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The petition has made DCP, SHO of Jamia Nagar Police Station, Delhi government, Director General of UP Police, UP government as parties.

Womenia

Calm down your fussy baby

Your baby's cry is how he or she communicates with you. All babies cry, especially in the first 6 months of life. During this period most babies can cry for 45 minutes to 2 hours every day. Babies will usually cry so they can be fed, put to sleep or have their diapers changed.

Here are ways you can try to comfort a crying baby. It may take a few tries, but with patience and practice you'll find out what works and what doesn't for your baby.

- Swaddle your baby in a large, thin blanket (ask your nurse or child's doctor to show you how to do it correctly) to help her feel secure.
- Hold your baby in your arms and place her body on her left side to help digestion or stomach for support. Gently rub her back. If your baby goes to sleep, remember to always lay her down in her crib on her back.
- Turn on a calming sound. Sounds that remind babies of being inside the womb may be calming, such as a white noise device, the humming sound of a fan, or the recording of a heartbeat.
- Walk your baby in a body carrier or rock her. Calming motions remind babies of movements they felt in the womb.
- Avoid overfeeding your baby because this may also make her uncomfortable. Try to wait at least 2 to 2½ hours from the beginning of one feeding to the next.
- If it is not yet time to feed your baby, offer the pacifier or help your baby find her thumb or finger. Many babies are calmed by sucking.



- Keep a diary of when your baby is awake, asleep, eating, and crying. Write down how long it takes your baby to eat or if your baby cries the most after eating. Talk with your child's doctor about these behaviors to see if her crying is related to sleeping or eating.
- Limit each daytime nap to no longer than 3 hours a day. Keep your baby calm and quiet when you feed or change her during the night by avoiding bright lights and noises, such as the TV.

If food sensitivity is the cause of discomfort, a change in diet may help

For breastfed babies

Moms may try changing their own diet. See if your baby gets less fussy if you cut down on milk products or caffeine. If there is no difference after making the dietary changes, resume your usual diet. Avoiding spicy or gassy foods like onions or cabbage has worked for some moms, but this has not been scientifically proven.

For bottle-fed babies

Ask your child's doctor if you should try a different formula. This has been shown to be helpful for some babies.

NEWS ROUNDUP

Zareen Khan wants to do much more than looking hot in films

Actress Zareen Khan gave content driven performance in her latest release "Hum Bhi Akele Tum Bhi Akele". She now hopes to get meaningful roles rather than just put make-up on and look glamorous.

"I have been offered a couple of different types of roles, I am keeping my fingers crossed," she says.

She hopes that people now see her in a different light after "Hum Bhi Akele Tum Bhi Akele", an offbeat, OTT-released film about a gay man and a lesbian woman, and their self-discovery on a road trip.

"I hope people see me in a different light and they do offer me roles that I really want to do, meaningful roles rather than just putting on make-up and looking hot. I want to do much more than that," she said.



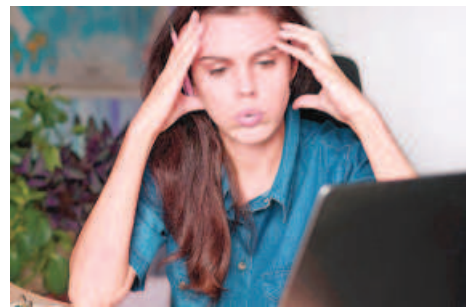
Youth getting stuck in a toxic productivity cycle?

SIDDHI JAIN

The competitiveness of today's education or work environments can lead to the development of unhealthy feelings in today's youth, who may begin to measure their worth with their ability to get sizable amounts of work done or remaining busy, says an expert.

"It was about two weeks ago when I overheard two people discussing their schedules, while it seemed like a friendly rant, it was much more than that. It was almost as if the two friends were competing based on who is busier, who has slept less, who had to experience more discomfort to feel productive. This is what toxic productivity looks like. It is essentially an innate desire to perform and deliver in all areas of your life, if your actions are not aimed towards self-growth; you feel low, devalued and even guilty," notes renowned clinical psychologist Dr Prerna Kohli who is the founder MindTribe.in.

