatnam

## Release of Kafeel Khan a victory of justice

UP doctor Kafeel Khan was released from Mathura Jail in Uttar Pradesh around midnight after the Allahabad High Court on Tuesday quashed his detention under the stringent National Security Act and ordered his immediate release, saying his speech at the AMU did not promote hatred or violence and gave a call for national integrity. The release of Khan is of course a victory of justice. Khan had always stood for humanitarian values as a doctor, maintained the high traditions of the

medical profession and never indulged in divisive activities. Instead of incarcerating Khan, the government should have availed his services at a time when health amenities in the State "badly needed" cooperation from the medical fraternity. Kafeel had exercised his democratic right to protest, but had never taken resort to undemocratic means, and always championed the spirit of unity and communal harmony. Khan was in jail since January after he delivered an allegedly provocative speech at the AMU during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Humera Jahan, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad

## Country undergoin bad times

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, called a "versatile genius" by a Supreme Court judge, our country is drowning under the ignorant blows of demonetisation, GST etc. Unemployment is eating us away. The country is moving from poverty to hunger. The government can only run on the selling of public wealth to private companies. So a surgery has been done at the level of more or less all fundamental government institutions, including the judiciary, media, CBI, RBI etc to control the flare up of public ire. Because of all this, the public interest today has been orphaned. Prashant Bhushan has dedicated his entire legal career to this orphaned public interest. After consigning the public interest to the garbage dump, the aim is now to repress its very voice. India's 'cow-faced-tiger' emergency seems to have used the judiciary to repress the voice of public interest by using Prashant Bhushan's tweets as an excuse. While writing all this, after overcoming anger, pain and regret, I thought that maybe – just maybe – Bharat Mata must be warming up for the birth of a leadership with the potential of a



# Dad is our guiding force, says Jagan

- **Glowing tributes paid to former CM YS Rajasekhara Reddy on his 11th death anniversary by YSRCP leaders and supporters in Telugu States**
- **Jagan and family hold special prayer at YSR memorial at Idupulapaya on memory of the departed leader**
- **Memorial programmes have been organised by ruling party leaders and activists across AP**

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Rich tributes were paid to former chief minister Dr Y S Rajasekhara Reddy on his 11th death anniversary in the two Telugu states on Wednesday.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, YSRCP honorary president Y S Vijayamma, Y S Bharathi along with family members paid homage to the departed leader at YSR Ghat at Idupulapaya. They participated in a prayer meeting and observed two-minute silence as a mark of respect to the departed leader. Y V Subba Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Amzat Basha, Ravinder-nath Reddy, Amarnath Reddy, G Srikanth Reddy and others were also present at the YSR Memorial.

The Chief Minister in a tweet said, "It's 11 years since father left us. The great leader is no more but his memories and welfare schemes are immortal. He is the guiding force in every step I take forward."



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy along with his family members pays floral tributes to his father Y S Rajasekhara Reddy at YSR Memorial in Idupulapaya on the occasion of his death anniversary on Wednesday. (Right) Jagan paying homage at his father's statue at Idupulapaya

At the party central office in Mangalagiri, Government Advisor (Public Affairs) Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy and other leaders paid homage to Dr Rajasekhara Reddy. Speaking on the occasion, Ramakrishna Reddy said that YSR had left an indelible imprint in the hearts of Telugu people by keeping up his promises and implementing numerous welfare schemes for the uplift of the poor. YSR left behind his iconic mark by bringing revolutionary re-



forms in health, education, and welfare sectors and Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy is carrying forward the legacy of YSR in creating a better society and striving for the uplift of weaker sections. The people have re-

posed their faith in Jagan and gave him a massive mandate enabling him to continue the legacy, he added.

In Visakhapatnam, senior leader and Rajya Sabha member V Vijayasai Reddy said that YSR

will stay alive in the hearts of the people through his welfare schemes and developmental initiatives. He stated that the former Chief Minister strived for the development of the Visakhapatnam region and brought IT SEZ, Pharma SEZ, industries for Visakhapatnam, which played a crucial role in the development of north Andhra. He said that Jagan Mohan Reddy shall continue the YSR's legacy.

Government Chief Whip G Srikanth Reddy in his homage to Rajasekhara Reddy, recalled the welfare schemes and developmental programmes introduced by him during his tenure and emphasised the need to awarding Bharat Ratna to YSR. The welfare schemes introduced by YSR inspired many others and stood as a model for the entire country, he said.

Deputy Chief Ministers P Pushpasrivani, Dharmana Krishna Das, Shankararayanan, ministers Balneni Srinivas Reddy, P Anil Kumar Yadav, Mutamsetti Srinivasa Rao, Buggana Rajendranath Reddy, K Kannababu, Vellampalli Srinivas were among those who paid tributes to YSR.

In Telangana, YSRCP and Congress leaders paid glorious tributes to Rajasekhara Reddy in Hyderabad, Suryapet, Karimnagar, Jagtial, Peddapalli, Gadwal, Wanaparthy, Nagarkurnool, Khammam, Kothegudem and other places.

Elsewhere, party leaders, MPs, MLAs, ministers and well-wishers have paid homage to YSR in their respective constituencies and recalled his contribution to the society in the agriculture, health and education sectors among others.



Chief Minister's convoy giving way to an ambulance between Gudavalli and Nidamanuru near Vijayawada on Wednesday

## AP CM gives way to ambulance

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy showcased his concern for people on Wednesday by making way to an ambulance while he was returning from Gannavaram airport to his residence at Tadepalli. The incident took place when an ambulance, ferrying a person injured in an accident, was held up with the Chief Minister's convoy on the move between Gudavalli and Nidamanuru. The Chief Minister directed his security to immediately give

way to the ambulance. The injured person was identified as Chaparathina Shekar, who was severely injured in an accident while travelling from Vuyyuru to Gannavaram on a bike.

Earlier, at Idupulapaya, the Chief Minister displayed similar kindness towards a woman who came to meet him along with her newborn baby all the way from Pulivendula. The Chief Minister and his wife Y S Bharathi took baby in their arms, showered blessings and greeted the mother (Jyothi) with a warm heart.

## Covid tally crosses 4.5 lakh in AP

**Amaravati:** The ominous rise in coronavirus cases in the state continued as the state on Wednesday added 10,000 plus fresh infections for the eighth straight day, taking the count past the 4.5 lakh mark.

As a five-figure daily increase seemed to have become the norm of late, the government, in its daily Covid-19 bulletin, recorded 10,392 fresh positive cases, 8,454 recoveries and 72 deaths in 24 hours ending 9 am on Wednesday.

