



WINDOWS



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to General Staff chief Valery Gerasimov during a video call at the Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow on Wednesday. Russian President Vladimir Putin celebrates his 68th birthday on Wednesday

Modi greets Putin on his birthday

New Delhi (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday greeted Russian President Vladimir Putin on his birthday and appreciated the personal role he has played in nurturing the "special and privileged strategic partnership" between the two nations. In a telephonic conversation, Modi also conveyed his best wishes to Putin, who turned 68. "Spoke to my friend President Vladimir Putin @Kremlin-Russia. E to greet him on his birthday today. Appreciated his immense personal contribution to strengthening the Special & Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia," Modi tweeted. An official statement said the prime minister also recalled his long association and friendship with Putin and appreciated the personal role that the latter has played in nurturing the special and privileged strategic partnership between the two nations. Both leaders agreed to remain in touch over the coming days, including on the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. "The prime minister expressed his keenness to welcome President Putin in India, as soon as possible after the normalisation of the public health situation," the statement said.



Trump turns the knife in, H1B workers say deja vu

New curbs on H1B visas to protect US workers ahead of Presidential poll

NIKHILA NATARAJAN

New York (IANS): The Donald Trump administration moved on Tuesday to cut back H1B visas for foreign skilled workers and tightened wage-based entry barriers citing "data" that more than 500,000 Americans have lost their jobs because of "H1B non-immigrants". India and China account for the lion's share of H1B visas. As per US government data, India accounts for upwards of 70 per cent, most years. In a call with reporters, Acting Deputy DHS Secretary Ken Cuccinelli said about one-third of the people who have applied for H1B visas would be denied under the new rules.

With Trump laid up with Covid-19, his poll numbers tanking and less than 30 days to go before the

US election, the timing of the H1B visa hammering is business as usual for foreign workers. "It would have been a surprise if this hadn't happened," an H1B worker on site at JP Morgan in New York City told IANS. The worker asked not to be named. The salary requirement will be a "gamechanger" in favour of the Trump administration, this worker said.

Many H1B workers expressed a version of the same sentiment. They've seen this movie before. It's Trump's all-base, all the time anthem to fire up his most vocal supporters, they said.

The latest blow comes as the ducks line up across multiple departments that coordinate and monitor the criss-crossing elements of foreign worker visas: US Department of Labor (DoL), US Citizenship

and Immigration Services (USCIS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The Department of Labor's revisions to minimum salary requirements take effect Thursday and DHS' H1B revisions will hit home in 60 days.

"When seeking to employ an H-1B, H-1B1, or E-3 visa, US employers must attest that they will pay non-immigrant workers, during the period of authorized employment, the higher of the prevailing wage or the actual wage paid to other employees with similar experience and qualifications," US Department of Labor announced.

The gaslighting of the "low cost" H1B pay cheque is a well worn anthem and has become louder in the Trump years. The word "undercut" was used multiple times on Tues-

day in a round robin of smoothly co-ordinated press-releases and telephonic briefings across DoL and DHS.

The DoL rule will raise the four salary tiers for employees on H1Bs and other professional visas, which currently begin at the 17th percentiles for each industry, to the 45th percentile.

"Under the existing wage levels, artificially low prevailing wages provide an opportunity for employers to hire and retain foreign workers at wages well below what their US counterparts - meaning US workers in the same labor market, performing similar jobs, and possessing similar levels of education, experience, and responsibility - make, creating an incentive - entirely at odds with the statutory scheme - to prefer for-

eign workers to US workers, and causing downward pressure on the wages of the domestic workforce," reads an excerpt from the DoL interim final rule.

The Department is also tightening the screws on the definition of "specialty occupation" to make it align with what it calls the "verbatim" description.

In parallel, DHS will narrow the definition of "specialty occupation", require companies to make "real" offers to "real employees," and turbocharge its own ability to ensure compliance "before, during, and after an H1-B petition is approved".

"Data shows that the more than a half million H-1B non-immigrants in the United States have been used to displace US workers," read a statement from the Department of Homeland Security.



Rhea walks out of jail after 28 days

Mumbai (IANS): Hours after she was granted bail, Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty on Wednesday evening walked out of the Byculla Jail, having spent 28 days in custody since her arrest on September 8. In full media glare with tight police security, she quickly stepped into a vehicle and was driven off to her home in Santacruz in the western suburbs.

Earlier on Wednesday morning, Justice SV Kotwal of Bombay High Court granted her conditional bail on a surety of Rs 1 lakh, along with the late Sushant Singh Rajput's staffer Dipesh Sawant and his house manager Samuel Miranda.

However, her brother Showik and drug peddler Abdul Basit Parihar were refused bail.

Welcoming the court order, her lawyer Satish Maneshinde said "truth and justice have prevailed" and ultimately the submissions on facts and law have been accepted by Justice Kotwal.

"The arrest and custody of Rhea was totally unwarranted and beyond the reach of law. The hounding and witch hunt by three central agencies - the CBI, ED and NCB - of Rhea should come to an end. We remain committed to Truth. Satyameva Jayate," he added. In the evening, Maneshinde expressed relief saying Rhea will finally get to sleep on her own after a month in the jail.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner of Police Sangram Singh Nishandar again warned the paparazzi against chasing or obstructing any vehicles in which persons called for investigations travel in view of safety of all the stakeholders.

Delhi riots were big conspiracy, says MoS

Gurugram (PTI): The riots in Delhi this year were a "big conspiracy" to disturb the country but security forces like the Rapid Action Force (RAF) played an important role in "suppressing the elements that spread anarchy" during the time, Union minister Nityanand Rai said on Wednesday.

The minister of state for home was addressing RAF troops on the occasion of the force's 28th anniversary, or raising day, at a Central Reserve Police Force camp here. The RAF is a special anti-riot wing of the CRPF and was raised in 1992.

"A big conspiracy was deployed to disturb the country through the Delhi riots that took place this year. The RAF played an important role in suppressing the elements that spread anarchy and ensured peace," Rai said in his address to the troops.

He added that RAF personnel had "completely defeated" the nefarious designs of the ri-

oters. "You suffer damage and injury during riots and protests...but you use force only when violent groups start troubling the peace of society," the minister added.

The RAF was deployed during the communal violence that broke out in northeast Delhi in February, killing 53 people and injuring about 200. Delhi Police has filed multiple chargesheets before a Delhi court in these cases. The RAF has 15 battalions (over 15,000 personnel) based in various parts of the country. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also greeted RAF personnel on the occasion.

"Greetings to RAF personnel and their families on their 28th anniversary. RAF has distinguished itself in dealing with the challenges relating to law and order," the minister said on Twitter. "Time and again, their commitment in several humanitarian works and UN peacekeeping missions has made India proud," he added.

Delhi air turns 'very poor' as stubble burning begins

AAKANKSHA KHAJURIA

New Delhi (IANS): With the smoke from the burning of paddy stubble in Punjab and Haryana blowing to the national capital and its surrounding regions, the air quality of the region dipped to the 'very poor' category on Wednesday. This marks the beginning of the highly-polluted season that goes on to last for about three months.

With stubble burning, the air pollution reaches a crescendo in Delhi-NCR every winter, when pollutants combine with the suspended water droplets in the lower atmosphere to form a thick blanket of noxious smog, thus creating health hazards for the residents. According to the data of the Central Pollution Control Board, out of 35 pollution monitoring sta-



Smoke billows after a fire at a garbage mountain in a dumping yard, at Daddu Majra in Chandigarh on Wednesday

tions, the air quality index in as many as 22 stations, including RK Puram, Rohini, was in the poor category. Twelve stations, including one at IGI airport, JNU etc., recorded the index in the moderate category, while one station logged the 'very poor' category. The overall air quality near Mundka in West Delhi stood at 308 micrograms

per cubic in the very poor category, followed by 290 at Delhi Technical University (DTU) area. Very poor air quality causes respiratory illness on prolonged exposure, warned CPCB.

The synergized fire counts aggregated over Punjab, Haryana, and neighbouring border regions were found to be 336, as per the System of Air

Burning of 1 tonne of Brice crop residue releases about 13 kilograms of particulate matter, 60 kg of carbon monoxide and 1,460 kg of carbon dioxide and other harmful gases

— National Academy of Agricultural Sciences

Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR).

"The boundary layer wind direction and speed are favorable for slow transport from the external emission sources and local conditions are conducive for accumulation of pollutants in Delhi," air quality forecasting system stated in their daily bulletin.

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2 women win Nobel in chemistry for gene editing

Stockholm (IANS): In a historic moment, two women scientists have been awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for developing the tools to edit DNA, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced on Wednesday.

Professor Emmanuelle Charpentier and US biochemist Jennifer Doudna are the first women to share the prize (first time without a male collaborator) for their discovery known as Crispr-Cas9 genetic scissors. The winners will share the prize money of 10 million krona (\$1,10,400). "I wish that this will provide a positive

message specifically for young girls who would like to follow the path of science... and to show them that women in science can also have an impact with the research they are performing," said Charpentier. "This is not just for women, but we see a clear lack of interest in following a scientific path, which is very worrying".

Researchers need to modify genes in cells if they are to find out about life's inner workings. This used to be time-consuming, difficult and sometimes impossible work. Using the CRISPR/Cas9 genetic scissors, it is now possible to change the code



Emmanuelle Charpentier (left) and Jennifer Doudna win the 2020 Nobel Chemistry Prize

of life over the course of a few weeks.

"There is enormous power in this genetic tool, which affects us all. It has not only revolutionised basic science, but also re-

sulted in innovative crops and will lead to groundbreaking new medical treatments," said Claes Gustafsson, chair of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry. Using the

CRISPR/Cas9 genetic scissors, researchers can change the DNA of animals, plants and microorganisms with extremely high precision.

This technology has had a revolutionary impact on the life sciences, is contributing to new cancer therapies and may make the dream of curing inherited diseases come true.

This technology has revolutionised the molecular life sciences, brought new opportunities for plant breeding, is contributing to innovative cancer therapies and may make the dream of curing inherited diseases come true.

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Modi enters 20th year in public office without a break

New Delhi (ANI): Crossing another milestone, Prime Minister Narendra Modi entered 20th consecutive year as the democratically elected head of a government, without a break, on Wednesday.

The journey of the Prime Minister in public office

began on October 7, 2001, as the Chief Minister of Gujarat. This was followed by three terms as the Gujarat CM in 2002, 2007 and 2012, respectively.

During the third term as the Gujarat CM, however, Modi fought the 2014 general elections. His popularity, which was going through the roof both inside and outside the State, led to the BJP declaring him as its prime ministerial candidate in 2013.

He had been projected as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate for the PM post.

Defeating the Congress-led government which held sway at the Centre, CM Modi left Gujarat to take over the reins at the Centre. Since then, he has solidified

his position with the NDA coalition retaining its position in the Centre with an even bigger margin in the 2019 general elections.

"If the first term was fulfilling the needs of people then since 2019, PM Modi has set his sights on fulfilling the aspirations of the 130 crore Indians. Jammu and Kashmir has firmly been fully integrated in India and Article 370 is history. The Ram Mandir is now a reality with construction starting for a grand Ram Temple at the birth place of Prabhu Ram. Our farmers have finally been freed from artificially imposed chains on them and far-reaching, historic agricultural reforms are now a reality. A host of other reforms such as Labour Reforms, Coal Reforms, allowing private enterprise in the space sector, FDI reforms across the board and tax reforms have put in place a foundation for sustained years of economic growth," an article shared on the official website of PM Modi on the day read.

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Palaniswami will be AIADMK's CM candidate for 2021 polls

Chennai (IANS): Tamil Nadu's ruling AIADMK on Wednesday announced that Chief Minister K Palaniswami will be the party's chief ministerial candidate for the 2021 Assembly polls. The much-expected announcement was made by party Coordinator and Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam at the party headquarters here.

Accepting the demand of Panneerselvam, the party has also announced the setting up of a 11-member steering committee to guide the party. The formation of the steering committee was announced by party Joint Coordinator and Chief Minister Palaniswami.

The members of the steering



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami being congratulated by AIADMK coordinator and Deputy CM O Panneerselvam after the former was announced as party's chief ministerial candidate for the upcoming 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, at party office in Chennai on Wednesday

committee are: Dindigul C Sreenivasan, SP Velumani, P Thangamani, C Ve Shanmugam,

D Jayakumar, R Kamaraj, Manoj Pandian, JCD Prabhakar, P Mohan, Gopalakrishnan and Man-

ickam. Welcoming the announcement party cadres burst crackers and distributed sweets at the headquarters.

At the recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the party, the issue of announcing the Chief Ministerial candidate for the 2021 assembly elections was raised.

There were heated exchanges between the supporters of Panneerselvam and Palaniswami.

Panneerselvam's demand is to set up a steering committee to guide the party as per earlier agreement.

All these years Palaniswami was not agreeable for the steering committee and Panneerselvam remained silent. After the

party's Executive Committee meeting, Deputy Coordinator KP Munusamy told reporters that the party's Chief Ministerial candidate will be announced on October 7 by Panneerselvam and Palaniswami.

"There will not be any change in the current set up. The status quo will continue. The party will face the elections with Palaniswami heading the caretaker government while Panneerselvam stays party Coordinator," the senior official, who did not want to be identified, had told IANS. The past couple of days saw hectic discussions within the party to thrash out the differences and arrive at an amicable settlement.

Womenia



Celebrate your curves!