A contributor in the area of mental health for over 27 years, Dr Kohli works towards helping people to sustain relationships and making their lives more productive, happier, and abounding with inner peace. She says, Throughout life, millennials have been told repeatedly to get their grades up, be involved in extracurricular activities,



they are expected to know multiple dialects, play various instruments and much more. We have put pressure on an entire generation to deliver performance in all spheres of their lives. We have literally driven them to find their self worth in their productivity. Hence, without work, they are likely to feel worthless. While this is beneficial to your organizations as they can get more work done from you in a limited amount of time and the influencers on your Instagram, Snapchat or other social media forums might be promoting this grind or hustling attitude, it is not good for your mental, physical or even emotional well-being.

Some psychologists and researchers agree that this hustle culture can be more damaging than workaholicism. Therefore, we must recognize the signs of toxic productivity and nip it in the bud.

One of these signs is feeling like a failure or feeling guilty when you are not working, which impacts your social life. You feel that catching up

with friends is a waste of time and think of the other activities that you would rather engage in. More signs include: Inability to enjoy any task or find menial tasks meaningful as they are not rewarded culturally; finding comfort in stressors; and inability to stop the cycle or finding it addictive. If you identified with these signs, it is time you stop working yourself towards a burnout. Take out time for introspection and prioritize your mental health over your work. Here are some tips you can follow.

Schedule relaxation

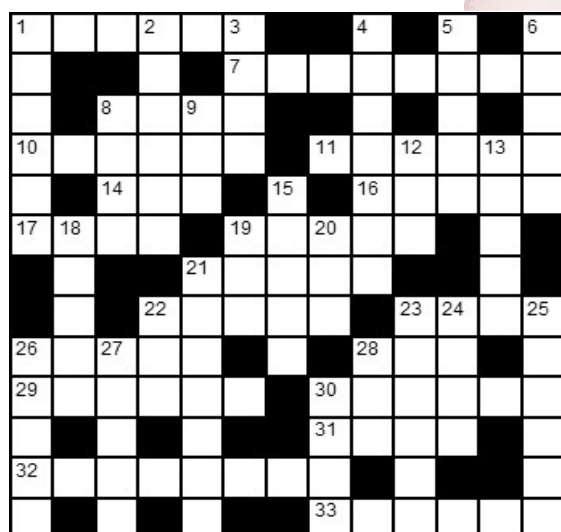
Take out time everyday to relax, this can include listening to music, writing in a journal, watching a movie, painting, talking to your friends or simply doing nothing.

Engage in breathwork

There is no better activity than mindfulness breathing, it helps calm your nervous system and keeps your mood regulated while making you feel relaxed throughout. With enough practice, you will be able to reduce your anxiety multifold.

Evaluate your attitude

Ask yourself the importance of work in your life. Is it the only thing in your life? Or is it a part of your life? Once you evaluate and understand the importance of working, you can learn to set healthy boundaries between your work and leisure time.



T O P A Z B W E E P S
N N O T E P A D E
P H O T O F I G L O O
O H S O L V E P
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I D E M U A R C H E R
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P I O U S E E G Y P T
L L O G I C A L E
B E R Y L N T E A R S

SOLUTION TO JUNE 28

CROSSWORD

Across

- Evergreen shrub (6)
- Make again (8)
- Vivacity (4)
- Anise-flavored liqueur (6)
- Frail (6)
- Bond creator Fleming (3)
- Scoffs (5)
- Rind (4)
- Improvise (5)
- Tavern glass (5)
- Inexpensive (5)
- Empty (4)
- Apportion (5)
- Plant (3)
- Short-sighted (6)
- Cringes in fear (6)
- Accustomed (4)
- Heavy or solidly built (8)
- Relaxing (6)

Down

- Buttress (4,2)
- Occurring in spring (6)
- Stepped (4)