The state's tally of overall cases reached 4,55,531, while the total recoveries increased

to 3,48,330. After a total of 4,125 deaths, a sum of 1,03,076 cases remained active in the state, as per the bulletin. The state has so far tested 38,43,550 samples at the rate of 71,977 per million population, turning out a positivity rate of 11.85 per cent as against the national average of 8.49 per cent.

The recovery rate improved to 76.47 per cent, inching closer to the national average, while the mortality rate remained steady at 0.91 per cent, less than the country's 1.76 per cent. (PTI)

# Naidu concerned over AP being 2<sup>nd</sup> in Covid cases

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu criticised that the state government failed miserably in implementing the 'trace, test and treat' protocol in controlling the spread of Covid-19.

In a statement on Wednesday, Naidu advised Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to rise above the level of making 'paracetamol' and 'bleaching powder' comments in order to protect the people from greater danger of coronavirus in the state.

He expressed concern that AP has now stood second in the list of states recording highest number of Covid positive cases in the

- **Blames unauthorised meetings and failure of crowd control at liquor shops**
- **Asks CM to rise above 'paracetamol', 'bleaching powder' solutions to the pandemic**



country. The increased infections were causing panic among people of all sections. As per the Covid-19 tracker, AP stood second with 4.45 lakh positive cases as against 8.08 lakh cases of Maharashtra and 4.33 lakh of Tamil Nadu.

The TDP chief attributed the unchecked rise in cases to the unofficial and unauthorised

meetings that took place. The government could not control crowds in long queues at its own liquor shops which led to spiralling of infections, he criticised.

Ge deplored the government for failing to regulate and check the coronavirus threat at the quarantine centres. All these failures and negligence led to a bigger threat from the virus.

## Pavithrotsavam concludes with Maha Purnahuti in Tiruchanoor

**Tirupati:** The three-day annual Pavithrotsavam concluded on Wednesday with Maha Purnahuti and Pavitra Visarjana rituals at Sri Padmavati Ammavari temple at Tiruchanoor in which TTD EO Anil Kumar Singhal participated. On the last day Shanti Homam, Kumbha Prokshana and Nivedana were also observed. In the afternoon, traditional Snapana Tirumanjanam was performed for the utsava idols of Sri Padmavati Ammavaru and Sri Sudarshana Chakrattalwar. Thereafter, Chakrasnanam was performed to the utsava idol of Sri Sudarshana Chakrathalvarin a silver vessel (Gangalam) at Sri Krishna Mukha Mandapam in view of COVID-19 restrictions.

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** TDP general secretary Nara Lokesh alleged that the 'anti-farming' policies pursued by the state government had pushed Andhra Pradesh onto 2nd place in the country in farmers' suicides.

He advised the YSRCP government to set aside its publicity show for some time and start rescuing farmers from crop failures and mounting debts. In a statement on Wednesday, Lokesh criticised that the ruling party was dealing another blow to the farmers by taking steps towards withdrawal of free power to farmers. The YSRCP was reducing the farmer from the status of king to that of a pauper with its bankrupt policies, he said. He

- **TDP leader Lokesh says AP stands 2nd in farmers suicide in the country, owing to the 'anti-agriculture' policies of the State govt**
- **Alleges that the YSRCP govt is taking steps that ultimately lead to withdrawal of free power to farmers**

recalled that the government promised to provide Rs 1 lakh benefit to each farmer under different programmes but eventually, even seed and fertiliser were not being given to them. The inefficient administration was responsible for the countless woes and hardships of the farmers and different sections of people, he added.

Stating that every promise of the YSRCP was turning out to be a big lie, Lokesh said that a game of betrayal was started to say goodbye

to the free electricity to farmers. It was because of the apathetic policies of the government that the farmers' suicides had recorded a spurt in the state in the past 15 months, he alleged.

The TDP leader said that AP now stood in second place in tenant farmers' suicides and in third place in farmers' suicides. The ruling YSRCP leaders should stop their gimmicks at least now and undo the damage done to the farm sector.

# Railway sleuths bust ticketing racket powered by Pak tech

Continued from P1

Officials identified that hundreds of crores of rupees in black money generated from these activities was linked to several anti-national and criminal activities all over India and overseas.

"As a result of this activity, unauthorised tickets were booked and genuine passengers could not book e-tickets through IRCTC personal identities as within seconds of opening, the tickets would vanish as the gang was using powerful software," the official said.

As many as 25,000 hackers across the country were operating this racket with a well defined hierarchy in place, where touts would generate the demand for the tickets and bring it to the sellers.

Sellers in turn used the software to game the Railways' Tatkal system.

"These sellers in turn reported to panel developers who would give them access to the software

on monthly charges. These panel developers would report to financial and technical administrators whose main job was to maintain the servers hosted in foreign countries," said the official.

Meanwhile, the illegal money generated was suspected to have been used in terror funding, making illegal documents for hostile foreign nations, and money laundering through crypto currency, among others. Busting the nationwide racket involved top-level intervention at the level of RPF director general, who personally coordinated through the DIG Railway Board.

As many as 100 panel developers and software sellers were arrested across the country while the officials have destroyed the seized software codes.

Due to the international ramifications of the case, higher authorities in the Railways have given assent for further investigation.

# No Question Hour, curtailed Zero Hour

Continued from P1

The one mechanism to promote accountability has now been done away with," he tweeted.

The Congress party also tweeted separately that questioning the government is the "life-blood of parliamentary democracy". "By doing away with this tool of accountability, the BJP Govt seeks to pass laws without any discussion and debate. It is an attempt to stifle democracy under the garb of the pandemic," it added.

Trinamool Congress Derek O'Brien said question hours are significant because issues raised during this time are answered by the minister concerned which is not the case in the Zero Hour. He said questions are also asked from the treasury benches and the move to suspend the question hour

would mean that the government was also "denying their own MPs to raise their queries". This means that we cannot ask any questions on the state of the economy or the pandemic," he said.

CPI MP Binoy Viswam has also written to Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu, saying that suspension of Question Hour and Private Members' business is "unjust" and they must be reinstated immediately. Viswam said suspending these parliamentary procedures raises "serious questions" on the "intent" of the government at a time crucial developments continue to take place across the country.

"By introducing these changes, the Government has effectively ensured that its accountability to the Parliament and to the people is done away with," he said.

## SMART METERS

# No burden on farmers, says Ajeya Kallam

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Chief Adviser to the Government Ajeya Kallam said there will be no burden on farmers regarding free power. Allaying fears over smart meters to be fixed for agriculture pumpsets, he said the meters will be fixed by power distribution companies (discoms) and the power usage charges will be transferred directly into the dedicated accounts of farmers, as per the draft Electricity Bill of the Union government.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, Ajeya Kallam said that the state government will be introducing the direct electricity cash transfer system.