We want to celebrate curves and give them the royal treatment that they deserve! But as much as we love them, they do prove tricky when it comes to fashion. You can easily go wrong and end up accentuating all the wrong bits, or looking frumpy.

Follow these key tips to getting the balance right.

Feeling the fit

Avoid trying to 'hide' your figure in large, loose clothing. This is a large disservice to your curves, and can make you look larger – and sometimes sloppy! You also don't want to go too far the other way and squeeze into clothes that are too small. These will add visual kilos by highlighting each and every lump, as well as making you extremely uncomfortable. Find your true size and maybe even visit a tailor who can adjust clothes to fit you perfectly. You want to be in control of what curves you're showing off, highlighting your feminine shape by hugging in the right areas and skimming over others. Generally you'll want to enhance your waist and aim for an

hourglass-like shape.

Buck the trends

Fashion trends are not made for everybody. That's why everyone on the catwalk seems to be one size! It's lovely to be on trend but not if it does nothing for you. It's better to stick to classics that you know suit you, and accessorise to keep it modern. If you're wearing something that is made for your body you'll look even more stylish than everyone trying to fit into the latest version of tights and an oversized t-shirt.

It's what's underneath that counts

Do not underestimate the power of high-quality underwear. Supportive bras will lift and smooth, highlighting your assets while instantly dropping visual kilos from your shape. Well-fitting shapewear will also do wonders for smoothing your silhouette. The fit here is important – do not try to squeeze into something so tight that you can barely breathe. Not only will that be terrible for your health, but the hidden flesh will just be forced to pop out elsewhere!

Finding the right balance

Highlighting your bust in the right way can be tricky. While you don't want to smack people in the face with your cleavage (so to speak), you also don't want to have a neckline so high that it makes your chest look a lot bigger than it is. Try to find V-neck or scooped necklines that elongate your silhouette.

It's in the length

To elongated your legs and

make them look slimmer, choose the right length when picking skirts and dresses. You want a skirt/dress that ends where your legs start becoming slimmer (generally just above or below the knee), which will give the optical illusion of long, slim legs!

The dress rules

You've got a feminine body, and dresses are made for feminine bodies. When dress shopping, always remember these rules and you can never go wrong: nip your waist, hug your hips and skim over your lower body. Wrap dresses are your friend, as are shifts, A-lines and belted shirt dresses.

Keep it simple

Whether you're shopping for a top, pants, dress or skirt, simplicity is always going to be more flattering. Ruffles, frills, pleats, pockets, bows and other details – they're all just adding bulk and detracting from that gorgeous shapely silhouette.

Be wise, accessorise!

Accessories make an outfit, so don't hold back. Curvy girls should opt for bold statement jewellery, bright, colourful scarves worn long to elongate the silhouette, oversized handbags and killer shoes. While it's tempting to always go for black, a pop of colour in your outfit will lift your spirits and make you stand out. Accessories are a great way to do this. And the most important accessory? Your head! It's the first thing a person notices, so find a fantastic hairstyle that compliments you, and rock it!



Subashree (extreme left) seen with her young singers

Musical memories kept alive by young talent online

K NARESH KUMAR

What started off as a 'casual thought' the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a total lockdown is now a globally feted online music show, nearing 200 episodes. It is simultaneously hosted on popular digital platforms – YouTube, Facebook and mentioned on Instagram.

Appropriately titled 'Quarantine From Reality', this is a celebration of rare and forgotten gems of Tamil film music, put together by a nostalgia-obsessed Subashree Thankachalam.

Keeping away from the celebrities and musical legends of Chennai film industry (with whom Subashree has been associated independently as a TV professional and an international event host of music programmes) the charged-up cineaste explored deep into the talent pool of young singers that she had nurtured during her music shows for various satellite TV channels. Overcoming the initial trouble of inadequate tech support as the studios were closed, she went along with, as she says 'my children, who were willing to answer my call and present a song' in an exclusive interaction with The Hans India over e-mail.

Sustaining it initially with her own resources, Subashree recreated olden, forgotten classics from the years 1950 to 1995. These were reprised by a variety of singers from across the globe (around 50 of them from India, USA, UK, Europe etc) for the first 104 episodes. 'The information that I gathered over the years is what added up to the spicy trivia that I shared every day during the programme' added Subashree.

Of course, after the first 21 episodes, the original schedule, going along with the tide the programme sustained on her resources till the 104th. 'Of course it was tough on us. Zero revenue and 100 percent work we were doing. But the way the fan base grew day by day, I decided I won't just drop it someday and move off'. Subashree confided.

By then, she had built up a steady viewership for her 12-minute shows (lovingly put together as a database by one of her admirers, P Jose who says she had 32000+ viewers per show for 195 episodes) and her musical group was swelling too, apart from her mainstay Shyam Benjamin and Venkat making

A brave, original idea – Quarantine From Reality – launched on March 25, reprising forgotten gems of Tamil film music daily on YouTube and Facebook with virtual support of young singers and musicians from across the world is now entering its 200th episode on Thursday

them a permanent feature of her daily show.

Interestingly, since its launch over six months ago, it never missed an episode any day except on September 25 as a homage to the legendary S P Balasubrahmanyam when he breathed his last. Even that blip was rectified with a 24-minute video the next day titled 'To Sir With Love'.

So how did she manage to take it on till the 200th which is due on October 8? As Subashree informs: 'When I completed 100, I knew it can't be going on like this. We needed funds to pursue further, technical expenses, musicians payment were all worrisome. So the best decision was to make people who love the programme contribute'. Thus QFR became crowd funded show from episode 105. 'Every musician who is a part of QFR gets something. Really peanuts for the work, but at least, something. The technical expenses are still much at large, but we are compensating as much possible, as you see the video edit and audio is all professional' Subashree adds.

With the programme now featured all across the online and offline media, QFR is now viewed as more of a 'social commitment' by its creator. So after the double century mark, she is toying with the idea of making it a bi-weekly programme. Above all, her OFR has been such a keenly watched one for which she is thankful to all 'her children' and musical team, apart from a dedicated support base which is her oxygen to sustain her passion.

Activate weight loss with a sedentary lifestyle

Restrictive movements in this home quarantine has us all stretched thin, juggling between online meetings, cooking, cleaning and virtual school. I have numerous clients constantly buzzing me if they can lose those quarantine kilos with no time to work out. To put it quite simply- yes, it is possible as I believe in that the word impossible spells I'm possible. Over the years I have consulted clients who are bedridden with severe joint and back pains, who are unable to exercise and yet have achieved healthy weight loss on my plan.

While diet and exercise have a symbiotic relationship let me tell you, at rest your body burns calories and I will include foods that burn fats, not store it. Don't think if you have inherited fat genes you will remain fat or if you can't move your body you will lose your body. I am going to teach you to activate your thin genes, burn lipase and bal-



ance your insulin automatically helping shed the pounds.

Good news, my weight loss diets will give you terrific health, great immunity and fantastic

moods. It's not about cutting out calories but about the addition of incredible Indian food.

All your 3 main meals breakfast lunch and dinner must be

A simple example of what your meals should look like:

Breakfast: idli + sambar with veggies + chutney OR masala egg omelet with veggies roti or toast
Lunch: Salad + Vegetables + daal / whole pulse / chicken / fish / dahi + roti or rice
Evening: Fruits or nuts
Dinner: Soup or Rasam + cooked vegetable + roti / rice

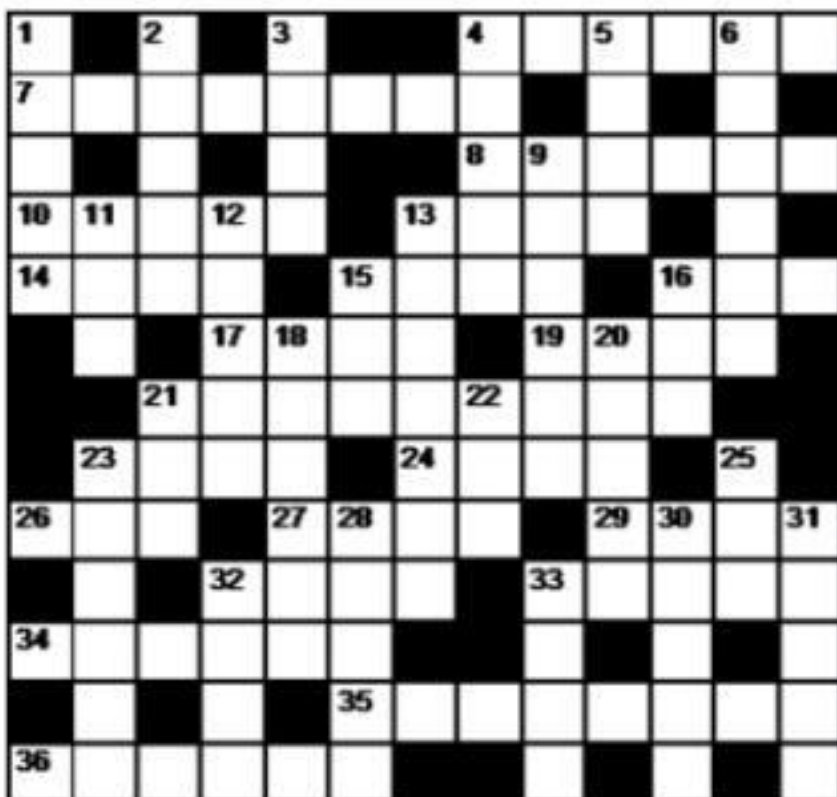


Naini Setalvad

a balance of all 3 major food groups; carbohydrates, fats and proteins. The thumb rule is to begin your day with a minimum of a glass of room temperature or warm water. 40 per cent of your plate should be from leafy

greens and vegetables daily. The balance 60 per cent divided equally between grain, fat and protein. We have a large variety of whole grain, millet, rice and daal, whole pulse, curd, egg, fish, prawns or chicken to choose from. Cook these in good quality fat like cows ghee or coconut oil and add on your healing herbs and spices which will add the taste and flavour to your foods. In between, snack on fruits, nuts and seeds along with your tea and coffee in limit. Ensure there is plenty of water throughout the day.

Cut out sugar, refined flours, fried, processed, junk, red meat, juices, alcohol, aerated drinks.



SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 07

CROSSWORD

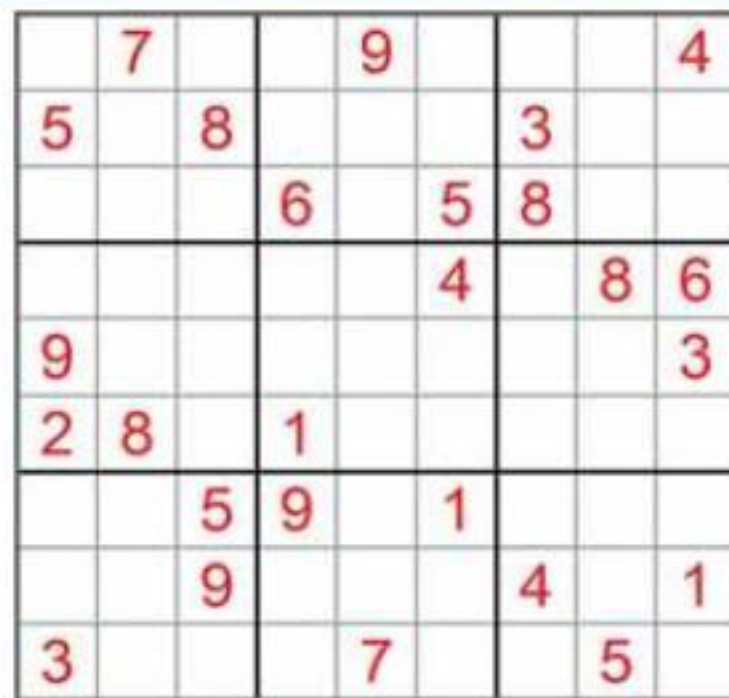
Across

- 4 Natty as a tree (6)
- 7 Affecting the emotions (8)
- 8 Recently (2,4)
- 10 Eskimo's hut (5)
- 13 Fleece (4)
- 14 Not of the clergy (4)
- 15 Instructs or commands (4)
- 16 Possesses (3)
- 17 Solicit customers (4)
- 19 Convey (goods); a vessel (4)
- 21 A metallic element (9)
- 23 Duty-roster (4)
- 24 Long fish (4)
- 26 With it (3)
- 27 Duty (4)
- 29 Slay (4)
- 32 G-men (4)
- 33 Alpine region (5)
- 34 Shipworm (6)
- 35 Distantly, lightly; in a negligible manner ? (8)
- 36 Weed (6)

Down

- 1 Plunder (5)
- 2 Garlicky mayonnaise (5)
- 3 Keen on (4)
- 4 Bore (5)
- 5 Brook (4)
- 6 A short sleep (6)
- 9 The remains of an animal (6)
- 11 A cooking fuel (3)
- 12 Group of eight (5)
- 13 Stupid (7)
- 15 Purchase (3)
- 16 Masculine pronoun (3)
- 18 Gave a speech (6)
- 20 Be burly or robust (5)
- 21 Jazz style (3)
- 22 A monetary unit of Albania (3)
- 23 Go back on one's word (6)
- 25 Specialized U.N. agency (3)
- 28 Idolize (5)
- 30 Bugged (5)
- 31 Composer Andrew ____ Webber (5)
- 32 Exploit (4)
- 33 Jogging gait (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 07

NEWS ROUNDUP

Bhumi Pednekar: I will constantly pick projects that hit home for me

Actress Bhumi Pednekar is proud of her work. She says she searches for extraordinary stories, and will constantly pick projects that hit home for her.