- Introduce (5,2)
- West Indian (5)
- Measures of sheets of paper (5)
- French cheese (4)
- Charged particle (3)
- Trivial lie (3)
- Prefix with linear (5)
- Just right (5)
- Before the usual time (5)
- Bothered, with "at" (3)
- Impudence (3)
- Comic routines (7)
- Policeman (3)
- Opposites of "consonants" (6)
- Was in debt (4)
- Drugging (6)
- Name in violins (5)
- Boxer Joe (5)
- Call for help (3)
- Daintily pretty (4)

SUDOKU

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SOLUTION TO JUNE 28

9	1	2	5	3	7	8	6	4
3	5	4	9	6	8	7	1	2
6	8	7	1	4	2	9	3	5
7	4	8	3	2	9	1	5	6
1	3	9	7	5	6	4	2	8
2	6	5	4	8	1	3	7	9
4	2	1	6	9	3	5	8	7
8	9	3	2	7	5	6	4	1
5	7	6	8	1	4	2	9	3

SOCIAL MEDIA DAY

Social media seems to be everywhere these days. Though the days of social media pioneer Myspace are now long gone, we're constantly hearing about trending topics on Twitter, laughing at social media fails and many people are obsessive about keeping up with their Facebook news feed. Even if Facebook and Twitter aren't for you, there's still blogging, Vine, Snapchat, and even LinkedIn, among many others. Even businesses have recognized the value of social media for connecting with customers and selling their product, as well as quickly updating users about problems affecting their service.

Social media has become a major factor in the world. For many of us, it is how we keep up with what our friends are up to, even if they're on the other side of the planet. It has also played a big part in world events. Twitter was used to organise protests and report on events during the Arab Spring, for example. On a shallower note, Twitter is a great way to keep up with what your favourite celebrities are up to as long as they don't just use it to Instagram pictures of their lunch!

If we're honest, most of us use social media for less than upright purposes ourselves. We use it to show off our holidays and what adventures we have planned for the weekend. Almost everyone presents an idealised version of themselves on social media, whether by detagging unflattering photos or implying their life is more exciting and glamorous than it really is. Never compare yourself negatively to your friends on social media as you're only seeing what they want you to see!

TWEET PATROL



AMEESHA PATEL

@AMEESHA_PATEL

Off for my evening
dubbing session...
love to all



Monsoon reaches one of its last outposts in Raj 2 weeks early

NEW DELHI

THE southwest monsoon has reached Barmer in west Rajasthan, one of its last outposts, two weeks before its normal schedule but is yet to arrive in the north Indian plains including Delhi which have been reeling under searing heat, the Met office said on Tuesday.

The northern limit of southwest monsoon (NLM) continues to pass through Barmer, Bhilwara, Dholpur, Aligarh, Meerut, Ambala and Amritsar, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. After ar-

riving two days late in Kerala, the monsoon had raced across the country, covering eastern, central and adjoining north-west India seven to 10 days earlier than normal.

It has even covered parts of north India, including Rajasthan's Barmer -- a border district and mainly desert area -- but parts of west Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana are yet to receive rainfall. According to Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional forecasting centre, Barmer is among the few stations in west Rajasthan which are usually covered by the southwest



monsoon in the last. Southwest monsoon reaches west

Rajasthan by the first week of July. However, it covered

Barmer two weeks before its normal schedule, IMD's Director General Mrutunjay Mohapatra said. "A system in the Arabian Sea provided impetus to the monsoon which covered some parts of Rajasthan including Barmer in early June," Mohapatra said. In case of Delhi, Haryana, parts of Punjab, west Uttar Pradesh and west Rajasthan, the easterlies bring monsoon over this area from the Bay of Bengal, he said. "But there has been no active system currently in the Bay of Bengal that could help the easterlies to bring monsoon over this region," Moha-

patra added. The meteorological office had earlier predicted that the wind system may reach Delhi by June 15, which would have been 12 days early. However, westerly winds have been blocking its advance into Delhi, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana.