Discoms were given the responsibility to create dedicated bank accounts for the farmers and install smart meters at free of cost, where every month the meter reading will be directly sent to the finance department, which immediately transfers the amount to farmers' bank accounts,

- **Clarifies the decision to fix meters to agriculture connections is in tune with draft Electricity Bill of the Central govt**
- **Says meter reading every month will be sent directly to Finance Dept, which immediately transfers the amount to farmers' account**
- **Discoms will create dedicated bank accounts for farmers for the transfer of power charges**

to be redeemed by discoms.

He asserted that the steps are being taken in line with the Central reforms and explained that the Union government has made it clear in the draft Bill that the subsidies given to the farmers should be transferred directly to their accounts. Although several states, including AP and Telangana, objected to some of the aspects in the draft Bill, to

fulfil the promise of providing free electricity to the farmers, the state government formulated a new policy that fits within the guidelines of the Union government. The Chief Minister is determined to continue this scheme under any circumstances, as it was introduced by his father former CM Dr Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, Ajeya Kallam said.

He alleged that the previous government ignored the power sector by destroying the production at thermal power stations and making purchases from the private sector for kickbacks. Despite having a surplus production of 12 per cent, the then officials have made purchases from private units at higher costs and left a pile of debts to the discoms. He said that the YSRCP government had cleared Rs 34,384 crore of pending bills to the discoms, which include Rs 20,122 crore dues by the previous government. In addition, the government also cleared the pending bills of power utilities, which are about Rs 17,904 crore, he explained.

# Healthier options make their way to kitchens

Continued from P1

"Tamarind used to be an indispensable ingredient in my cooking. From chutneys to sambar and gravies, tamarind takes myriad forms in the dishes I prepare. But now, I add amla (gooseberry), tomatoes, kokum and lemons instead of tamarind. Also in place of turmeric powder, I use minced turmeric rhizome in the 'subzis' as curcumin present in rhizome aids in boosting the immune system," explains J Lakshmi, a food blogger.

This apart, the staple cooking oil takes a new avatar as many shift to healthier alternatives. "Based on the doctor's suggestion, I bid adieu to refined oil and now confine to assorted cold pressed oils as they contain natural antioxidants and are rich in Vitamin E. For instance, I use cold pressed mustard oil for bitter-gourd curry and instant pickles, coconut oil for 'dosa' and curd-based dishes and groundnut oil for subjis. I ensure using cold pressed coconut oil as it is suitable for humid weather," says Aruna Jain, proprietor of Nature's Nest, the immune store.

In many households, there is also an extensive use of jaggery and honey instead of processed sugar while making sweets. Those who could not resist sipping a steaming cup of coffee in the morning now go for herb-infused concoctions, lemon water laced with honey or green tea.

# India bans PUBG, 117 more Chinese apps

Continued from P1

"These measures have been undertaken since there is credible information that these apps are engaged in activities which are prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order," the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology statement had said.

According to the ministry, the move would safeguard the interests of crores of Indian mobile users.

Other Chinese apps in the banned list were Club Factory, SHAREit, Likee, Mi Video Call (Xiaomi), Weibo, Baidu, BIGO LIVE and more.



**TODAY'S QUOTE**

**Coal India will invest over ₹1.22 lakh cr**


“ With an aim to achieve 1 billion tonnes (BT) coal production by the year 2023-24 and make the nation Aatmanirbhar in coal, Coal India Ltd (CIL) will invest over Rs 1.22 lakh crores on 500 projects related to coal evacuation, infrastructure - Union Coal Minister **Pralhad Joshi**



**COVID TOLL**

**Oz in recession for 1st time in 30 yrs**

Australia has officially entered its first recession after nearly 30 years, with the June quarter GDP numbers showing the economy went backwards by 7 per cent, the worst fall on record, official figures revealed on Wednesday. The latest figure follows a fall of 0.3 per cent in the March quarter.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	77.45	South	
Euro	91.12	African Rand5.04	
UAE Dirham	21.88	Hong Kong Dollar10.84	
Thai Baht	2.69	Japanese Yen0.79	
British Pound	101.39	New Zealand Dollar51.86	
Australian Dollar	56.38	Saudi Riyal21.43	
Canadian Dollar	58.69	Swedish Krona9.65	
Swiss Franc	83.32	Singapore Dollar56.35	

DELHI THURSDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2020

**BIZ BRIEFS**

**NCC gets ₹1,548 cr orders in Aug**

**Hyderabad:** Infrastructure major NCC on Wednesday it had received six orders, totalling to Rs 1548 crore (exclusive GST) in the month of August 2020. Out of these, one order of Rs 959 crore pertains to Water Division and second order of Rs 262 crore pertains to Building Division and balance four orders of Rs 327 crore pertain to Electrical Division. These orders are received from State Government agencies and do not include any internal orders.

**AstraZeneca's diabetes drug**

**Hyderabad:** AstraZeneca Pharma India Limited, a bio-pharmaceutical company, announced the full results from the clinical trials of its latest diabetes drug, Dapagliflozin, which showed significant benefits in reducing chronic kidney disease (CKD) progression in patients with and without type-2 diabetes. This CKD benefit is over and above the superior anti-diabetic and heart failure benefits. Dr Anil Kukreja, Vice President – Medical Affairs & Regulatory, AstraZeneca India, said: "Due to life style changes, increased life expectancy, and high prevalence of non-communicable diseases, chronic kidney disease is uniformly affecting low and middle income countries including India. Despite currently available therapies, a significant unmet need for effective management of CKD continues to exist globally". The DAPA-CKD trial which included 201 Indian patients with CKD into a global clinical study enrolling 4,304 patients, was able to show a benefit in patients with CKD, he said.

**Compaq enters TV segment**

**Hyderabad:** Compaq on Tuesday introduced its range of smart televisions in the Indian market through a licensing association with Ossify Industries. The company launched two models of Hex QLED series, at a starting price of Rs 59,999, which will be available on e-commerce platform Flipkart, it said. It is also planning to go offline and touch the mass market in the next one year, Compaq Television CEO South Asia and Middle East Anand Dubey said. "With this launch, we have taken the first of many steps towards establishing...Compaq as a brand that presents great options to customers in all segments and sizes of smart televisions," Dubey said. The TVs are being manufactured in India and will also be exported to the Middle East and South Asian markets, he added.