Bhumi said, "I search for extraordinary stories of extraordinary women! I think that really guides my film choices. Right from my debut, I have tried to bring to life stories of powerful, strong, independent women who have a voice and they want to be heard by society. Cinema can spark conversations and all my films, in their own, unique way, have been about achieving parity."

Bhumi has shown that she is not afraid to explore roles and diverse genres because she wants to start a positive conversation about being a woman in India. She adds, "I'm proud of my body of work and I know I will constantly pick projects that hit home for me. Such subjects are extremely close to my heart because I do feel I have a responsibility to portray women differently on screen. Thankfully, I have been lucky enough to find these projects and fortunate that the filmmakers have decided that they could channelise these really special on-screen women characters through me."



NCW summons BJP leader for offensive remarks against victim

HATHRAS GANG-RAPE CASE

New Delhi: The National Commission for Women (NCW) has summoned BJP leader Ranjeet Srivastava for reportedly making offensive remarks against the 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after allegedly being raped by four men in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras.

The NCW said it has sent a notice to Srivastava, asking him to appear before the commission on October 26. The commission tweeted, "@NCWIndia strongly condemns the offensive and defamatory remarks made by political leader #RanjeetSrivastava regarding the #Hathras victim. The Commission has sent him a notice directing him to appear before NCW on October 26th at 11

AM to give an explanation."

NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma said Srivastava is "not fit" to be called a leader. "He is not fit to be called leader of any party. He is showing his primitive and sick mindset and I am going to send notice to him," Sharma tweeted.

According to media reports, Srivastava had allegedly character assassinated the Hathras case victim. Srivastava allegedly claimed that the four upper caste men accused of brutally assaulting the 19-year-old Dalit girl in Hathras are "innocent" and that the victim's character was not "good." The controversial BJP leader, who has over 44 criminal cases against him, made this

Covid positive AAP MLA booked for visiting Hathras

Hathras (IANS) Delhi AAP MLA Kuldeep Kumar has been booked under the Epidemic Act, after he visited the Hathras victim's family having tested positive for Covid.

Hathras Superintendent of Police Vineet Jaiswal said on Wednesday that Kuldeep Kumar had taken to Twitter on September 29 to announce that 'due to my mild fever for the last two days, today I got Covid-19 test done, the report of which has come out to be positive, due to which I will be at home in isolation. Whoever has met me in the last 2-3 days should also get his test done'.

Six days after he tested positive for the virus, Kumar went to meet the victim's family.

shocking statement in an interview to a news channel on Tuesday night.

He claimed that the teen was 'having an affair with the accused' and had called him to the millet field on September 14 (the day of the crime). However, the BJP

leader did not stop there. He claimed that "such women are found dead in a few specific spots". "Such girls are found dead in only some places. They will be found dead in sugarcane, corn and millet fields or in bushes, gutters or forests. Why are they

never found dead in paddy or wheat fields?" he asked.

He implied that crops like sugarcane, corn and millet are taller in height and can conceal a person while wheat and paddy grow up to only three or four feet in height.

Radical group PFI in Hathras

Kerala scribe, 3 others charged with sedition

Lucknow: Kerala-based journalist and three other people said to have links with alleged radical group Popular Front of India (PFI) were on Wednesday booked for sedition. The four were arrested in Mathura on Monday while on their way to Hathras from Delhi and have been sent to judicial custody for 14 days.

"Four persons who were apprehended from Mathura on October 5 and had links with PFI were going to Hathras to disrupt peace as part of larger conspiracy," reads an FIR registered against them.

Police had said the four were taken into custody at Mathura's Math toll plaza where the police were checking vehicles after receiving a tip off that some suspicious people were on their way to Hathras from Delhi.

The four were in a car and



identified themselves as Atiq-ur Rehman of Muzaffarnagar, Siddique of Malappuram, Masood Ahmed of Bahraich and Alam of Rampur, the police said, adding their mobile phones, laptop and some literature, which could have an impact on peace and order, were seized.

During interrogation, it came to light that they had links with the Popular Front of India (PFI)

and its associate organisation Campus Front of India (CFI), the police said, adding further their interrogation is underway.

The Kerala Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ), however, claimed that Siddique is their member and the secretary of the union. The members are now mulling to move the Supreme Court against UP police's action.

India's tally mounts to 67 lakh

New Delhi: India's Covid-19 tally of cases climbed to 67.57 lakh with 72,049 new cases in a day, while 57,44,693 people have recuperated so far pushing the national recovery rate to 85.02 per cent on Wednesday, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 67,57,131, while the death toll climbed to 1,04,555 with the novel coronavirus virus claiming 986 lives in a span of 24 hours in the country, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The Covid-19 case fatality rate has further declined to 1.55 per cent. There are 9,07,883 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 13.44 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 8,22,71,654 samples have been tested up to October 6 with 11,99,857 samples being tested on Tuesday.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and it went past 50 lakh on September 15.

SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT'S CASE

Family questions AIIMS report

New Delhi: A week after the AIIMS-Delhi submitted its report to the CBI in Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case to rule out murder, the legal team of Sushant's family has written to CBI Director Rishi Kumar Shukla to claim that the medico-legal report by the AIIMS medical board was "faulty".

In the letter, the legal team represented by Varun Singh said: "I have been reading in the media about the forensic report submitted by the AIIMS to the CBI with regard to the opinion expressed by the agency in the matter of Sushant Singh Rajput's death on June 14. I have also seen some doctors on the AIIMS team come on TV and make statements with regard to the forensic examination done by the team."

The letter said that despite several efforts to get a copy of the report, there was no response from AIIMS board head Dr Sudhir Gupta. "I am accordingly writing this letter on the premise that the news report regarding the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) opinion is correct."

"The leaked report, if correct, amounts to drawing a biased and boastful conclusion from insufficient evidence," the legal team said.

Raising questions, the letter said that AIIMS was not to do a post-mortem but only to express its opinion on an autopsy report submitted by Mumbai's Cooper Hospital as the AIIMS did not get to examine Sushant's body



and thus form a firsthand opinion about the cause of death.

"Dr Sudhir Gupta has been giving media interviews about the sensitive case right from Day One, questioning Cooper Hospital doctors for the 'dubious' autopsy and Maharashtra Police for a hurried post-mortem and contamination and non-preservation of the scene of crime," the letter added.

The letter also pointed to various other infirmities like the post-mortem done at the Mum-

bai hospital in the night without any Magistrate's order for such an exercise, no videotaping of autopsy, and non-preservation of sufficient viscera for future examination.

The CBI officials have remained tight-lipped on the AIIMS report.

Dr Gupta, meanwhile, in a statement said that the AIIMS Medical Board has expressed very clearly and conclusively its final medico-legal opinion in this case.

World Bank lauds efforts to control Covid in Dharavi



New Delhi: The World Bank on Wednesday praised the efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus in Mumbai's Dharavi, one of the world's largest slums, saying its suc-

cess stemmed from a combination of "customised solutions", community involvement and perseverance.

Dharavi, which is located in India's commercial capital Mumbai, is spread over an area of 2.5 square kilometres and has a population of 650,000.

People live in shanties and dilapidated buildings with narrow lanes and open sewers.

The first COVID-19 patient in Dharavi was detected on April 1, nearly three weeks after Mumbai recorded its maiden positive case on March 11. The Washington-based global lender, in its biennial Poverty and Shared Prosperity report, said that in the space of three months, by July 2020, reported cases in the area had been cut to 20 per cent of their peak in May.

Dabbawalas, consulate staff allowed to travel in local trains

Mumbai: Mumbai's dabbawalas and staff of foreign consulates and high commissions have been allowed to travel in local trains which are currently being run only for essential services staff, officials said on Wednesday.

Dabbawalas, the famous lunch-box carriers in Mumbai, last month said there was never a six-month break in the "130-year-old history of the tiffin services", and demanded access to local trains to resume their services in

full capacity. "The staff of foreign consulates and high commissions have also been permitted to travel in local trains, as per the directives received from the Ministry of Railways," he said.

Over 5,000 dabbawalas run the tiffin delivery business in the metropolis. Before the outbreak of COVID-19, they used to deliver over two lakh tiffins to office-goers on normal working days. They use suburban trains to ensure lunch boxes are delivered at the destination on time.



Bihar elections: Paswans' LJP turns 'shelter home' for rebels

MANOJ PATHAK

Patna (IANS): The political scenario in Bihar is becoming more interesting by the day. The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) seems to have become a 'shelter home' for those who have turned rebels in other parties over denial of tickets.

The LJP, which is part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre, has emerged as a favoured option for the rebels in the NDA.

Senior BJP leader Usha Vidyarthi joined the LJP on Wednesday. She has earlier been the Vice President of the Bihar BJP and also a State Minister.

After joining the LJP, she said that she was impressed with Chirag's stand against Nitish and to take Bihar forward there was a need to take hard decisions. She said that 'Bihar First, Bihari First' is an idea whose time has come.

Earlier on Tuesday, veteran BJP leader Rajendra Singh joined the LJP. According to sources, he will contest the Assembly elections from Dinara. The JD-U has given the ticket to its minister Jayakumar Singh from Dinara.

It is said that Rameshwar Chaurasia, a senior BJP leader and MLA from Nokha, and Jawahar Prasad, a five-time BJP MLA from Sasaram,



are also angry with the party. Sources say that the LJP is in touch with these two.

Sources reveal that many leaders are in touch with the LJP, including BJP leader Ram Sanjeevan Singh of Bhojpur, Devesh Sharma of Jehanabad, Ramavtar Singh of Gaya, R.S. Singh, former JD-U vice-president of Aurangabad district and Kapil Dev Singh, former JD-U vice-president of Khagaria.

A LJP leader said, "Party President Chirag Paswan is in contact with dozens of veteran leaders from the BJP, JD-U and RJD who are ready to contest elections. The party is giving priority to leaders with a strong voter

base. Chirag will soon announce the list of the first phase candidates."

Sanjay Saraf, a senior LJP leader and a member of the party's media panel, told IANS that if anyone joins the party, is there any harm in it?

He said that many ministers of the BJP and the JD-U are in touch with the party. In response to a question, he said, "The LJP has prepared a list of candidates for 143 seats, but out of the leaders who have recently joined the party, only those who are heavyweights or have a strong voter base, will be given a ticket after holding discussions with the party workers. Workers will not be ignored in candidate selection."

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We should live with corruption

It is time political parties stop promising that they would provide corruption-free government. We have seen that no government could achieve this in the last seven decades. Instead of corruption-free governments we now have free corruption whether any political party agrees or not.

Though we have several laws to curb corruption and many agencies to probe cases of graft, things have not changed or maybe they were not allowed to be changed. In this connection, one should admire the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who admitted on the floor of Parliament that corruption cannot be done away as it is a global phenomenon.

Just before every election, all political parties vow to root out corruption and give clean administration. Corruption does not only mean giving and taking bribe. There is corruption of thought as well. We have even seen leaders stating

on the floor of the legislatures that they will not encourage practice floor crossing and if anyone wants to join their party he or she would have to resign from the membership of the legislature and if they do not do so, the Speaker should disqualify them. But in practice this never happened.

In process of presenting the Interim Budget for the fiscal year 2019-20 on February 1, Union Minister Piyush Goyal identified Modi Government as 'corrupt-free'. He said, "It's a new era of graft-free regulation by bringing out Real Estate regulation Act and Benami Act. We conducted a transparent transaction of natural resources, like coal. The Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill will prosecute economic offenders who have taken the money and never returned them and fled the country. Number of measures implemented to ensure clean banking, a resolution friendly mechanism has been in-

stituted for the recovery of non-performing loans".

But then the big question is whether have we done away with corruption? Can changes in rules and regulations make the country free from corruption? To root out corruption would mean to change the system. And this cannot take place overnight. What we need is a revolution.

Corruption in India is rampant both in political field and in every department of the country and the people feel helpless and they give bribe to the officials to get the work done. The very fact that the Supreme Court has asked all the CJs of High Courts to head special benches and immediately hear long pending criminal cases against sitting and former legislators speaks volumes. These cases range from corruption to money laundering and all of them are among those who spoke against corruption.

Corruption cannot end unless we have

government employees who have high moral values and who refuse to accept bribe. But now in certain states we are seeing officials who say "Our vote bank is safe". It seems the political system has made the officials forget the thin line between political executive and the administration. Can the NDA government led by Modi tackle such a situation?

We also need law makers who will refuse to break the law. We need to sensitise the people, particularly the youngsters. But that can be done only when the political and administrative system is flushed out corrupt elements. It is easy to preach that as responsible citizens, we should say NO to bribery. But when officials refuse to move the files unless their palms are greased, the honest person has either to suffer or fall in line and pay the money to get things done.

There should be complete transparency in official transactions. Structured anti-corruption laws need to be put in place. What is most important is we should have a strong political will to fight corruption. Perhaps in India this would amount to asking for the moon.

PART-II

My musical memories...

TALKING OF MANY THINGS



Dr Mohan Kanda

Sometime in the 1960s, while I was a post-graduate student in Osmania University, I started taking guitar lessons from my friend Richard Gnanakan, whom I used to compensate, out of gratitude for the trouble he took, the princely fee of Rs.10 per lesson!