Normally, monsoon reaches Delhi by June 27 and covers the entire country by July 8. Last year, the wind system had reached Delhi on June 25 and covered the entire country by June 29. However, this year, the wait for Delhi, Haryana, parts of west Uttar Pradesh,

Punjab and west Rajasthan has been overdue even as the mercury and humidity have continued to soar, the IMD said, adding immediate relief was unlikely. "Prevailing meteorological conditions, large scale atmospheric features and the forecast wind pattern by dynamical models suggest that no favourable conditions are likely to develop for further advance of southwest monsoon into remaining parts of Rajasthan, west Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi and Punjab during the next six to seven days," the IMD said.



Corbett opens for round-the-year tourism

RISHIKESH

THE Corbett Tiger Reserve was opened on Tuesday for round-the-year tourism.

Five ranges of the reserve including Garjia, Bijrani, Dhara-Jhirna, Dhela and Pakhron were opened this afternoon for day visits for the whole year, Corbett's Director Rahul said.

Corbett's opening generated great enthusiasm among wildlife lovers with around 50 bookings made for the day safaris on the inaugural day, he said. Opening the reserve for round-the-year tourism will help people whose livelihoods are connected with it, Rahul said. Corbett's revenues have been hit hard by the Covid pandemic and a measure like this will help offset the impact, he said. Uttarakhand's Forest and Environment Minister Harak Singh Rawat had recently announced that Corbett and Rajaji tiger reserves will be opened for tourists for the whole year.

Wildlife experts have been opposed to the move saying it will not be good for animals inhabiting the reserves.

Prez Kovind lays foundation stone for Ambedkar memorial

LUCKNOW

PRESIDENT Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone of a memorial to Dr B R Ambedkar here on Tuesday and stressed that equality is a prerequisite for the all-round development of society. For Ambedkar, it was the country that mattered, not religion, caste or sect, the President said laying the stone of Bharat Ratna Dr Ambedkar Memorial and Cultural Centre, which will come up at Aishbagh here at a cost of over Rs 45 crore.

The memorial will have library, research centre, picture gallery, museum, a multipurpose convention centre, cafeteria, dormitory and an auditorium with a capacity to accommodate 750 people. A 25-foot-high statue of Ambedkar will also be installed. The event held at Lok Bhawan here was attended by Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Deputy CMs Keshav Prasad Maurya and Dinesh Sharma.

In his address, the president said 93 years ago on this day, Dr Ambedkar started "Samta" magazine to propagate his idea of an egalitarian society. "Without equality, all-round development



President Ram Nath Kovind pays tribute to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow, on Tuesday

of society is not possible," he said. "Babasaheb was always active in ensuring equal rights for women. In the US, after 100 years of their constitution, women were given voting rights. But when our constitution came into force on January 26, 1950, women got the right to vote and the credit goes to Babasaheb," he said.

Kovind said even when the

freedom struggle was going on and there was Hindu-Muslim animosity, people used to say that they are Indians first and then Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. "But Babasaheb used to say that we are Indians first, Indians later and Indians in the end. That means there is no place for religion, caste and sect," Kovind said.

BJP govt's pre-poll deceit, drama: Maya

LUCKNOW

BSP president Mayawati on Tuesday termed the laying of the foundation for Ambedkar cultural centre here a pre-poll act of "deceit" and "deception" by the BJP government to serve its electoral interest. Had it been not a "deceit", "deception" and "drama" before the 2022 assembly polls, "the President would have been inaugurating the centre and not laying the foundation stone" for it, said Mayawati.

The BSP supreme sought to undermine the Yogi Adityanath government's move asserting that his government is no different than the previous ones of Akhilesh Yadav and the Congress in denying the rights of Dalits and backward class people.

Mayawati made the allegation in a series of tweets soon after President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for the memorial to be after Dalit icon Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar, which is to come up on a sprawling plot of nearly 5500 sq metre land in the state capital.

Travel agents unhappy with financial package



K CHANDRASHEKAR
HYDERABAD

The travel agents are unhappy with the financial package announced by the Centre on Monday, stating that this was not a package but merely a small benefit for a handful of agents ignoring thousands of the agents across the country and have decided to represent the Centre to extend the benefit to the members of the association which are registered with the Tourism Ministry.

The Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman had on Monday announced a relief package for travel agents, a loan guarantee scheme of Rs 1 lakh and Rs 10 lakh for the Travel and Tourism Stakeholders including hotels, bus operators, tour bus operators etc. However, the package covers only those who are registered with the Ministry of Tourism and leaves out a vast majority of the agents registered with the State Tourism corporations. The Travel Agents As-

sociation of India (TAAI) Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states Chairman Nagesh Pampati said that he would not call it a package but a benefit to few. As many as 900 agents only would be benefiting from this initiative which is less than 10 per cent of the total number of agents.

"We are trying to make a representation to the ministry at national level and will be addressing a press conference on this soon. I can't call it a relief as it is only a benefit to a few," said Nagesh Pampati. According to the Indian International Air Transport Association there are about 10,000 agents in India. These are the agents who handle the tourists who come to India. "We request the government to help us out, everybody is affected... we are looking for ways and means on how to survive. We request the government to include travel agents who are members of the Associations recognized by the Ministry of Tourism," said Nagesh

Fake medicine factory busted

MUZAFFARNAGAR

AN illegal medicine manufacturing unit was busted in a village here with the arrest of three, officials said on Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of drug department raided the factory in Bilaspur village on Monday, they said adding raw material and machines worth lakhs were seized and a case registered at New Mandi police station.

According to Joint Director Virender Kumar, the team, led by Drug Inspector Lavkush Prasad, found that the medicines were being supplied to Meerut, Kanpur, Baghpat, Aligarh, Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Saharanpur and Agra. The arrested accused have been identified as Balraj, Mursaleen and Sahdev.

Covid curfew extended for another week in Uttarakhand

DEHRADUN

COVID curfew in Uttarakhand has been extended by another week till July 6 with more relaxations.

The extended curfew, which came into effect on Tuesday, will remain in force till 6 am on July 6, an order issued by Chief Secretary Om

Prakash said. Giving more relaxations, shops and business establishments have been allowed to open six days a week instead of five. They

will remain open even on Sundays in the two popular tourist spots of Mussoorie and Nainital, the order said. Markets in these towns will remain closed on Tuesday. Gyms and coaching centres for job aspirants have also been allowed to open with 50 per cent occupancy.

However, educational institutions, training institutes, malls and cinema halls will remain closed till further orders. Permission for

online classes and distance learning remains in place.

Registering on the smart city portal at the start of their journey and bringing a negative RT-PCR or Rapid Antigen test report not older than 72 hours will be compulsory for people coming to the state from outside or those going to hill areas from the plains. Hotels, restaurants and roadside eateries can open with 50 per cent of their capacity.

Elderly couple killed inside house in Ajmer

JAIPUR

AN elderly couple was murdered inside their house in Ajmer district of Rajasthan, police said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred late Monday night in Gulapura area, SHO Alwar Gate Police Station Sunita Gurjar said. "Madan Singh (85) and his wife Maina Devi (81) were alone in the house when unidentified people barged in. They slit the throat of the man with a sharp edged weapon," she said.

The incident came to light when their son, who lives nearby, went to give them tea in the morning. "Prima facie, robbery appears to be the motive of the double murder but investigation from all angles is going on. The bodies have been shifted to the mortuary of JLN hospital for post-mortem," she said.

Growth only on paper, people fed up with BJP-JJP misrule: Selja

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Congress president Kumari Selja on Tuesday alleged that people are fed up with the BJP-JJP rule in the state and development exists only on paper.

Selja said the BJP-JJP coalition recently celebrated 600 days of their rule and claimed of all-round development. "But the situation which exists in Haryana is there before all. The government seems to be non-existent. Not only farmers, every section of society is fed up with their misrule," she said. "The reality is that whatever they have done exists only on paper. One does not see any development on ground," Selja told reporters in Hisar.