**Hyundai adds Board members**

**Hyderabad:** Automobile manufacturer Hyundai Motor India has added two new Directors on its Board. According to the company, Ganesh Mani S, Director-Production, and Tarun Garg, Director-Sales, Marketing & Service have been inducted on the Board. The new Board members will hold office for a period of three years effective August 24, 2020, to guide the company's strategy, operations and lead the "organisation's initiatives towards a successful and meaningful future". Hyundai Motor India, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hyundai Motor Company. It currently offers 11 car models across segments and has a fully integrated manufacturing plant near Chennai. Meanwhile, Hyundai Motor India on Tuesday reported a 6.06 per cent decline in total sales at 52,609 units in August. The company had sold 56,005 units in the same month last year. Domestic sales, however, were up 19.9 per cent to 45,809 units as against 38,205 units in August 2019.

# AP to develop bulk drug park in Nellore

**APIIC signs MoU with IICT for developing the park**

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** The Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd (APIIC) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with CSIR-IICT in the presence of Mekapati Goutham Reddy, Minister for Industries, on Wednesday, in which he participated virtually from Nellore district.

On this occasion, the Minister informed that the objective of MoU is to develop a collaborative partnership between State government and CSIR-IICT in establishing Bulk Drug Park (BDP) by seeking financial support from the Indian Government. The Hyderabad-based Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-IICT) will provide necessary technical support as the knowledge partner in preparing the proposal to be submitted by the State government to the government of India.

It may be noted that the central government has recently launched a scheme on promotion of BDPs for financing common infrastructure facilities in three parks with a financial assistance of Rs 3,000 crore for next five years.

Taking advantage of it, the State government is establish-



**In this park, incentives will be given to the eligible manufacturers of identified 53 critical bulk drugs on their incremental sales for next six years. Out of 53 identified bulk drugs, 26 are fermentation based drugs and 27 are chemical synthesis based drugs**

ing one out of the three BDPs in Andhra Pradesh. The government has to develop the park on an extent of at least 2000 acres of land. In this park, incentives will be given to the eligible manufacturers of identified 53 critical bulk drugs on their incremental sales for next six years. Out of 53 identified bulk drugs, 26 are fermentation based bulk drugs and 27 are chemical synthesis based bulk drugs. Goutham Reddy stated that the AP is home to many global and national pharma players and various companies

have set up their manufacturing hubs in different cities of the State. The Jawaharlal Nehru Pharma City (JNPC) developed at Parawada near Visakhapatnam in 2,400 acres of which 611 acres fall under the ambit of Special Economic Zone (SEZ), has attracted major investments. AP is the third largest State in pharmaceutical sector and has 16 per cent share. The total output from the pharma industry in the State is estimated as \$5 billion and the exports are estimated at \$1 billion per annum.

## Flipkart launches B2B marketplace

**Bengaluru:** E-commerce platform Flipkart on Wednesday launched operations of its digital business-to-business marketplace, Flipkart Wholesale, with an aim to connect local manufacturers with retailers and bring the entire wholesale marketplace at their fingertips.

The platform is currently available for fashion retailers, especially footwear and apparel, in Gurugram, Delhi and Bengaluru, with plans to expand to Mumbai as well, the company said in a statement.

Flipkart Wholesale also plans to expand to 20 more cities and in categories such as home and kitchen and grocery by the end of this year. "With the strong capability within the group in B2B, we will focus on meeting the needs of kiranas and MSMEs by providing these small businesses a wide selection at significant value,

**It will connect local manufacturers with retailers**



powered by technology to make their lives easier," said Adarsh Menon, Senior Vice President and Head, Flipkart Wholesale.

"Whether in grocery, general merchandise or fashion, these businesses will have one-stop access to an extensive selection of products with attractive schemes and incentives."

Accessible to retailers via the app on Google Play Store, the B2B digital platform aims to rope in over 300 strategic partners and have over two lakh listings in two months.

## Indian cos embracing AI in big way

**60% believe that AI will disrupt their business: Nasscom-EY survey**

**New Delhi:** Nearly 70 per cent of Indian enterprises that deployed Artificial Intelligence (AI) have achieved measurable results while 60 per cent believe that AI will disrupt their business within the next 2-3 years, a new Nasscom-EY survey said on Wednesday.

While 74 per cent enterprises established either a formal strategy or obtained C-suite sponsorship to initiate or scale-up their AI programmes, 78 per cent believed re-skilling of the existing talent will aid in maximizing value from AI.

"Implementing AI will not only catalyze the innovation to stay competitive but also generate long-term value for enterprises. The survey is ready reckoner that AI adoption is a critical competitive lever. It enables business leaders to infuse technology at speed," said Debjani Ghosh, Pres-



ident, Nasscom. As business leaders continue to recognise the role AI can play in providing competitive advantage and generating long-term value, the top three areas cited by the survey respondents where AI is believed to add

maximum value were; operational efficiency, customer experience and revenue growth.

"AI adopters have already achieved remarkable success in transforming their business models, operational processes and

stakeholder experiences. As business leaders continue to push the frontiers of technology and the future success of AI will be driven only by our inspiration and imagination," explained Nitin Bhatt, Partner & Technology Sector Leader, EY India.

Sectors such as BFSI and retail that are intensive in terms of recorded or digitized data were found to be leading in AI adoption with 36 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively.

While end-customer centric functions were most favoured by organizations in retail and BFSI sectors, healthcare and agriculture cited operations to be the function with the highest potential for AI deployment, the survey added. The joint survey assessed the responses of over 500 CXOs on the maturity of AI adoption and the challenges faced by enterprises in their AI journey.

## Umbrella PLI scheme on anvil to spur domestic mfg

**Centre likely to allocate Rs 40,000 cr for this scheme this year**

**New Delhi:** The government proposes to introduce an umbrella production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme with an allocation of about Rs 40,000 crore to replace the existing Merchandise Exports India Scheme (MEIS) scheme introduced in April 2015 to promote manufacturing and exports of specified goods from India.

Government sources said that a high-level meeting chaired by the Cabinet Secretary took place on Wednesday to discuss measures to promote domestic manufacturing, undertake import substitution and thrash out details of a universally applicable production-linked incentive (PLI) and phased manufacturing programme (PMP) scheme.

Unlike the existing PLI schemes introduced by the Ministry of Electronics and IT for mobile phone manufacturing and the Ministry of Chemicals and



Fertilisers for promoting bulk drug and medical device parks, the one being proposed now would be an umbrella scheme that could be adopted by any ministry that comes up with viable plan on import substitution and promotion of domestic manufacturing.

The government proposes to fund the new scheme with an initial allocation of Rs 40,000 crore in the current year with allocation rising by about 10 per cent every year depending on the need. Like the existing PLI schemes, the umbrella scheme would also be operational for a period of five years.

The allocation from the scheme would from what was required under MEIS.