Those lessons came in very handy when 'Saaz Aur Awaaz', a group I formed with some friends, organised a show at the well-known auditorium Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad early in 1967. It was a medley of events comprising instrumental music, vocal music, a skit in Telugu and a play in English (called, of all things, 'Herlock Sholmes!'), among other things.

The show was a great success, and gave us so much encouragement and assurance that, very soon thereafter, we all travelled to Machilipatnam to stage a similar show there. 'Saaz aur Awaaz' also rendered a number in 'Aakashvani' - singing, of all things, in those hallowed precincts, 'Can't buy me love' by the Beatles!

My next foray into the world of music learning was when I had the honour of having Dr. Yella Venkateswara Rao, the legendary Mridangam maestro, as my tutor for a short while.

It would be unnatural, at the age I have reached, not to have regrets and disappointments about the years that have gone by. I am not ashamed to confess that I have such feelings about several things I wish I had done when I was younger. For one thing, despite my father's repeated exhor-

tations, I never read a play of Shakespeare's. No doubt, I quote the great Bard frequently in my speeches and writings. But the fact remains that I have never either read or watched, any of his plays in full.

A similarly deep and unfulfilled desire remains in my heart in the context of the world of poetry. It was again my father who made persistent attempts to get me to read the all-time great poets such as Keats, Shelley, Byron or Wordsworth, apart from the classical giants like Homer and Dante. His entreaties, however, fell on deaf ears, and I now remain only a part human being, having denied myself many great and enriching experiences.

Coming back to the subject of music, as I mentioned in the early part of this article, I never really travelled deeply into the enchanting land which could have unravelled to me the wonders and mysteries of music. The works of masters such as Beethoven, Bach, Mozart or Tchaikovsky, from the Western part of the world, and stalwarts of the realm of Hindustani and Carnatic music such as Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan or Thyagaraja, remain realms of melody and rhythm unexplored by me.

For what it is worth I take solace from the fact that K.L. Saigal, C.H. Atma, Lata Mangeshkar, Mohammed Rafi, Kishore Kumar from the Hindi film world, and from the southern part of the country, singers who created history such as P. Susheela, Ghan-tasala and Balu, to mention but a few, gave me immense joy and pleasure.

As incurable music aficionados, Usha (my wife) and I will never forget the times when we listened live to (while sitting in their direct presence), great personalities such as Balamuralikrishna, Mehdi Hasan, Pandit Jasraj and Amjad Ali Khan. I enjoyed that privilege and honour largely on account of the affectionate relationship I had with senior colleagues in the Police and Administrative services such as R. Prabhakar Rao (whose wife, incidentally, is a highly talented



Coming back to the subject of music, I never really travelled deeply into the enchanting land which could have unravelled to me the wonders and mysteries of music. The works of masters such as Beethoven, Bach, Mozart or Tchaikovsky, from the Western part of the world, and stalwarts of the realm of Hindustani and Carnatic music such as Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan or Thyagaraja, remain realms of melody and rhythm unexplored by me

singer), and C.S. Sastry.

We were treated to another rare experience when Dr. C.D. Deshmukh and Durgabai invited my parents to watch Duke Ellington perform live at the India International Centre in the early 60s. More recently, we had the opportunity to watch many children of Indian origin (including our own grandchildren) perform on India's Independence Day at the Indian Consulate in Hong Kong. While, they sang several patriotic songs, the rendering of 'Saare jahan se achcha' was, in particular, so soulful, and full of spirit, that it was literally a hair-raising experience.

Another thrilling experience was attending a show, while in Lisbon in 2006, when Prof. Edgar Nogueira, reputed to be the best guitar player in the world at that time, played live to the audience. It will be no exaggeration to say that he literally made that instrument talk, not only to him, but also to the audience!

I recall a particularly interesting incident which happened when my daughter Aparna, granddaughter Gayathri and I happened to meet Balamuralikrishna at the lounge of the Rajiv Gandhi International airport at

Shamshabad one day. Contrary to the impression entertained in some quarters that he was a haughty and opinionated kind of person, I personally found him to be an unpretentious, and generous to boot. He not only agreed to be photographed with both the girls but also sang one of his popular kirtanas along with Gayathri who, as children will do, first asked him whether he knew to sing that song at all! Aparna had hummed many of his devotional songs as a child and her daughter Gayathri, in turn, did that on the day!

I still cannot figure out, for the life of me, why he was not honoured with the Bharat Ratna, which he richly deserved, in fact, perhaps more than many others who were awarded that coveted title. And that too despite the efforts made by the State government when I was the Chief Secretary.

Time was when the old war horse, the windup gramophone, ruled the roost among music playing instruments. One remembers, especially, the picture of the dog singing into the huge speaker of the gramophone as part of the advertisement campaign of the company His Mas-

ter's Voice. One had to wind up the gramophone each time a record was played, and, every now and then, change the needle of the stylus which would collect dust from the disc being played. And this came in several sizes with different speeds such as 33 1/3, 45 and 78 rpm.

From the era of gramophones, having passed through several stages such as the radiogram, record changers, juke boxes, tape recorders and video cassette recorders, we have reached the realm of smartphones. And, simultaneously, from the days of 'the Shadows', 'Ventures' and wildly popular crooners about whom audiences went crazy, such as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Elvis Presley, Doris Day and Connie Francis, we now have Taylor Swift and bands such as 'DTH'.

Some songs remain etched in the minds of people, their precise identity varying from place to place and culture to culture. The famous 'Waltzing Matilda' of Australia, the haunting melody 'where have all the flowers gone' of America, the internationally popular Scottish song 'auld langsyne' (often sung while bidding adieu to the old year), or our own 'Sarfaroshi ki tamanna ab hamare dil mein hai', are only some such examples of timeless numbers.

And the lilting melodies that filled musical films such as 'My Fair Lady' and 'The Sound of Music' will forever remain fresh in our memories.

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

As virtual fans cheer in IPL



Cops launch pan-India crackdown on betting

ZAFAR ABBAS

The roar you hear after every boundary hit or wicket taken in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) is virtual, compensating for the crowd that has not been allowed into the stadiums as a precautionary measure due to the pandemic. However, there are many who literally shout, cheer and get the adrenaline rush on every ball of the ongoing T20 cricket matches. They have money at stake and are running a dark network of betting on IPL matches with their setup of laptops, mobiles and registers to maintain records.

The Indian police in states like Hyderabad, Uttar Pradesh, Kolkata, Goa, Delhi and the NCR has actively launched a crackdown on betting syndicates, arresting several men who were caught red-handed from small flats to resorts in India.

The Goa police busted at least two gambling networks in Goa betting on the outcome of IPL matches. On October 2, the Goa Police Crime Branch raided a hotel and arrested three persons from Hyderabad who were found accepting bets on IPL matches from people across India. The arrests came a day after the police apprehended five persons from a villa at Candolim, a coastal village in north Goa. All those arrested were from Rajasthan except one who was from Nepal. None of those arrested belonged to Goa.

In Hyderabad, at least 13 persons were arrested from different parts of the city and more than Rs 22 lakh in cash was seized. Seven members of a gang organising betting for the ongoing IPL matches were apprehended by the Cyberabad Special Operations Team of Balanagar zone on Sunday night.

In another incident a gaming house in Red Hills was raided and the police apprehended three persons while three more were held by Hyderabad city police for betting on IPL matches.

In Uttar Pradesh, at least eight men, including five in Meerut and three in Varanasi, have been arrested for their alleged involvement in betting in the ongoing IPL matches.

The Kolkata police acting on a tip-off, conducted raids in Hare Street, Park Street, Jadavpur and Salt Lake areas on Thursday night and arrested nine persons, mostly in their mid-20s, for allegedly betting on the previous day's IPL cricket match.

In the NCR, Gurugram police have arrested two persons on charges of betting on an IPL match between RCB and Delhi Capitals. The duo was arrested from an EWS flat in Vatika City in Sector-50.

"Based on specific inputs, the police raided the spot and nabbed the duo when they were placing bets on an IPL match played between RCB and Delhi Capitals," said Subhash Boken, Spokesperson of the Gurugram police.

The police registered a case under the Prevention of Gambling Act. In a big crackdown in Delhi, six persons were arrested from south Delhi, four from south-east and two from west Delhi's Punjabi Bagh a few days ago.

"In Rajpur Khurd village, six persons were found sitting on a lawn with a laptop in which entries on bets were maintained. In one mobile phone, a live cricket match was being telecast and on another landline phone the rates of bets were being announced," said Atul Thakur, DCP, south Delhi.

Betting on IPL matches is not new and the police has to deploy both technical surveillance and manual intelligence to unearth these betting rackets that are mushrooming all over the country.



Bihar elections: LJP turns 'shelter home' for rebels

MANOJ PATHAK

The political scenario in Bihar is becoming more interesting by the day. The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) seems to have become a 'shelter home' for those who have turned rebels in other parties over denial of tickets.

The LJP, which is part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) at the Centre, has emerged as a favoured option for the rebels in the NDA. Senior BJP leader Usha Vidyarthi joined the LJP on Wednesday. She has earlier been the Vice President of the Bihar BJP and also a State Minister.

After joining the LJP, she said that she was impressed with Chirag's stand against Nitish and to take Bihar forward there was a need to take hard decisions. She said that 'Bihar First, Bihari First' is an idea whose time has come. Earlier on Tuesday, veteran BJP leader Rajendra Singh joined the LJP. According to sources, he will contest the Assembly elections from Dinara. The JD-U has given the ticket to its minister Jayakumar Singh from Dinara. It is said that Rameshwar Chaurasia, a senior BJP leader and MLA from Nokha, and Jawahar Prasad, a five-time BJP MLA from Sasaram, are also angry with the party. Sources say that the LJP is in touch with these two.

Sources reveal that many leaders are in touch with the LJP, including BJP leader Ram Sanjeevan Singh of Bhojpur, Devesh Sharma of Jehanabad, Ramavatar Singh of Gaya, R.S. Singh, former JD-U vice-president of Aurangabad district and Kapil Dev Singh, former JD-U vice-president of Khagaria. A LJP leader said, "Party President Chirag Paswan is in contact with dozens of veteran leaders from the BJP, JD-U and RJD who are ready to contest elections. The party is giving priority to leaders with a strong voter base. Chirag will soon announce the list of the first phase candidates." Sanjay Saraf, a senior LJP leader and a member of the party's media panel, told IANS that if anyone joins the party, is there any harm in it? He said that many ministers of the BJP and the JD-U are in touch with the party. In response to a question, he said, "The LJP has prepared a list of candidates for 143 seats, but out of the leaders who have recently joined the party, only those who are heavyweights or have a strong voter base, will be given a ticket after holding discussions with the party workers. Workers will not be ignored in candidate selection."

LETTERS

POTUS and the pandemic



US President Donald Trump has returned to the White House from a military hospital after undergoing treatment for coronavirus after having been diagnosed with Covid-19. The first thing after Trump came to the White House was to remove his facemask as if to prove a point which has resulted in more positive cases in the White House.

His attitude, and the message he gave to the world on prevention of Covid-19 was quite negative and disappointing. At the early stages of the pandemic in the world, Trump was making fun of the pandemic in his comments to berate the severity of the virus, while the rest of the world was meaningfully proactive in taking preventive measures, like using facemask, keeping the social distance and going into quarantine, when infected. He said nobody had heard of going into quarantine for suffering a common flu that could be tamed by taking a paracetamol.

In a way Donald Trump misled the Americans by discouraging caution that was absolutely necessary to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. The citizens in some states wanted no restriction to be imposed on their public life, so that they could enjoy all forms of amusement including the unrestricted visit to pubs. There was even a contest that prevailed among some youth who were against the restrictions to see who would catch the virus first. The US had to pay a heavy price for the misdemeanour, which

people have paid with their lives. Even today, there are no meaningful precautions that are being carried out by the Americans, which is serious concern.

The Democrats, on the other hand are more systematic in suggesting measures in the prevention of the pandemic that became a serious talking topic in the debate between the Presidential candidates that the public could unerringly see President Donald Trump cutting a sorry figure on such occasions.

India's role in the Covid pandemic was extraordinary as there was more clarity in preventive measures on the part of the Centre and states. The measures were effective to a great extent in bringing down the death rate as a result, which is comparable with the lowest in the world. Now, it is up to the citizens of the country to continue to practice these simple but effective methods in the wake of restrictions that are being removed in the country, till the pandemic is totally banished for the face of the earth.

S Lakshmi, Wayanad

Jagan's tyrannical government

When there are no elections of any sort in AP, it is aghast that the YCP rulers are booking bind over cases on those who question its failure on many an issue and also on opposition leaders who find fault the autocratic rule of the YCP leaders at the government's helm of affairs. Human rights are usurped ever since this government took reigns of administration in AP.

Such type of atrocities and violation of human rights has been brought to the notice of the NHRC earlier, but no action so far seems to have been initiated on the offenders in the government as well as in the YSRC party...The apex courts are chiding the YCP govt on many an issue... Still, the boss is thinking too high of himself and his bulge of 150+ MLAs is an impenetrable and impregnable team..

Because there is no veto power in the hands of the voters, alas, the YCP rulers have become tyrannical.

K Sai Prasanna, Tadepalligudem

Aim for sustainable development

According to the new study by the University of Colorado of Boulder, USA, millions of years ago intense fire burnt even the wet forests. The fire swallowed 30-40 per cent of the global forests then, due to the excessive amount of carbon in the air. History is about to repeat itself. Now, we see similar fires in dry regions of the earth. Scientists have claimed through their projections that the earth may have the same amounts of carbon dioxide by 2100. It's high time to understand that uncontrollable and unchecked amount of poisonous materials released in the air will lead to destruction of the generations to come. It's time for sustainable development. Now or never.