Selja, a former Union Minister, alleged that the state has reached at the top in crime, unemployment and scams. The BJP-JJP alliance has emerged as the biggest anti-farmer government in the country, she alleged. "It is unfortunate that despite so many farmers losing their lives since the agitation (against farm



laws) began, the state government is advocating the agricultural laws," Selja said.

Referring to the BJP-JJP leaders facing protests by farmers in public functions over the farm laws issue, she said for the first time in Haryana's history it is being seen that elected representatives from the ruling party are not able to go amongst the public.

"Instead of finding solution to farmers' problems, the government is trying to create situations to provoke them. For how long will the government allow

this situation to continue where thousands of farmers are sitting near Delhi's borders and elsewhere for months and not take concrete steps to find a solution," she said.

Replying to a question, Selja said the Congress Party is with the farmers in their fight against the Centre's farm laws.

She slammed the Centre over rising fuel prices and asked why the government is not extending relief to common people from the taxes collected on petrol and diesel. The BJP government has

recovered about Rs 4 lakh crore in 2020-21, which is 300 per cent more than the amount collected in taxes on petrol and diesel in 2014. "Petrol and diesel prices are increasing every other day, has such a thing happened before," she asked. In coming days, the party will stage demonstrations and take out cycle yatras and against the increase in fuel prices and other essential commodities, the state Congress chief said.

On Covid situation, Selja said when experts were warning of a second wave, the government allegedly did not pay attention and everyone knows the consequences. "There was a shortage of medical oxygen, beds, patients ran from pillar to post and black marketers exploited the situation, but the government was nowhere to be seen," she claimed. During the ongoing pandemic, Congress workers have assisted and will continue to assist the needy with medical oxygen, masks, medicines and food packets, she said.

Radiation from cell phone towers causes no harm

JAIPUR

CONTRARY to popular fears that radiation from cell phone towers may be injurious to health, a senior DoT official on Tuesday said extensive research on electro-magnetic field signals has established that it does not cause any harm.

Senior Deputy Director Harvesh Bhatia of the Department of Telecommunication made this remark in a webinar organised by the Union government's DoT aimed at dispelling various myths and misconceptions on radiation from mobile phone towers.

"On the basis of extensive research on EMF signals, it has been established that mobile tower radiation does not cause any injurious health issues," said Bhatia. Bhatia pointed out the research findings while impressing upon the need for more mobile towers to ensure seamless connectivity.

"With the increase in the numbers of mobile users, there is also a need to increase the number of



mobile towers to cater seamless mobile connectivity to all," he said.

Medical experts and other stakeholders too endorsed Bhatia's remark in the webinar held on various concerns put forth by people on alleged health hazards from the radiation from mobile towers.

"Various myths and misconceptions were addressed in the webinar on radiation which was

held to make the public aware of the need for mobile towers and disprove theories surrounding the harmful radiation from mobile towers," an official said.

Apart from DoT officials, the webinar was attended by doctors, officers of the state government, police, local bodies and technical institutions, Sidhartha Pokharna, Deputy Director General-Compliance, Rajasthan, said.

Insurtech platforms in demand now

TECHNOLOGY has transformed various sectors beyond recognition. And the insurance sector is no exception. Apart from large established players operating in both life and general insurance space adopting technology in various operations, many insurtech firms have come up which are pure-play digital players in the insurance space. Companies like Digit Insurance, Acko General Insurance, Toffee Insurance, Coverfox Insurance, Ensuredit, PolicyBazaar, and many more have come up providing various services in the insurance sector. While some players are providing small-ticket insurance policies only through their digital platforms, many are working as aggregators that facilitate the comparison and buying of insurance policies easier. Among these insurtech companies, PolicyBazaar has already joined the unicorn club since 2018 with more than \$1 billion worth of market valuation. Similarly, Amazon-backed Acko General Insurance Ltd is planning a new funding round that could value the Indian online insurer at more than \$1 billion, reports suggested.

According to global consultancy firm S&P Global, India

is the second largest insurance technology market in the Asia-Pacific region with around 35 per cent of the \$3.5 billion of venture capital coming into the sector.