Sources said that the government proposes to expand the scope of PLI to cover nine or 10 more sectors including air conditioners and TV sets, leather, chemicals, furniture, tyres, toys, solar cells, auto components, capital goods, textile and food processing. Apart from PLI, a phased manufacturing programme (PMP) will also be launched especially in areas of import substitution and where some domestic manufacturing capability exists. This would cover some electronics items, surgical instruments, sports equipment, optical and photographic instruments, and power equipment.

Under PMP, the government will look at providing duty protection to the sector for some time so that manufacturing could be established.

## Vodafone mulls raising funds post AGR verdict

**New Delhi:** The Board of Directors of Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) will meet on Friday to discuss and evaluate proposals for raising funds in one or more tranches through public issue, issue of equity shares or securities among other options.

The announcement came after the Supreme Court's September 1, verdict on the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) issue, wherein the top court gave a 10-year timeline to the telcos to repay their dues, with an upfront payment of 10 per cent by March 31, 2021.

"A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on September 4, 2020, inter-alia, to consider and evaluate any and all proposals for raising of funds," the company said.

The board will consider raising funds in one or more tranches by way of a public issue, preferential allotment, private placement, including a qualified institutions placement or through any other



permissible mode or combination thereof, by way of issue of equity shares or by issue of any instruments or securities, including securities convertible into equity shares.

According to an assessment by the Department of Telecommunications, (DoT), Vodafone Idea owed a total of Rs 58,254 crore. As per the government, the operator now owes balance AGR dues of around Rs 50,399 crore.

On Wednesday, shares of Vodafone Idea rose after plunging in the previous session weighed down by the Supreme Court verdict. Its shares on the BSE were trading at Rs 9.61 in the morning, higher by 8.10 per cent from its previous close.

## Apollo holds webinar on JCI

HANS BUSINESS

**Hyderabad:** The Apollo Hospitals Group marked the 15th anniversary of its JCI accreditation by organising a webinar on patient safety and quality of care in association with Joint Commission International, USA (JCI) and the National Accreditation Board of Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH). It was in July 2005 that the Apollo Hospitals Group clocked a major milestone when Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi became the 1st hospital in the country and the 6th in Asia to be accredited by the JCI.

Since then, eight hospitals in the group including the Apollo Proton Cancer Centre have joined the elite list of JCI accredited hospitals for best global practices.

Dr Prathap C Reddy, Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group, said: "It is a matter of immense pride that our JCI accreditation journey that began 15 years ago has seen eight hospitals in our group achieving this gold standard".



## CINE STARS TAKE UP GREEN INDIA CHALLENGE



Payal Rajput



Satyam Rajesh



Pradeep

## 3-day TS People's Assembly to discuss problems, post-Covid

Representatives from different voluntary organisations will present 'People's Charter' to MLAs of different parties

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** Different voluntary organisations will team up to raise several issues troubling people during the Telangana People's Assembly to be held from September 4 to 6.

According to organisers, the 3-day 'Assembly' will raise real issues concerning the people of the State. The representatives of different NGOs will be demanding that the issued that should be heard in the upcoming monsoon session of the State Assembly starting from September 7. Through six online thematic sessions covering all major sectors, the speakers will highlight the important issues. Later the 'people's charter' will be presented

to MLAs of different political parties on September 7.

The inaugural session (September 4) will be addressed by Prof Haragopal, Prof Sujatha Surepalli, Kaneez Fathima, and Rachana Mudraboina.

Elaborating through online press meet, the organisers said that during the crisis triggered by Covid and lockdown, the people of the State faced serious problems owing to failure of governance as well as the lack of democratic spaces to raise people's issues. This has been acutely felt in the case of migrant workers and food security during the lockdown as well as the mounting health crisis due to pandemic and failure of the health system.

"The People's Assembly is a concerted attempt to address the governance failure and the collapse of democratic spaces. It will bring together the most committed persons from people's organizations from across all sectors onto one platform. About 100 speakers including experts, leaders of people's organizations and people from various walks of life (urban workers, farmer suicide victims, farm workers, advisers, Dalits, women, transgender persons, etc) will enrich the People's Assembly," they said.

Ravi Kanneganti (Rythu Swarajya Vedika), S.Jeevan Kumar (Human Rights Forum), Purushottam Rao (All India Parents Association) and others addressed the media persons.

## Sarpanches, MPTCs demand release of development funds

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Ranga Reddy:** MPTCs and sarpanches said that there is a shortage of funds to solve the problems of the public, at a general body meeting held in Shadnagar on Wednesday.

Several public representatives have bought many issues to their attention. A heated debate took place between the officials and the people's representatives during the meeting.

At the meeting, Chowdamma Gutta sarpanch Krishna lamented that there were no funds for development. The condition of his village is getting worse day by day, he pointed. The MPTCS and sarpanches stopped him from walking out of the meeting.

Later, Mogiligidda MPTC Kotla Srisailem alleged that the government officials have not been responding upon any issue and are not trying to solve the problem. Tahsildar Pandu said that the ration shop owners are behaving rhetorically with the people. MPP Khaja Mohamad Idris assured the sarpanches and the MPTCs that action will be taken against the wrongdoers and will make sure that the information about the development activities will be updated to all of them.

ZPTC Venkat Ramreddy, mandal tahsildar Pandu Nayak, MEO Shankar Rathod, vice MPP Shiva Jyothi along with sarpanches, MPTCS, officials attended the meeting.

## KCR snatches away Dalits' lands, alleges Manda Krishna

The government often acquires lands from Dalits for different welfare projects, but doesn't touch properties of upper caste people, says MRPS leader

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Warangal:** Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao who promised to give land to Dalits is in fact snatching the same from them, the MRPS founder Manda Krishna Madiga said, speaking at the MRPS leaders' hunger protest demanding three acres land to Dalits, here on Wednesday.

"KCR, who promised to make a Dalit the CM of Telangana, failed to fulfil it so he promised three acres land to the SC and STs. But he targeted Dalits to make them landless by acquiring their land for Hariitha Haram, dump yard, Rythu Veditak etc," he said.

Although the upper caste sections own hundreds of acres, the government is not trying to acquire them, he said, criticising the other parties for maintaining



silence over the issue, Manda Krishna said.

"Even though 100 acres of assigned land is available in Sidipet, the KCR government is not interested in distributing it to Dalits. The government wants to utilise it for its various departments," he said.

Stating that the government had acquired 70 acres belonging

to Dalits in Station Ghanpur constituency, Manda questioned two former deputy chief ministers Kadiyam Srihari and Thatikonda Rajaiah why they were not coming to the rescue of the Dalits.

Jannu Inesh Madiga, MSP State president Teegala Pradeep Goud, Manda Kumar, Putta Ravi and Velpula Veeranna were among others present.