Hrishi Singh, Chittaranjan, West Bengal

Beware, Sonu Sood!

A part from his popularity as an actor, Sonu Sood became more popular with his selfless service to the people in dire need during the lockdown period while his peers were enjoying the comforts of home quarantine. Now, the problem for him may be from political parties. He is in the very good books of people and politicians may entice him into the vortex of politics. The service mindedness in him may change into self-aggrandizement once he joins politics. He is well-advised not to fall a prey to the machinations of the politicians.

DSP Rao, Kakinada

thehansreader@gmail.com

JAGANANNA VIDYA KANUKA

CM to launch distribution today

- The kits contain 3 pairs of uniform, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, a set of textbooks, note books, belt and school bag
- 42,34,322 schoolchildren from Classes 1 to SSC will get the kits
- The state govt spent Rs 650 cr for the implementation of the scheme

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: The distribution of Jagananna Vidya Kanuka kits will be launched by Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to students from Classes 1 to 10 on Thursday.

The uniqueness of the scheme is that the kit comprises three pairs of uniform, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, pre-scribed textbooks, notebooks, belt and a school bag getting the student fully prepared for the new academic year.

Vidya Kanuka puts an end to the earlier practice of erratic and non-supply of books, uniform and other essentials to students.

The Chief Minister will formally launch the scheme at Punadipadu government high school in Krishna district which heralds a new chapter to strengthen the enrolment rate in government schools.

Under Jagananna Vidya Kanuka, 42,34,322 kits would be distributed across the state at an estimated cost of Rs 650 crore.

The kits will bring relief to the parents and will save the new academic year expenditure motivating them further to send their children to school and continue their education.

The scheme will not only increase the number of admissions in government schools but also bring down the dropout rate.

There was full transparency in the purchase of material which has undergone reverse



MLA Kolusu Partha Sarathy along with district collector A Md Imtiaz and sub-collector Dhyana Chandra and other officials inspect arrangements at Punadipadu high school on Wednesday

Focus on Cheyutha, Aasara: CM to officials

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy directed the officials to lay a special focus on branding and marketing facilities for the self-help groups under YSR Cheyutha and YSR Aasara schemes and ensure that they would be corruption-free.

During a review meeting on the implementation of Aasara and Cheyutha welfare schemes here on Wednesday, the Chief Minister told the officials to implement the schemes in a clean, corruption-free, and transparent manner, and assist all those beneficiaries who want to start their retail outlets by providing a good branding along with proper marketing platforms. As we have signed MoUs with major companies, the two schemes should be implemented without any hindrance and the expertise of the business houses

- Asks official to ensure these schemes are implemented in a transparent, clean manner without any scope for corruption

- Says self-help group women who want to start their retail outlets under Aasara should be provided all help with good branding and proper marketing platforms

- Officials inform the CM that 13.03 lakh women of self-help groups have benefited from two schemes

should benefit the women entrepreneurs to give them the intended results.

He directed the authorities to take an expert opinion on providing livestock to the beneficiaries of Cheyutha, in order to avoid complications in the future.

The officials informed that so far 21 lakh beneficiaries were enlisted under YSR Cheyutha and provided with the total financial assistance of Rs 3,937 crore. Similarly, Rs 6,792 crore has been utilised under YSR Aasara for 87.74 lakh beneficiaries. As many as 13.03 lakh

women belonging to self-help groups have been benefited from both the schemes. Of the total target of establishing 33,486 retail outlets in rural areas, 8,836 outlets were started the remaining will be coming up by the end of October.

Panchayat raj and rural development minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, chief secretary Nilam Sawhney, special chief secretary Poonam Malakondiah, principal secretary of panchayat raj Gopalakrishna Dwivedi and other officials were present at the review meeting.

tendering and e-procurement to ensure that there is no scope for corruption.

All the Covid-19 norms will be followed during the distribution of kits to parents. The school ed-

ucation department in its guidelines, stipulated that only 50 parents, 25 in the morning and 25 in the evening, will be given kits in a day to prevent any crowding. Bio metric will be

taken with abundant precautions like using hand sanitisers in the process. Wearing of masks and cleaning hands with sanitiser during biometric process are made mandatory.

Ryots asked to derive benefit from zero interest loans

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Kakinada: Agriculture Special Commissioner H Arun Kumar said on Wednesday that if the farmers farm into groups they would get zero interest loans. These loans could be utilised for agriculture works.

Aurun Kumar visited Rythu Bharosa Kendram (RBK) along with Kothapeta MLA Chirla Jaggedreddy at Lakshmi Polavaram village.

He said that up to Rs 1 lakh can be availed by forming into groups without the need for a card and opening a bank account.

He added that landless or tenant farmers if formed into societies would also get zero interest loans. He said Rythu Bharosa Kendras would enable them to secure harvesting machines on rental basis. Arun Kumar inspected the quality of seeds, pesticides and fertilisers at the godown at Amalapuram division. He also interacted with farmers to secure information on the utility of kiosks at RBKs.

Later the Commissioner inspected the integrated lab.

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: TDP senior leader and Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council Yanamala Ramakrishnudu alleged that yet another massive benami transaction involving Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy took place in the multi-crore Baypark property in Visakhapatnam.

In a statement on Wednesday, Ramakrishnudu accused the Chief Minister of taking over of Baypark in the guise of Hetero group and Rs 300 crore worth Rushikonda lands have fallen into the hands of Jagan through his benamis.

The TDP leader demanded the government to explain and reveal the secrets behind the changing of hands of Baypark which was developed at a cost of Rs 120 crore. People in high-est positions were behind the major shares in Baypark that is going into the hands of Hetero, he added.

He said that Jagan's benamis took over Kakinada SEZ recently and now Vizag Baypark was also grabbed. While the TDP developed the tourism projects, now the Chief Minis-



- Says CM's benamis have taken over Vizag Baypark, Rs 300 cr worth Rushikonda lands
- He also alleges that Jagan is behind KSEZ takeover by Aurobindo group
- The TDP leader points out that Aurobindo and Hetero are accused No 3 and 4 in Jagan's illegal investments cases

ter was developing his own benami companies. All the benefits were being passed on to those who were co-accused in his cases in the past, he stated.

Ramakrishnudu pointed out that Hetero was the co-accused in the first charge sheet filed by CBI

in Jagan Mohan Reddy's illegal assets cases. If Jagan and YSRCP Rajya Sabha member V Vijayasai Reddy were A1 and A2 in those sensational cases, Hetero and Aurobindo were A4 and A3, he said. Hetero invested Rs. 1950 Cr in Jagan Reddy's companies in return for 75 acres allotted to Hetero in Jachchela SEZ.

He said that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed cases against M Srinivas Reddy, director of Hetero. It has got varied companies like Hetero Drugs Ltd, Hetero Labs Ltd and Hetero Healthcare Ltd. Kakinada SEZ was allotted to A3 Aurobindo company now. A4 Hetero got hold of Vizag Baypark.

"The TDP leader said that Jagan resorted to quid pro quo-1 during his father Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's rule regime between 2004-09 and now unveiled quid pro quo-2 during his own regime. "Kakinada SEZ and Baypark benami transactions are part of quid pro quo-2 only. High level probe should be conducted into these deals. The TDP will complain to the Central government and expose Jagan's shady transactions," he warned.

2 women win Nobel in chemistry for gene editing

Continued from P1

When Charpentier from the Max Planck Unit for the Science of Pathogens in Berlin and Doudna from the University of California-Berkeley, started investigating the immune system of a Streptococcus bacterium, one idea was that they could perhaps develop a new form of antibiotic.

Instead, they discovered a molecular tool that can be used to make precise incisions in genetic material, making it possible to easily change the code of life.

Just eight years after their discovery, these genetic scissors have reshaped the life sciences.

"Biochemists and cell biologists can now easily investigate the functions of different genes and their possible role in the progression of disease". In plant breeding,

researchers can give plants specific characteristics, such as the ability to withstand drought in a warmer climate. In medicine, this gene editor is contributing to new cancer therapies and the first studies attempting to cure inherited diseases.

"There are almost endless examples of how CRISPR-Cas9 could be used, which also include unethical applications. As with all powerful technology, these genetic scissors need to be regulated," said the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Charpentier published her discovery in 2011. The same year, she initiated a collaboration with Doudna, an experienced biochemist with vast knowledge of RNA. Together, they succeeded in recreating the bacteria's genetic scissors in a test tube and simpli-

FARM LAWS

Nirmala slams opposition parties for cheating voters

- Says the reforms were promised by Congress and other opposition parties in their manifestos in the past but now they are trying to create fears among farmers
- States that some farmers whom she met on her way from airport have indeed thanked the PM for bringing these laws
- Asserts that the Centre has not touched the subjects like agriculture markets which are in the state lists



HANS NEWS SERVICE

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman addressing the media in Vijayawada on Wednesday

Amaravati: With the amendment and enactment of the three laws pertaining to the agriculture by the Parliament in the recent session, the farmers across the country would benefit immensely, said Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

Addressing a press conference at Income Tax Building in Vijayawada on Wednesday, she alleged that opposition parties had been opposing these bills with only political motives. Nirmala Sitharaman was here as part of visits by Union minister to all the states to create awareness among farmers and the general public on these three Acts. During her visit, she also interacted with the farmers and BJP cadres in Vijayawada after addressing the media.

The Union finance minister said that these reforms were not new ones and even opposition parties had promised to introduce them in their manifestos. "But now they are resisting them. This means the opposition parties, particularly Congress, are cheating the voters," she said.

Despite many challenges including the Covid-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Narendra Modi passed the amendments with a commitment to empower the farmers, she claimed.

She said that a farmer can now take his produce to any state and sell anywhere in the country, without additional burden. The farmers could utilise the e-NAM platform to get more benefit by selling his produce. At the same time, farmers could also go for agreements with the companies, they could form Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), add value to their produce among other things, Sitharaman explained.

"I met some farmers on my way from airport to here. They thanked the Prime Minister for the reforms, as they can sell their produce anywhere in India after these reforms," she said. "Agriculture Produce Market Committees

'Revenue deficit grant is not under my ministry's purview'

- Finance Minister says only 15th Finance Commission will have to take a call on Andhra Pradesh's demand for payment of revenue deficit grant for last five years

Amaravati: Agreeing that the dispute raging between the Centre and the Andhra Pradesh government over payment of revenue deficit grant for over five years now still remained unresolved, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, however, said it was for the 15th Finance Commission to take a call on the issue and not the finance ministry.

She asked the state government to discuss the issue with the 15th Finance Commission and let the latter decide. "It is unresolved. But its for the 15th Finance Commission to decide, not the finance ministry. I said this also to the state government when the Finance Minister met me," Sitharaman told a press conference in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

During his recent trip to New Delhi, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy submitted a memorandum to the Centre stating that a sum of Rs 18,830.87 crore was still overdue in the form of revenue deficit grant to the state. Post-bifurcation of the state in 2014, the

Centre agreed to bridge the revenue gap but pegged the amount at Rs 4,117.89 crore for the financial year 2014-15 whereas the state government, citing a CAG report, claimed the amount was Rs 22,948.76 crore. Even out of the Rs 4,117.89 crore, the Centre so far paid only Rs 3,979.50 crore, leaving a gap of Rs 138.39 crore, according to the state government.

"I don't know about the amount and what is unresolved is something which the ministry has to work, considering that it was based on the 14th Finance Commission's recommendations. The 14th FC's term is over. So it is an issue which has to be discussed," Sitharaman said, replying to questions.

Maintaining that she was not questioning the state government's claims on the issue, the Union finance minister remarked, "I don't know what kind of solutions I can offer. This is something which I have told the minister concerned who met me to speak about it."

She pointed out that the one-year report of the 15th Finance Commission has already come and was being implemented. "And, the 15th FC will give for the rest of the 4-5 years. You are talking about a recommendation of the 14th FC, so it has to be discussed," Sitharaman added. (PTI)

(APMCs) will remain intact, even after these three Acts. We are not touching them. Farmers can trans-

act outside the market yard or out of the state. States will not lose their control over agriculture or agri marketing. The amendments we made are under Central list only. We did not touch APMCs as they are under state list," she said

allaying fears among farmers.

She said there would be no tax on agriculture produce but the market yards have been collecting different kinds of cess, between 8 to 8.5 per cent on sales. These legislations would allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country, maintain stock till they get remunerative price, she added.

Delhi air turns 'very poor' as stubble burning begins

Continued from P1

"Reduction in wind speed and lowering temperature between October 15 to 20 would further aggravate the situation, resulting in deterioration of the air quality," Head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre Kuldeep Srivastava told IANS.

Kamal Narayan, CEO of Integrated Health and Wellbeing Council said that there is a need to tackle air pollution during Covid-19 times as combination of both can have a far more damaging impact on people's health. "The need to develop an economical alternative to stubble burning and making it available to farmers is the need of the hour."

Burning of stubble in the agricultural states surrounding Delhi marks the beginning of a highly-polluted period. The farmers harvest paddy in October, which leaves them about three weeks before the next round of wheat sowing is to begin.

With cheap labor no longer available, and with machinery to extract the crop residue or stubble expensive or unavailable, the farmers resort to the easiest possible option, which is to burn the fields.

With the pollution mounting to dangerous levels, the Centre and state governments have also leaped into action. The Centre has deputed 50 Central Pollution Control Board teams to monitor stubble

burning and help in implementing measures to combat pollution in Delhi-NCR.

Whereas the Delhi government started preparing a liquid solution for spraying it on the 700 hectares of farm fields in the national capital to soften the stubble to curb stubble burning. The spraying of this solution will start from October 11.

The Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority, in a report submitted to the top court on September 30, said that the state governments should take actions to provide the assistance to farmers to carry out smart straw management and impose strict enforcement against violators

Modi enters 20th year in public office without a break

Continued from P1

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister's journey to the head of an elected government started in 2001 in the backdrop of relief work for the devastating Bhuj earthquake.

The following years saw him rolling out several pro-people policies and actively reaching out to the people directly, leading to the formation of his image as a leader of the masses.

Further, upon becoming the Prime Minister, he continued the pro-people approach, which was further reflected in the various schemes such as Jan Dhan Yojana, the Mudra Yojana, the Jan Suraksha Yo-

jana, the Ujjwala Yojana, the Saubhagya Yojana, Ayushman Bharat, the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana, the PM-Kisan Yojana, among others.

Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic phase too the pro-poor schemes continued, under which arrangements were made to provide foodgrains, jobs, financial help to migrant workers, farmers, among others during the lockdown phase.

As PM Modi enters the 20th consecutive year in public office, the mantra of 'development for all' continues to steer India ahead towards the goal of making an "Atmanirbhar Bharat".

TODAY'S QUOTE

Highways, infra can spur economic growth

“Highways and infrastructure can spur the country's economic growth. The workforce is back at pre-Covid levels, which is a healthy sign. Good quality road network leads to ease of doing business, goods transportation and economic growth.”

— Union Minister **VK Singh**



GREEN SHOOTS

Maruti reports 26% rise in production

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India said its total production in September increased 25.63 per cent to 1,66,086 units. The company produced a total of 1,32,199 units in the same month last year. Passenger vehicles production stood at 1,61,668 units last month, a growth of 24.1 per cent.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	77.72	South	
Euro	90.47	African Rand	5.05
UAE Dirham	21.95	Hong Kong Dollar	10.9
Thai Baht	2.7	Japanese Yen	0.79
British Pound	98.04	New Zealand Dollar	50.7
Australian Dollar	54.81	Saudi Riyal	21.49
Canadian Dollar	57.84	Swedish Krona	9.43
Swiss Franc	83.06	Singapore Dollar	56.62

DELHI THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

SBI gets new chairman

Mumbai: Dinesh Khara on Wednesday took charge as the new Chairman of the country's largest lender State Bank of India. Khara took over from Rajnish Kumar, who superannuated on Tuesday. Soon after taking over the charge, Khara told reporters that one of the top priorities for him will be to maintain the quality of the loan book. Other focus areas would be safety of bank employees and customers, he said. On Tuesday, the government appointed Khara for a period of three years. Prior to his new role, he was serving the bank as Managing Director (global banking & subsidiaries).



GMM Pfaudler opens plant

Hyderabad: GMM Pfaudler Ltd (GMPF) had acquired De Dietrich Process Systems India Pvt Ltd's Glass Lined Equipment manufacturing facility in Hyderabad in July this year. This state-of-the-art facility, located at Nacharam Industrial Estate in the city, is spread across an area of six acres. This facility was formally inaugurated, signaling GMM Pfaudler's long-term commitment towards meeting the demands of its ever-increasing customer base. With an employee strength of over 500 employees and a strong sales & service support team spread across seven cities in India, GMM Pfaudler is the preferred supplier of engineered equipment and systems to the pharmaceutical and chemical industries. Tarak Patel, Managing Director, GMM Pfaudler, said, "We are extremely happy and proud to have concluded the acquisition announced in July and aim to start operations at this facility within the next few days".

Realme unveils new products

Hyderabad: Realme on Wednesday launched new smart lifestyle products including its first 55-inch SLED 4K smart TV for Rs 42,999 in India. The TV will be available for Rs 39,999 during the 'Festive First' sale offer and the pre-booking will start from October 16 on realme.com and Flipkart. The company also launched Realme 7i, a 64MP quad-camera phone, and Realme 7 Pro 'Sun Kissed' edition. It unveiled a 100W soundbar that comes with four speakers and the flagship Buds Air Pro with Active Noise Cancellation (ANC). "We witnessed tremendous success with our first generation of realme Smart TVs, which gave us the confidence to bring the 55-inches, 4K Smart TV with the world's first SLED technology," said Madhav Sheth, Vice President, Realme and Chief Executive Officer, Realme India and Europe.

Alliance partners with Alniche

Hyderabad: Alliance appointed Alniche as its exclusive marketing partner in India to market and distribute the Nizral / Nizoral range of formulations in the country. Rajiv Ghildiyal, Alliance's Regional Business Director - Central Asia, Middle-East & Pacific, said: "With the acquisition of a great brand comes great responsibility, as we look to take over and maintain the long-standing quality, heritage and brand awareness built by our J&J colleagues over the past decades". Together with the marketing and distribution excellence of our local partner Alniche Life Sciences, we aim to consolidate and expand this awareness and reach beyond metros and Class A towns so that more of the Indian population can benefit from this time-tested remedy for scalp and related skin conditions, he added.

Reforms will help GDP bounce back: CII chief

New Delhi: Continued focus on reform measures ushered in by the government even as the country faces one of its toughest crises during the pandemic, will trigger a faster recovery of the economy with the industry reposing confidence of a bounce back sooner than expected, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) president Uday Kotak said on Wednesday.

Talking about the state of the economy post the unlock phase, Kotak said there was now a big departure from the depressed mood that had gripped the industry during the early stages of lockdown.

"The industry now sees their sectors seeing a better pick up and capacity utilisation than what they had projected in March 2020. While in the first few weeks post the lockdown, the pickup was attributed to pent up demand, the sustenance of demand particularly in some non-essential sectors have lifted hopes of a faster recovery," he said.

The CII president said that the determination by the government to meet the challenges by pushing through some long pending reforms like the labour reforms and those for the farm sector apart from the call for an Atma Nirbhar Bharat have helped improve the confidence of the industry.

With the further easing of restrictions and successive unlocking of the economy initiated from June, most of the high frequency data points have shown a continued normalisation in ac-



The robust performance of merchandise exports can be largely ascribed to the industrial units being able to function with greater capacity in September, as restrictions on mobility were eased and local lockdowns were fewer — CII president Uday Kotak

tivity levels, as compared to the multi-year lows seen in April.

"The robust performance of merchandise exports can be largely ascribed to the industrial units being able to function with greater capacity in September, as restrictions on mobility were eased and local lockdowns were fewer. Slowly improving global trade is also helping on the margin," said Kotak.

The turning around of outbound shipments after a gap of six months with merchandise exports expanding by 5.27 per cent in September is amongst the many indicators which have recorded an impressive recovery.

Amazon India partners with IRCTC

Bengaluru: Amazon India said on Wednesday that it has partnered with Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), to provide their customers with the facility to book reserved train tickets on Amazon.

With this new offering, customers will be able to check seat and quota availability across all train classes on the Amazon app. They can pre-load money into their Amazon Pay Balance wallet to make this experience even smoother and pay in a single click. With this launch, Amazon Pay has added another travel category, thereby offering its customers a one-stop-shop for booking flights, bus and train tickets. "We are excited to partner with IRCTC and move another step forward in making life easy and convenient for our customers. Last year, we launched flights, and bus ticket bookings on Amazon," Vikas Bansal, Director - Amazon Pay, said in a statement. "With the facility to book reserved train tickets on our platform, we are enabling travel across any mode preferred by customers."

Coca-Cola India to allow permanent WFH option

New Delhi: Beverages maker Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB) on Wednesday said it has introduced an option of permanent work-from-home for its employees whose physical presence in the office is not required as part of a new policy.

The policy provisions for employee safety, their emotional and physical well-being and also monetary support to make the work-home space ergonomics suitable, HCCB said in a statement.

The policy, which is built on the company's basic tenet of providing care and flexibility, will span the period post-pandemic that employees can choose to permanently work-from-home, provided they do not need to be physically present at the work location such as factory, or sales, it added.

"This policy is led by empathy and flexibility, ensuring employees and their dependents to feel safe and be at ease, regardless of their work location. The idea is

to provide a seamless experience that is meaningful both for the company as well as the employees. "The unique feature of the policy is that it has been co-created by our colleagues who we feel know their problem the best. The situation is evolving and hence we remain open and flexible to any modifications that the policy may need," HCCB CHRO Indrajeet Sengupta said.

Under the policy, HCCB said it has started delivering ergonomically designed chairs from its office to the eligible employees to their homes on request.

"Those working in other cities have the option to purchase work chairs. Recognising the need for uninterrupted internet connectivity, HCCB will provide monetary support for employees to install UPS for power back-up including monthly wi-fi expenses," the statement said.



I-T refunds ₹1.22L cr to 36 lakh taxpayers

New Delhi: In pursuance of the exercise to meet liquidity needs of taxpayers during Covid-19 pandemic, the Income Tax Department has fast tracked its tax refund process and processed 35.93 lakh cases amounting to more than Rs 1,21,607 crore up to October 6 in FY21. The Income Tax Department has worked at breakneck speed to process the refund claims. It issued tax refunds at a speed of 76 cases per minute between April and June and continued the momentum well into October.

In a tweet the Income Tax Department said that between April 1 and October 6, tax refunds of Rs 33,238 crore have been issued in 34,09,246 cases and corporate tax refunds of Rs 88,370 crore have been issued in 1,83,773 cases. Refunds of this magnitude and numbers have been issued completely electronically and have been directly deposited into the bank accounts of the taxpayers.

Unlike what used to happen some years ago, in these refund cases no taxpayer had to approach an officer of the department to request for release of refund. They have got refund directly into their bank accounts.

Markets end higher as Reliance, IT stocks gain

Mumbai: Markets ticked higher for the fifth straight session on Wednesday following gains in RIL, banking and IT stocks amid a mixed trend overseas after US President Donald Trump dashed hopes of a pre-election stimulus package.

After opening on a weak note, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained ground to end 304.38 points or 0.77 per cent higher at 39,878.95. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty jumped 76.45 points or 0.66 per cent to close at 11,738.85. The Sensex has now gained 1,905.73 points in five sessions, while the Nifty has advanced 516.45 points.

Titan was the top gainer in the Sensex pack on Wednesday, climbing 4.44 per cent, after the Tata group firm said its business has been returning to normalcy in the second quarter of this fiscal, led by the jewellery division.

Index heavyweight Reliance Industries spurred 2.13 per cent a day after its retail arm raised Rs 5,512.50 crore from Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) for a 1.20 per cent stake. Bajaj Auto, Maruti, UltraTech Cement, and ONGC were

BSE Sensex adds 304 pts while Nifty jumps 76 points



among the other prominent gainers. IT major TCS inched up 0.78 per cent ahead of its quarterly results.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finance, PowerGrid, Sun Pharma, Tata Steel, NTPC and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards, skidding up to 4.12 per cent.

BSE consumer durables, energy, auto, IT, tech and financial indices rose up to 1.74 per cent, while metal, realty, power, utilities, capital goods and industrial lost as much as 2.97 per cent. Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices fell up to 0.16 per cent.

Indian CEOs less certain about GDP growth

62% of CEOs take salary cuts due to pandemic; only 33% confident about economy: KPMG survey

Mumbai: Corporate leaders in India are less confident about economic growth and 6 out of 10 CEOs have taken salary cuts as part of the overall cost management measures amid the pandemic, according to a survey.

As per a survey carried out by KPMG India in August among 100 CEOs, only one-third of the respondents said they are confident of economic growth and 62 per cent of them have taken salary cuts as part of the overall cost management measures to sail through the pandemic.

Only 33 per cent of CEOs are confident of the economy and 42 per cent are optimistic about growth of their companies, as against 78 per cent and 84 per cent in the January survey, respectively. Commenting on the find-



CEOs have already seen accelerated progress in digital transformation during the pandemic and are likely to prioritise investments in new technologies to become future-ready

ings, Arun Kumar, Chairman, KPMG India, says the significant shift in CEOs' priorities seen over the last six months reflect the agility with which they had to deal with the challenges of the pandemic.

"Looking forward, like their global counterparts, CEOs here are less confident about global and domestic economic growth than

they were at the onset of the year. Their earnings outlook is clearly challenged," he says.

The respondents listed supply chain risks and digital disruption and enhancing environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) programmes as their top concerns. As per the survey, a large number of respondents have identified "lack of skills and capabilities

in the IT area" as one of the most significant challenges to growth.

The CEOs have already seen accelerated progress in digital transformation during the pandemic and are likely to prioritise investments in new technologies to become future-ready, and 89 per cent of them plan to invest more on technology, the survey noted.

As per the survey findings, Indian corporate leaders are better positioned than their global counterparts in terms of growth in earnings as only 19 per cent of them expect earnings to either remain flat or decline, while 23 per cent globally foresee their companies' earnings to stagnate or fall. Moreover, CEOs globally feel a greater need to re-evaluate their purpose amidst the pandemic, than their domestic CEOs.

Toilet construction by GHMC at graveyard gate sparks row



HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Within days of the arrest of TS Wakf Board officials by Uppal police for raising objection over road widening involving NHAI at graveyard, another issue this time involving GHMC has cropped up on Wednesday.