## YSRCP leaders pay tribute to former CM YS Rajasekhara Reddy

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Ranga Reddy:** YSRCP leaders paid homage to former Chief Minister late YS Rajasekhara Reddy on his 11th death anniversary on Wednesday.

Leaders in Shadnagar, Chevella, Shamshabad, LB Nagar, Serilingampally, Ibrahimpatnam paid tribute to the former CM. Shadnagar YSRCP leaders paid floral tributes to his statue at Shadnagar

chowrasta. On this occasion the YSRCP district president Bobbili Sudhakar Reddy said that Rajasekhara Reddy was a great leader and he always worked for the betterment of the people.

State YSRCP minority secretary Ibrahim said that YSR introduced several schemes like Pavala Vaddi programme, Rajiv Arogya Shree and Indiramma Illu that were helpful for the people, especially for those belonging to underpriv-

ileged communities. Full reimbursement of college tuition for the underprivileged and reservations for minorities were instituted. YSRCP district youth president Sheelam Srinu, district secretary Patti Santhosh, YSRCP Shadnagar senior leader Kona Devaiah, Keshampet mandal president Manasani Ramreddy, district minority leaders Basheer, Jahangir, Saber along with others were also present.



Victims' relatives at the MGM Hospital in Warangal

## 5 die as car rams into lorry

**Warangal:** Five youth travelling in a car died in a road mishap near Pasargonda village under Damera mandal in Warangal Rural district in the wee hours of Wednesday.

The car collided with a sand-laden lorry. The impact was such that all the five occupants of the car who were in their mid-20s died on the spot.

The victims were identified as Mekala Praveen, Mekala Rakesh, Medi Pavan of Pochamma Maidan, Raheem of Auto Nagar in Warangal, and Rohit of Nay-

em Nagar in Hanamkonda.

According to the police, the lorry was coming from Kaleshwaram and the car was moving towards Mulugu when the mishap occurred at around 1.30 am.

The police had a tough time to retrieve the bodies struck in the mangled car. It's learnt that the mishap occurred when the victims' car was overtaking another car. Parkal ACP Srinivas visited the spot. The police shifted the bodies to MGM Hospital for post-mortem.

## Karimnagar task force arrests conman

The accused collected about Rs 4 crore from gullible people by promising jobs in various district courts and other government departments

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** The Karimnagar task force on Wednesday arrested a fraudster, D. Ramesh (30), a native of Warangal district for cheating gullible by pretending to be a vigilance officer.

According to police, the accused person had cheated many people by promising jobs in various courts and other government departments and for preparing fake documents. Fake appointment letters, stamps, promissory notes, bank account details and others were seized from him.

He created fake ID cards of different government departments and also claimed to be the only vigilance officer in the Warangal district to be appointed by the merit list declared by the high court.

The issue came to light when the accused started an office to settle

civil disputes in the DMS complex in Huzurabad. He proclaimed to be the district vigilance officer and started settling disputes and by using the name of the court he contacted many people through Facebook and lured them in his trap and later on cheated them of huge money, said the police.

The accused collected about Rs four crore from gullible people by promising jobs in various district courts, and other government departments. He collected Rs 40 lakh from a Singareni worker Kaitha Ramachandram of Godavarikhani of Peddapalli district by promising a junior assistant's job to his son in GHMC and two more jobs to his relatives. Ramachandram had given money to Ramesh by selling his two houses, said the Commissioner of Karimnagar police, V B Kamalasan Reddy.

He noted, "The modus operandi

of accused was to become rich in a short span of time and he adopted the dubious means to cheat people. The accused created fake appointment letters stating that A V Parthasaradhi, Principal District Judge, Karimnagar and K V Vidhyasagar Rao, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Adilabad recruited junior assistant posts.

He also created a fake cheque stating that K V Vidhyasagar Rao, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Adilabad, had given Rs 2.75 lakh to him. He also prepared documents stating that he got Rs 5 crore from RBI and Rs 6.5 was paid towards GST."

In such a way, the accused person has cheated many gullible people and was planning to cheat further. However, he was arrested under sections 417, 420, 468, 471 r/w 34 of IPC and will be remanded to judicial custody, said the police.

## Fans, JSP leaders celebrate chief Pawan Kalyan's birthday

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Ranga Reddy:** Shadnagar Jana Sena Party (JSP) leaders celebrated the birthday of the party leader and film actor Pawan Kalyan. The JSP leaders distributed essential commodities to the workers of 5 theatres in Shadnagar under the auspices of JSP executive committee member Md Ashraf. On this occasion, Raju Nayak and Ashraf while expressing their deepest condolences to the families of the three fans of Pawan Kalyan who died of electrocution and further informed that four were severely injured. They also said they will strive for the betterment of the party and form committees in the villages. Jana Sena Party leaders and admirers of Pawan Kalyan participated in the programme.



## PDS rice scams on rise in RR

As lockdown norms ease, PDS rice smugglers intensify attempts to resume their illegal business

## SRINIVAS GUDIPALLI

**Ranga Reddy:** The district has been facing a rapid growth in PDS rice scam cases since the lockdown began.

Recently, the PDS rice being illegally stored and transported to different parts of the country has been seized in several places. With the lockdown easing in the district, PDS rice smugglers have intensified their attempts to resume their illegal business.

There have been several incidents that have taken place recently.

Commissioner's South task force team raided a house where the rice meant for distribution under PDS was illegally stored with the team seizing 100 quintals of rice from the place. Other incidents include officials seizing a total of 90 quintals of PDS rice from a rice mill in Keshampet; seizing 30 quintals of illegally stored PDS rice in

Shadnagar on August 23.

Police caught at least five gangs in yet another incident in Chandrayangutta on June 13 who were involved in procuring the rice meant to be distributed or already dispensed under the PDS. Rachakonda Police in another incident on August 13 arrested 11 persons on charges of illegally procuring PDS rice from beneficiaries and selling them to dealers in Maharashtra at higher rates.

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** In continuation with the investigation against Keesara Tahsildar, Evra Balraju Nagaraju, the sleuths of Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday opened a bank locker and recovered over 1.5 kg of gold worth Rs 57.6 lakh from it.

According to ACB officials, the locker key was found from Tahsildar's residence during the search. After a lot of questioning, the Tahsildar revealed the source of the key to the ACB officials who then visited the

South Indian Bank of Alwal branch.

With the help of bank officials, the locker was opened. The locker was booked in the name of GJ Narender, a relative of Tahsildar. The seized gold ornaments would be deposited in the court of special judge for SPE and ACB cases, informed the ACB officials.