The toilet construction by GHMC which ignored the Wakf Board's objections is drawing ire, even as police arrested over a dozen MIM activists for staging a protest near the site.

Mild tension was witnessed at Feelkhana graveyard and mosque at Begum Bazar trigger row after construction activity purported of public toilets was started by the GHMC despite TS Wakf Board's objection. As the news spread, the MIM activists reached the spot and resorted to the demonstration, prompting the arrest of scores of them. The construction activity was only stopped after Mohammed Khassim, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Wakf, reached the spot. Earlier on October 3, the CEO wrote to the City Police Commissioner urging him to help Wakf Board protect its lands. He pointed out that the graveyard in question with 2090.6 sq yards is a notified and registered Wakf property. Despite making it clear that the Inspector Auditor (Wakf Circle 2) tried to fix up the iron gate for protection of the graveyard, the SHO Begum Bazar stopped, citing there was a stay from High Court.

"As per office record, there is no suit is pending with regard to the subject institution. The interference of SHO is highly objection-

- Row erupts after GHMC starts toilet construction at graveyard gate
- As the news spread, the MIM activists reached the spot and resorted to the demonstration at Feelkhana graveyard, prompting the police to arrest scores of them

able and against the Wakf Board," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, some Muslim leaders picked up the issue and also wrote the MA & UD Minister, KTR. The leaders questioned as to how the GHMC with the help of police had gone ahead with the construction of toilet works at the entrance of the graveyard in spite of the Wakf Board's objection and officials on spot asked them to stop the work immediately.

In his letter addressed to Minister K Taraka Rama Rao, MBT leader, Amjedullah Khan pointed out that the Wakf Board erected a new gate but the local BJP Corporator objected to erecting of the gate and Begum Bazar police booked a case against the Graveyard Committee members and Wakf Board officials. "Very sad that we can't fix a gate to our graveyard, whereas today BJP Corporator along with heavy police and GHMC stated damaging the graveyard wall and gate and started constructing the toilets again. It's very a shameful act to erect a toilet at the graveyard entrance," he added.

Innova driver caught for using fake number plate



HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: An Innova car owner, who had been avoiding vehicle challans by using fake vehicle number plate, was caught by Banjara Hills traffic police during a routine check of vehicles on Wednesday.

According to police, when the Innova was stopped for checking of documents, the on duty officer noticed that the number plate on the car was different from the number on Registration Certificate (RC).

The original number of the Innova was TS 09 UC 7162 but the driver changed the number to TS 07 UC 7162 which is actually a

registered number of an auto, said The DCP Traffic Chauhan said.

The Innova driver was indulged in violating the traffic rules and was caught on camera multiple times for over speeding, but the challans which were being sent on his number did not reach him. Rather they were going to the auto driver who was not at all involved in any offences. Apart from that, the Innova was registered under the yellow number plate used for taxis but he was using a white one, he informed.

He was then handed over to Banjara Hills law and order police for further investigation.

KTR pitches for policy to transform dalits, tribals as entrepreneurs in TS

Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao reiterates government's resolve to uplift and stand by the weaker sections by providing education, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao on Wednesday asked the officials to formulate a best policy to make dalits and tribals as industrialists.

The Minister along with Social Welfare Minister K Eshwar and Tribal Affairs Minister Satyavathi Rathod had a review meeting with secretaries of various departments at SC, ST Commission office on Wednesday. After inaugurating a new conference hall, website in the commission office, Rama Rao said that only by strengthening the financial conditions of these communities, eradication of caste system was possible in the country. To achieve this, the government needs to introduce schemes and policies to encourage young SC, ST entrepreneurs.

The Minister said that the government had already assisted about 36,000 SC, ST youth through T-Pride. In the meeting, a total of Rs 100 crore subsidy amount from the industries department was released to help



Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao along with Social Welfare Minister K Eshwar and Tribal Affairs Minister Satyavathi Rathod holding a review meeting with secretaries of various departments at SC, ST Commission office in Hyderabad on Wednesday

2,000 beneficiaries from the communities. The Ministers handed over the cheques to beneficiaries. Rama Rao said that government plans to uplift and stand by the weaker sections by providing education, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.

He instructed the officials to come up with the best policies to encourage SC, ST entrepreneurs.

The officials were also asked to study the policies being implemented in various other States. He said that a meeting would be held soon called to discuss the drafting of the innovative policies for the uplift of SC, ST communities. Minister said that these plans would be placed before the Chief Minister for approval. He also asked the officials to take up awareness programmes in rural

areas and educate the rural youth with the present policies and schemes.

The Municipal Administration Minister appreciated the SC, ST Commission for its efforts since its inception. Minister Koppula Eshwar said that the Commission has resolved 92 per cent of the received cases and has actively toured districts and supported the people whenever they needed

assistance. Satyavathi Rathod said that the Chief Minister ST Entrepreneurship scheme was playing a key role in providing assistance and transforming ST youth into entrepreneurs.

Commission Chairman E Srinivas said that the earlier governments never cared for the SC, ST Commission before the State's formation. But the Telangana government has set up an office with complete infrastructure, he said.

A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between WE-Hub and Tribal Welfare department in the presence of Ministers to ground and scale tribal women-led enterprises. As per the MoU, Tribal Cooperative Finance Corporation Limited (TRICOR) and WE-Hub would set up three pre-incubation centres in the Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDA) regions of Telangana. The Ministers handed over the Rs 100 crore bank guarantee documents to the Telangana SC, ST Commission granted by National Scheduled Caste Finance Development Corporation.

MLC POLLS

Congress' gripe about enrolling fake graduates

- Urges the Election Commission to put in place some mechanism to identify and stop fake graduates from voting
- The system of online enrolment is very porous without any scope for verification of the authenticity of the degrees or marks memos, the party leaders say

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Alleging that TRS is enrolling the graduate voters by using fake degree certificates for the MLC (Graduates) elections, Congress on Wednesday urged the EC to put in place some mechanism to identify and stop fake graduates from voting.

The party leaders led by chairman, TPCC election coordination committee, Marri Shashidhar Reddy and convenor G Niranjan met the Chief Electoral Officer (TS) Shashank Goel to highlight the serious-



TPCC election coordination committee chairman Marri Shashidhar Reddy along with others leaders submitting a representation to the TS Chief Electoral Officer Shashank Goel in Hyderabad on Wednesday

ness of the problem which could impact the prospects of winning candidates. In their representation, they pointed out that the system of online enrolment was very porous without any scope for verification of the authenticity of the degree or marks memo. While referring to reports in digital media, the leaders alleged that TRS leadership was resorting to utilising fake degree certificates. "We raised this issue in the all-party meeting at the GHMC on October 3. Since 2014 there have been sev-

eral instances of fake degree certificates coming to light in City and the TRS has the dubious distinction of tinkering with the purity of the electoral rolls right from 2015 onwards. "We have serious apprehensions about the enrolment of bogus voters on the basis of fake certificates. Since there is no procedure to verify the authenticity of degree certificates or marks memo, we urge the EC to take steps to put in place a process to do this immediately," they urged.

Dubbak bypoll: TRS candidate meets KCR

Hyderabad: TRS candidate for Dubakk bypoll Solipeta Sujatha met Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao and took his blessings. Sujatha along with Finance Minister T Harish Rao, MLA Padma Devender Reddy, met the Chief Minister at Pragathi Bhavan on Wednesday. The Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao handed over the B-form to Sujatha and wished that she would win the elections with huge majority. He asked the party candidate to go to the people and explain about the works done by the TRS government elaborately. Sujatha said that she would win the election with a huge majority with the blessings of the Chief Minister. She wanted the Chief Minister to encourage her the way he did his husband Ramalinga Reddy.

State govt refuses to grant VRS to VK Singh

Hyderabad: The State government has decided not to relieve former Director of Telangana State Police Academy from duty under Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), it is learnt. Singh applied for VRS in the month of June and requested the government to relieve him from his duties. Since he applied for VRS, speculations were rife that nothing was good between the officer and the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) government as time and again the officer spoke about various reforms which needed to be done in the police depart-

ment. However his suggestions were not heeded. Recent reports suggest that, the TRS government has rejected the VRS proposal of VK Singh mentioning that there were two unresolved cases in which he was the investigating officer and those files were not yet to be cleared. Ever since he applied for VRS, the officer was transferred and was directed to report in the DGP headquarters, but Singh denied the offer and said he was ready to resign immediately. Singh was also appointed as consultant to the Punjab government two months ago.

All set for Nizamabad MLC polls tomorrow

Stage set for council poll

- All arrangements in place
- Polling will be held in 50 stations from 9 am. to 5 pm.
- 824 voters to exercise their franchise
- Corona tests done on all 824 voters
- 24 tested positive among them
- Covid patients should cast their votes in the last hour
- They can cast by postal ballot also



Counting at Nizamabad Polytechnic College on Oct 12

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: All arrangements are in place for the by-election to Nizamabad Local Authorities' constituency under Legislative Council scheduled on October 9. Voting will be held in 50 polling stations in two districts (Nizamabad and Kamareddy) from 9 am to 5 pm through ballot method. MPTCs, ZPTCs, Councillors, Corporators, and Ex-officio members totalling 824 will exercise their vote in the election. The Election Commission of India (ECI) gave strict guidelines to be followed in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic and stressed on the need for all to follow them for free and fair elections. Covid-19 tests were also performed on the total electorate out of which 24 had tested positive. Separate arrangements are being made by authorities so that positive voters also can exercise their votes without any hassles. District Collector and Election Returning Officer (ERO) C Narayana Reddy stated that 24 Covid positive voters were being given two options - either to cast their vote by postal ballot or by coming to the polling station in the last hour of polling (4 pm to 5 pm) by wearing PPEs and taking all necessary precautions. They could come in their own vehicles or if requested authorities would arrange them ambulances to transport them to polling stations, he said.

A notification for this by-poll was released in March this year to fill the post that fell vacant due to the dis-

qualification of sitting MLC R Bhoopathi Reddy. The polling was originally scheduled on April 7, but it was deferred by ECI due to corona pandemic and later extended the election period thrice.

It has been mandated to wear face mask. Thermal scanning and sanitisers have been made available for everyone visiting the polling stations. The staff and voters have been instructed to strictly follow the Covid-19 guidelines including maintaining physical distance. Each polling station will have a polling officer, a micro-observer as well as a medical officer, an ANM or an Asha worker. A medical officer will be in charge of the help desk. Further, the authorities were instructed to keep ambulance vehicles ready at the polling stations.

Webcasting is being set up at 48 polling stations out of the total 50 stations. The other two polling stations will be covered by video cameras. Counting of votes will be done on October 12 at Nizamabad Polytechnic College. The entire election process should be completed by October 14. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's daughter and former MP Kalvakuntla Kavita is in the fray from the TRS. V Subhash Reddy (Congress) and P Lakshminarayana (BJP) are in the fray but the ruling party is confident of winning with a big majority as it has an absolute majority in terms of elected members in different local bodies under the constituency.

Film distributor complains against TDP leader's son

Hyderabad: A film distributor Shiva Ganesh on Wednesday filed a police complaint at Banjara Hills alleging that he was threatened of kidnapping by Konda Reddy who is the son of MLA Vardaraj Reddy in AP. According to police, the complainant alleged that he was approached by Konda Reddy and others who threatened him at gunpoint and took his signature on blank papers and some documents related to land. Based on the complaint, we have registered a case of extortion against the said persons and the matter is being investigated.

SCTPC passing-out parade held

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The Passing out Parade (Dikshant Parade) of SCTPC's (Stipendiary Cadet Trainee Police Constables, Civil - Men) was held on Wednesday at City Armed Reserve Parade Grounds in Petlaburj. In the passing out parade, 465 cadets were recruited in Medak, Karimnagar and Khammam districts and were trained at various training centres in Hyderabad. Out of these 465 cadets, 88 were post-grad-

uates, 111 were engineering graduates, 210 regular grads whereas 56 had completed intermediate education. Overall, 10,000 cadets from the entire State had undergone training for a period of nine months at 28 training centres in the State. In Hyderabad police Commissionerate, 901 cadets were trained at 4 training centres.

The event was attended by the Home Minister of Telangana, Md Mahmood Ali; DGP of Telangana police, M Mahender Reddy and other officials.

Civil Society urges govt to pause property survey

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: City-based Civil Society Forum Force comprising retired bureaucrats on Wednesday demanded the Telangana Government to withdraw the non-agricultural property record (NAPR) survey under the Dharani forthwith and said that the entire official process mainly collection of data from people was fraught with potential assault on the rights of the citizens. The forum said that certain information obtained in utter disregard of the ruling of the apex court of the land, inviting contempt of the

- The entire official process mainly collection of data from people was fraught with potential assault on the rights of the citizens
- Officials claiming to be employees of GHMC /local bodies are visiting households armed with a form and seeking a wide variety of information citing the purpose as uploading data on Dharani, says former TSPSC member TS Vivek

court.

The Force member and former TSPSC member TS Vivek said that officials claiming to be employees of GHMC /local bodies are visiting households armed with a form and seeking a wide

variety of information citing the purpose as uploading data on Dharani to issue non-agricultural property record (NAPR).

He said the officials are clueless about the law under which the information is sought. The

information sought by them, among other things, pertains to (1) Mode of acquisition of property (2) caste (3) Aadhar number (4) family members and their Aadhar numbers. The functionaries on the survey job are also insisting on disclosing mode of acquisition of property. This is yet another contentious piece of information sought by the government. He insisted that information about caste, mode of acquisition of property, Aadhar (except where it is necessary) be expunged from the survey form only to assuage the anxiety of the wary citizens.

FRENCH OPEN

Nadal overcomes Sinner test, Svitolina shocked by Podoroska

Paris (IANS): Twelve-time champion Rafael Nadal overcame a stern test against Italian teenager Jannik Sinner to enter the semi-finals of the ongoing French Open.

On Tuesday evening, Nadal -- playing his 100th match at the Roland Garros -- defeated 19-year-old Sinner 7-6(4), 6-4, 6-1 in a match that lasted two hours and 49 minutes on Court Philippe-Chatrier.

"He's a very, very young talent with great shots. For two sets it was very tough. At the end of the first set I was very lucky. It was very difficult for me to pull him out of position," said Nadal after he booked his 13th last-four place in Paris.

"In the third set I improved, I was much better being much more aggressive. That's the only way. I'm very, very happy to be back in the semi-finals of Roland-Garros again. It's no doubt the most important place for me, the most beautiful place to play," he added. His record now stands at 98

wins and just two defeats, 237 hours and eight minutes on the court, just 27 sets lost, 427 of 602 break points saved, according to the tournament's website.

The Spaniard will next face Diego Schwartzman, who beat Dominic Thiem on Wednesday in a five-set quarter-final that lasted more than five hours.

No. 2 Nadal will take a 9-1 head-to-head edge against Schwartzman into their match in Friday's semifinals.

"Two days to practice, to rest a little bit and to recover, and just try to be ready," Nadal said.

Schwartzman has this going for him: He won their most recent matchup, beating Nadal last month on clay at a tuneup in Rome.

"I'm not sure if I'm going to have a lot of confidence," Schwartzman said, "but, yeah, I know... that I can beat him. That's important."

Nadal is trying to win a 13th French Open title and 20th Grand Slam trophy

overall, which would equal Roger Federer's mark for men.

Meanwhile, in women's singles, Argentine qualifier Nadia Podoroska produced the greatest shock of the ongoing tournament as she defeated No.3 seed Elina Svitolina, 6-2, 6-4 in the quarterfinals. She has become the first qualifier ever to reach the last four of Roland Garros - and the first in 21 years to reach such a point in any major.

"It's difficult for me to speak after the match, but thanks everyone for your support. I'm very, very happy!" Podoroska said after the match "It's difficult

for me to speak after the match, but thanks everyone for your support. I'm very, very happy!" she added. She will next face Polish teenager Iga Swiatek, who ousted Italian qualifier Martina Trevisan 6-3, 6-1 to reach her first Grand Slam semifinal.



Injured KKR pacer Khan ruled out of IPL 2020

Abu Dhabi (IANS): US fast bowler Ali Khan, who was part of the Kolkata Knight Riders squad, has been ruled out of the remaining Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020 tournament due to an injury.

Khan had been brought in as replacement for English pacer Harry Gurney, who had to undergo a shoulder surgery before the start of the tournament.

"...Kolkata Knight Riders signed up Ali Khan as a replacement for injured Harry Gurney. Khan became the first USA cricketer to be signed up by an IPL franchise. Unfortunately, Khan has since been injured and will miss the rest of the IPL 2020 season," an official IPL statement read.

Khan, the first player from the US to join an IPL franchise, was, however, unable to find a place in the playing XI in the four matches that KKR played till now in the tournament.



The right-arm fast bowler had come into the IPL on the back of a successful campaign at the Caribbean Premier League 2020 with the Trinbago Knight Riders -- the CPL franchise with the same parent company as KKR -- in which they won all 12 matches to seal the title. In the season, Khan took eight wickets in eight matches that he played.

TODAY'S MATCH

Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Kings XI Punjab at 7.30 pm

NBA Academy India prospect Sandhu signs with FLCA

New Delhi (IANS): NBA Academy India prospect Amaan Sandhu has signed with First Love Christian Academy (FLCA), a private high school in Washington, Pennsylvania. The 18-year old becomes the third male student-athlete from the NBA Academy India to get a high-school basketball scholarship in the US.

Sandhu joined the NBA Academy India in 2017 as part of the inaugural class of student-athletes identified through the ACG-NBA Jump Program. The 6'11 standout forward/center from Mohali has been a part of multiple high-profile basketball development camps, including Basketball Without Borders Asia 2018 & 2019, NBA Global Camp 2018 in Italy, 2018 and 2019 NBA Academy Games, and most recently, Basketball Without Borders Global Camp during NBA All-Star 2020 in Chicago. The 18-year old made his debut with the Indian men's senior national team with a gold medal-



winning campaign at the South Asian Games in 2019. "I am grateful to First Love Christian Academy for offering me this opportunity. The last three years at the NBA Academy India have built a strong foundation to take my game to the next level, and for that, I would like to thank my coaches for believing in my abilities and making me better every day," said Sandhu. Sandhu will join NBA Academy India teammate Pranav Prince who committed to FLCA in August.

Abu Dhabi (IANS): Mumbai Indians (MI) skipper Rohit Sharma was all praise for his team mates on Tuesday after they beat RR by 57 runs at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium. This was their third consecutive win this season and both their previous matches ended in comprehensive victories for the four-time champions.

"We strive to play with power. We've got quality in this squad. We've given confidence to each one of them because we know they're very talented," said Rohit in the post-match presentation ceremony.

"The conditions are quite helpful (for our fast bowlers). We were not sure how the pitches were going to be, whether it'd be helpful for our pace battery. But it was nipping around and it's good to have guys who can exploit those conditions," he said.

All but one of the RR batsmen on Tuesday fell to catches, which included two screamers by substitute fielder Anukul Roy and Kieron Pollard to dismiss Mahipal Lomror and the rampaging Jos Buttler respectively.

"The fielding was brilliant, it's something we take pride in. "We can have ups and downs with the



bat and ball but fielding is something we can control. It is something that we pride ourselves with and work very hard on," he said.

The match was featured a gutsy 79 not out from Suryakumar Yadav, was declared player of the match for the performance.

"It was coming (for Suryakumar). I spoke to him today before the match. He was batting really well all these games. It was all about shotmaking - today his shortmaking was perfect. All the innovative shots at the end came in handy," said Rohit.

Govt sanctions ₹5L each for boxer, archer siblings from UP

New Delhi (IANS): The Sports Ministry has announced financial support to UP boxer Sunil Chauhan and his brother archer Neeraj Chauhan who were facing financial crunch after their father -- who is the only earning member of the family -- lost his job due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the family was forced to sell vegetables to make ends meet. Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju sanctioned an ex-gratia financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh each to the athletes under the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay National Welfare Fund for

Sportspersons. "I'm happy to announce that Sports Ministry has sanctioned Rs 5 lakh each for UP archer Neeraj Chauhan and boxer Sunil Chauhan under the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Fund. The athletes had a acute financial crisis because their father lost his livelihood during the pandemic," Rijiju tweeted. "The financial help will go a long way to help me and my family and we are really thankful to the minister to helping us at the time of our need," said Sunil as per a sports ministry release.

Melbourne (IANS): A private memorial service to celebrate the life of former Australian cricketer Dean Jones was held last week at the hallowed Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

Dean, who was part of the Star Sports commentary panel for the 13th Indian Premier League (IPL) edition being held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), died in a Mumbai hotel after suffering a cardiac arrest

on September 24.

His wife Jane, daughters Isabella and Phoebe and Jones' siblings were among a group of 10 to attend the small ceremony at a funeral parlour held over the weekend because of Covid-19 restrictions.

A hearse carrying Jones' handmade Indian coffin adorned with the Australian flag and a floral 324 arrangement showcasing Deano's Aus-

16 elite boxers to train in Italy & compete in France

New Delhi/Patiala (IANS): Sixteen elite women and men boxers will travel to Italy and France for their overseas training and participation in international competition after the Covid-19 hiatus.

A 28-member contingent, that includes 10 male boxers and six female boxers along with the support staff, will travel for a period of 52 days from October 15 to December 5.

The teams will be training at Assisi, Italy. All the four events (men's 57 kg, men's 81 kg, men's 91 kg, women's 57 kg) where India are yet to win a quota, will have boxers who will be a part of the travelling contingent.

They will be accompanied by eight coaches and support staff in the men's team and four coaches and support staff in the women's team.

Thirteen boxers from the contingent will also participate in the 'Alexis Vastine' international boxing tournament to be held in Nantes, France from October 28 to 30, stated the Sports Authority of India (SAI) in a release.

Amit Panghal, Ashish Kumar, Satish Kumar, Simranjit Kaur, Lovlina Borgohain and Pooja Rani from among the contingent have earned quotas for the Tokyo Olympics.

Nine boxers, the highest ever for a single Olympics from India, have so far earned quotas for the Tokyo Games. The World Olympic qualifying event scheduled for next year is the last event for Indian boxers to obtain quotas for the prestigious quadrennial event.

‘KL shouldn't be bothered with wicket-keeping in Indian squad’



New Delhi (IANS): Legendary West Indies cricketer Brian Lara believes KL Rahul is a "great batsman" and that's why he should concentrate on his batting and not bother about wicket-keeping when it comes to the Indian team.

Rahul, who is currently leading Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020, has scored 302 runs -- including one hundred and two half-centuries -- in five matches so far.

"Well, first of all I would like to say that KL Rahul should not be bothered with wicket-keeping when it comes to that Indian squad. He's such a great batsman that I feel that he should concentrate on that and put in a lot of runs on the board," Lara said while speaking on Star Sports Cricket Connected show.

According to the former West Indies captain, Rishabh Pant is the number one choice to replace MS Dhoni behind the stumps in the Indian team.

Pant has been in good form in the ongoing tournament, scoring 171 runs in the five matches he

has played so far for the Delhi Capitals.

"Rishabh Pant a year ago, I would say no, but I feel that he has stepped up in terms of his responsibility as a batsman. Look at how he plays for Delhi Capitals, it looks like he wants that responsibility, he wants that onus on him to score runs, build an innings and get big scores," said Lara. "If he continues that way, I think that he should the number one," he added.

Dhoni retired from international cricket in August after representing India in 350 ODIs, 90 Tests and 98 T20Is while affecting a staggering 829 dismissals behind the stumps across formats.

Pant -- who has so far played 13 Tests, 16 ODIs and 28 T20Is -- was touted as Dhoni's successor but he hasn't been able to put up consistent performances when playing for the national side. He was replaced behind the stumps, in limited-overs formats, in New Zealand by Rahul when the Men in Blue last played international cricket.

Smith fined for slow over-rate against MI

Abu Dhabi (IANS): Rajasthan Royals captain Steve Smith has been fined Rs 12 lakh for maintaining slow over-rate during his side's 57-run loss against Mumbai Indians in their latest Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020 encounter.

"As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Mr. Smith was fined Rs 12 lakh," stated an IPL media release. Earlier, Delhi Capitals skipper Shreyas Iyer and Royal Challengers Bangalore captain Virat Kohli were also fined for maintaining slow over-rates during their respective matches against SunRisers Hyderabad and Kings XI Punjab.



Orange Cap stays with KL, Rabada holds onto Purple

Abu Dhabi (IANS): Kings XI Punjab captain KL Rahul and Delhi Capitals pacer Kagiso Rabada continue to hold the Orange and Purple Cap respectively following the conclusion of the 20th IPL 2020 match between Mumbai Indians and Rajasthan Royals which the Rohit Sharma-led side won by 57 runs. Rahul has scored 302 runs -- including one hundred

and two half-centuries -- in five matches so far and leads the chart for the leading run scorers. He is followed by Chennai Super Kings' Faf du Plessis who has 282 runs to his name from five games. Kings XI opener Mayank Agarwal is third on the list with 272 runs.

In the bowlers' list, Rabada has 12 wickets from five games and leads the chart. He is fol-

lowed by Jasprit Bumrah, who now has 11 wickets in six games. Bumrah's teammate Trent Boult is third on the list with 10 wickets from six matches.

These running caps are presented to the leading run scorer and wicket-taker and keep changing hands throughout the duration of the tournament.

GANDHI JAYANTI TENNIS CAMP



As many as 20 boys and girls attended a day-long training during the exclusive Gandhi Jayanti tennis camp organised by Academia Sports Village (ASV) in their courts at Hyderabad Polo and Riding Club (HPRC) in Aziz Nagar on Friday. Tollywood actor Ali, who graced the valedictory function, gave away certificates to the trainees and felicitated players and coaches

DEAN JONES' FINAL LAP AT MCG

Australian Test cap number, took one last lap of the iconic cricket ground, according to the official MCG website. The number was also his highest first-class score achieved for Victoria against South Australia on the MCG in the 1994/95 Sheffield Shield season. "We have been deeply moved by the outpouring of love for Dean over the last week and can't thank everyone

enough for their support and for sharing their memories with us," Jane said.

Meanwhile, former Australia captain Michael Clarke said Jones deserved a "full house standing". "He deserved a full house standing and applauding. RIP great man," Clarke tweeted on Wednesday.

Dean's friend and writer Chris Driscoll also penned a poem in honour of the former

Australian batsman:

Prof Deano featured in 52 Tests, scoring 3,631 runs at an average of 46.55. In 164 ODIs, he made 6,068 runs, at 44.61, with seven hundreds and 46 fifties. One of his most memorable Test innings came in 1986, when in the heat and humidity of Chennai, he battled exhaustion and illness to make a heroic 210 in what would be only the second tied Test ever.