The Tahsildar was caught red-handed on August 14 when the ACB sleuths raided his residence in AS Rao Nagar and seized unaccounted cash of Rs 1.18 crore. In subsequent searches, Rs 27 lakh cash besides

many property documents were also found.

Later, the Tahsildar was arrested as he acted hand-in-glove with two real estate dealers. The trio was engaged in a cash transaction with regard to 28 acres of land at Rampally Dayara, Keesara mandal. As the land was under dispute, a few parties approached the High Court and obtained favorable orders.

However, the Tahsildar demanded a bribe of Rs 2 crore to issue pattadar passbook. Currently, all the accused are lodged at Chanchalguda jail.

## Cops suspended over corruption

**Ranga Reddy:** Rachakonda police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat suspended Nacharam SI Shiva Kumar and two constables on Wednesday.

According to the commissioner, Nacharam SI along with constables E Ramulu and M Ashok were placed under suspension for exhibiting gross misconduct, demanding and accepting bribes from the accused for helping them in storing banned gutkha products. Rachakonda CP requested the citizens to inform on WhatsApp on 9490617111 in case there is any illegal demand by any police personnel while discharging his duty.



US OPEN

# Sumit Nagal storms into 2<sup>nd</sup> round

## Murray wins 5-set epic on Grand Slam comeback

**New York (IANS):** Indian tennis star Sumit Nagal scripted history by becoming the first Indian since 2013 to enter the second round of the US Open, while Andy Murray made a spectacular return to the grand slam singles stage with a gruelling five-set victory in the first round.

Nagal stormed into the second round of the Grand Slam by defeating US' Bradley Klahn 6-1, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 on Tuesday. With this the 23-year-old became the first Indian to win a singles main draw match at a Grand Slam in the last seven years.

Nagal maintained a win percentage of 80 per cent on his first serves in the first set during which the experienced American made 15 unforced errors.

The Indian continued to dominate and clinched the second set 6-3 but was broken at a crucial juncture in the 3rd set after which Klahn held his serve and forced a 4th set.

Nagal gathered his focus back and clinched an early break. There was no looking back from



thereon as the Indian youngster wrapped the first-round match in 2 hours and 12 minutes.

Andy Murray secured a brilliant 4-6, 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4), 6-4 come-from-behind victory in a 4 hour and 39 min encounter against 49th-ranked Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka, in his first singles Grand Slam match in 18 months following an injury and the coronavirus pandemic.

The Scot will now play 15th seed Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime in the second round. His comeback appeared to be heading for disaster when he went 1-3 down in the third set, appearing all-but-certain to be heading for an embarrassing straight-sets exit.

However, showing the grit and determination that led him to three Grand Slam wins during his peak, Murray hauled himself

into a 5-4 lead before taking the set on a tie-break. By then, Murray was playing more aggressively, forcing Nishioka on back foot and to err of his own.

The first four games of set four went to serve until a Murray double fault put him a break down. Murray immediately broke back though, a delicate back-handed lob from deep making the score 3-3, before breaking again for game, set, match.

# Sindhu withdraws from Uber Cup, doubtful for Denmark Open too

**New Delhi (PTI):** World champion P V Sindhu has pulled out of next month's Thomas and Uber Cup Finals due to "personal reasons" and could also miss the subsequent Super 750 tournaments in Denmark.

The Thomas and Uber Cup Finals, scheduled to be held from October 3 to 11 in Aarhus, Denmark is the first tournament in the revised calendar, which was launched by the sport's governing body BWF last week.

"Sindhu will not be able to participate in the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals due to some personal reasons," the Olympic silver-medallist's father P V Ramana told PTI.

"She has some personal work, so unfortunately she will have to skip the event. We have informed the Badminton Association of India about her decision," he added.

The Thomas and Uber Cup Finals will be followed by the Denmark Open I (October 13-18) and Denmark Masters (October 20-25).

An Olympic hopeful, Sindhu, who has been training at the national badminton camp in Hyderabad, had been planning to participate in the prestigious tournament.



Asked if she would be participating in the two 750 events in Denmark, Ramana said: "Actually that is also (in doubt) ... I mean the entries have been sent for both the events, but it depends on her personal work if she would be able to play both or not."

"She may have to skip one tournament in Denmark. If she can complete her personal work then she will play one."

Sindhu had resumed training last month under the supervision of Korean coach Park Tae-Sang after the Sports Authority of India (SAI) allowed the national camp for eight Olympic hopefuls following approval from the Telangana government on August 1.

Besides Sindhu, world championship bronze medallist B Sai Pra-

neeth, former world no.1 Kidambi Srikanth and women's doubles player N Sikki Reddy are the only ones currently training at the SAI-Pullela Gopichand Academy.

Satwiksairaj Ranki Reddy, who recently tested positive for COVID-19, is at his home in Amalapuram in Andhra Pradesh, while his men's doubles partner Chirag Shetty is lodged in Mumbai.

Ashwini Ponnappa has preferred to stay in Bangalore and train at the Padukone-Dravid Centre of Sports Excellence.

London Olympics bronze medallist and women's world no.1 Saina Nehwal has still not joined the national camp and is training at a separate facility with husband Parupalli Kashyap and a few others, who are not part of the camp.



## T20 International series final

# Hafeez shines as Pak seal narrow win to level series against Eng

**Manchester (IANS):** Pakistan batsman Mohammad Hafeez hit a scintillating unbeaten 86 as the visitors beat England by five runs in the third and final Twenty20 International at Old Trafford to tie the series 1-1.

Batting first, Pakistan posted 190 for four in their 20 overs as Hafeez and debutant Haider Ali (54) shared a hundred runs partnership for the third wicket on Tuesday. England could only manage to reach 185 for eight despite a superb 61 from Moeen Ali.

In his brilliant inning, Hafeez smashed six sixes in his 52-ball 86. Haider also became the first Pakistan player to score a Twenty20 half-century on debut when he brought up his milestone from 28 deliveries and his century stand with Hafeez came off 10 overs.

Chasing a tough total, Eng-

land were in early trouble when opener Jonny Bairstow was bowled by Shaheen Afridi (2-28) for a duck. Captain Eoin Morgan was run out for 10 as partner Tom Banton refused a run, and when the latter was leg before wicket to Haris Rauf for 46 from 31 deliveries, England were teetering at 69 for four.

Moeen and Sam Billings (26) put on 57 for the fifth wicket, and the former kept his side in the game with some power hitting, leaving them needing 20 from the last two overs. But a brilliant penultimate over from seamer Wahab Riaz (2-26) went for just three runs, including the wicket of Moeen, who scored 61 off 33 balls.

The hosts will now prepare for a three-match Twenty20 series against Australia that starts in Southampton on Friday.

# IPL TO TAKE PLACE AS SCHEDULED

**New Delhi (IANS):** Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) treasurer Arun Dhumal on Wednesday made it clear that the Indian Premier League (IPL) would begin on September 19 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as scheduled.

Doubts about the 2020 IPL had arisen after 13 members of the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) tested positive for Coronavirus last month, and that led to speculation that the tournament might be postponed, depending on the COVID-19 situation in the UAE.

However, Dhumal said that everything was fine now in the UAE and the event would take place as planned.

"They all [CSK members] have come negative now. And the IPL will take place as scheduled; there is no doubt about that. Don't worry, players are following the COVID-19 protocols and matches will be played without spectators. So, I don't think there will be any problem with that," Dhumal told IANS.

The BCCI has also put on hold the release of the tournament schedule. Asked about it, the BCCI treasurer said the Board is in talks with the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB), "and hopefully the announcement will be made soon". "IPL Chairman Brijesh Patel is also there in the UAE and he is working on it. The ECB is helping us in all the way possible. Just hope for the best," he added.

It is also learnt that the BCCI could go for a change in the schedule it has reportedly prepared if it goes ahead with the already decided dates. In that



## JAMES PATTINSON TO REPLACE LASITH MALINGA

**New Delhi:** Mumbai Indians has signed on Australian speedster James Pattinson as a replacement for Lasith Malinga for the Dream11 IPL 2020 season.

Lasith Malinga has requested unavailability for the season for personal reasons and wants to be with family back home in Sri Lanka.

James Pattinson will join MI Family currently based in Abu Dhabi this weekend.

Owner Akash Ambani welcomed James on board and extended all support to Lasith.

"James is the right fit for us and adds to our pace attack options available at hand especially for the conditions we will play in this season in UAE. Lasith is a legend and a pillar of MI's strength. There is no denying the fact that we will miss Lasith's cricketing acumen this season.

case, the opening encounter of the tournament could be held between champions Mumbai Indians and the runners-up of 2018 edition, Sunrisers Hyderabad. It was expected the opening game would be between Mumbai Indians and 2019 run-

ners-up CSK.

All eight teams have resumed training in the UAE, but CSK is yet to hit the ground running. They were quarantined after 13 members of the squad tested positive. They are likely to start training from September 4.

## Men wrestlers join Sonapat camp, some lock themselves inside rooms

**New Delhi (IANS):** After a long wait, the national camp for men wrestlers is all set to begin on September 15 in Sonapat, Haryana. So far, eight wrestlers have reached the venue and some have completely "locked themselves" inside their rooms for 14 days to comply with COVID-19 protocols.

While speaking to IANS, a Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) official heaved a sigh of relief that the camp was about to begin. "We have been waiting for it for so long. The federation is very happy. Hopefully, the women's camp would also start soon," the official said. "We also wish that this [men's] camp goes ahead without any trouble [vis-a-vis Covid-19]. Some wrestlers have completely locked themselves inside their rooms and don't want to take any chances with their health. They say they will cook their own food inside the room and eat there only," he added.

# Ex-hockey star likens own miserable Covid quarantine to Raina's

**New Delhi (IANS):** Former India hockey World Cup-winning star Ashok Diwan on Wednesday sympathised with cricketer Suresh Raina for withdrawing from the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) camp after he reportedly found the COVID-19 protocols unsettling in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), saying he experienced a similar jail-like confinement to a small hotel room during his quarantine in Delhi recently.

Diwan, who was part of the Indian team that clinched the 1975 World Cup, said that he spent 11 "forgettable" days confined to a hotel room in Delhi in May. He had returned from the United States of America after meeting his son. He likened his quarantine period to a jail term.

Raina, who recently retired from international cricket along with his good friend MS Dhoni, was in the UAE for the IPL, which is scheduled to begin on September 19.

"I can understand what Raina might have gone through while being confined to a room during



the quarantine period, if that is the real reason for his return to India from the UAE. I felt the same. I found it very difficult to kill time inside the room. My hotel room's windows would not open and had no balcony, though it was an air-conditioned room. I missed fresh air; it was like a jail," Diwan told IANS on Wednesday.

"The food would be left outside the door, and the man would just

keep it outside the door, ring the bell to inform about it, and leave. Also, I had to do the bed. No man would come inside the room. Only I know how I spent those 11 days in solitary confinement of that small hotel room. It was really tough on me. When I came out of it, it was like I was out of jail," said the 66-year-old Delhi-based former player.

Diwan, however, pointed out

that his case and that of Raina are slightly different. "I had no option but to comply with the Indian government's protocols for people returning to India from foreign countries and go into a 14-day quarantine. My quarantine period was reduced to 11 days. And Raina was in quarantine as per another country's COVID-19 quarantine protocols when he was going to compete in a cricket tournament," said the diminutive Diwan, who represented India from 1975 to 1981.

Another difference between the two is that when Diwan went into quarantine in May he was about to turn 66 while Raina is 33.

Several reasons are being cited for Raina's return, and one of them is that he felt uneasy in the room that he was staying in. And, on his return to India, Raina has said that he took the decision to withdraw for family reasons, and has talked in a conciliatory tone. He told NDTV that the hotel room was not the reason for his withdrawal. There are also hints that he might re-join the CSK camp for the IPL.

## ISL: Odisha FC sign Brazilian forward Marcelinho

**Bhubaneswar (IANS):** Odisha FC on Wednesday announced that the club had secured the services of experienced Brazilian footballer Marcelo Leite Pereira ahead of the seventh edition of the Indian Super League (ISL).

The 33-year-old forward signed a one-year contract with the Bhubaneswar-based team on Wednesday.

With an ability to play as a striker or in the wings or as an attacking midfielder, Marcelinho has a vast experience of playing in various leagues around the world, including the ISL. He was the Golden Boot winner in the 2016 season when he scored scoring 10 goals in 15 appearances for Delhi Dynamos and guided the team into the play-offs.

Marcelinho then played for FC Pune City/Hyderabad FC for three consecutive seasons and scored 31 goals and made 18 assists in 63 ISL matches. After starting his professional career with Atletico Madrid B, the

Rio de Janeiro-born playmaker has played club football for various other teams in the UAE, Greece, Spain, Italy, and his home country Brazil.

Welcoming Marcelinho to the club, head coach Stuart Baxter stated: "With good experience of Indian football, he is a record that is admired by many, Marcelinho represents a good signing on all fronts. "A delighted Marcelinho said: "I am very motivated for the challenge. I really want to do well with my new team and new coach. I hope that we have an amazing season ahead and I can't wait for this [to begin]."