“China and India are collectively home to nearly half of private insurtech companies in the APAC region and attracted about 78 per cent of the investments,” a report by S&P Global Market Intelligence said.

As the ongoing pandemic shifted focus to digital interfaces, these digital platforms specialising in the insurance space are likely to gain traction in the coming years. The pandemic has also raised the importance of insurance, especially health and life insurance. Such insurtech platforms, therefore, are likely to get benefited from the new demand.

Apart from the new-age digital platforms operating in the insurance space, established firms in India are also embracing technology in many ways. For instance, most life and general insurance companies have introduced user-friendly apps for transactions. Also, digital technologies like artificial intelligence and data analytics are being widely used for underwriting risks. As we know, under-

writing a policy with clear risk profiling is a must for making money in the insurance business. AI and data analytics-powered solutions are enabling insurance companies to underwrite a policy with accurate risk calculations. Similarly, profiling of insurer is being done through his or her past behaviour, which can now be analysed through AI-based algorithms.

Technology has also started playing a crucial role in the general insurance industry. For instance, satellite-based geospatial technology is being widely used by general insurance companies for issuing crop insurance products. Also, damage assessment after a cyclone or flood is now being done through geospatial data analysis.

In this context, technology is playing a crucial role in both the general and life insurance industries. With low insurance penetration levels in India as compared to the global average, technology can definitely play an important role in improving the overall coverage in the coming years. Insurance companies will definitely benefit from this as inline insurance sales will come at a low acquisition cost.

Two gems and the Bharat Ratna



MOOT POINT

The qualities of trendsetters, myth-busters and torch-bearers are unique. They try something new under trying circumstances and discover a new path to success off the beaten tracks for the benefit of the motherland. The

Narasimha Rao Made history’, mentioned PV pursued reform through implicit, if not explicit, consensus building as the ‘middle path’ that was successfully emulated by Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh. Baru rightly observed that the ‘middle path’ approach serves India’s plural democracy better than brute majority.

Natwar Singh, a former Foreign Secretary, once observed: “Unlike Nehru, PV’s knowledge of Sanskrit was profound. Nehru had a temper, PV a temperament. His roots were deep in the spiritual and religious soil of India. He did not need to ‘Discover India’”. The Missile Man and 11th President of India, APJ Abdul Kalam described PV as a “patriotic statesman who believed that the nation is bigger than the political system”. India has never produced and probably can’t produce such a versatile politician like PV who had interests in a variety of subjects such as journalism, literature, arts and computer software. His love for languages (spoke 14), literature (authored books) and sports (Tennis) is unmatched.

Telangana paid glowing tribute to its beloved son-of-the-soil by way of grand centenary celebrations that concluded on June 28. The year-long celebrations culminated with the unveiling of a 26-foot bronze statue of PV on the Necklace road (christened as PV Marg) of Hyderabad for which the Telangana Rashtra Samithi government led by K. Chandrasekhar Rao deserves kudos. The ‘Mouna Muni’ (silent monk), a moniker PV earned for his spirituality, simplicity and taciturnity, faces the Lord Buddha’s statue erected in Hussainsagar Lake.

The colossal leader from Telangana, PV, sadly, is left with no major civilian award. The Congress-led UPA government had not entertained a resolution passed by the united Andhra Pradesh Assembly seeking Bharat Ratna for PV for obvious reasons. It is too much to expect from the party that humiliated PV at his twilight and dishonoured him soon after his demise.

Interestingly, KCR has done what the Congress failed to do. He conducted the centenary celebrations in a grand scale notwithstanding the unsavoury environment caused by Covid-19. The TRS chief perhaps drew some inspiration from his political mentor NT Rama Rao in bestowing full honours to PV, the pride of Telugus, irrespective of political ideologies.

NTR rose to power on the plank of ‘Telugu self-respect’ following the ill-treatment meted out to the successive Chief Ministers by the Congress high command but he mellowed down his loath against the same party when it came to PV.

In the by-election for Nandyal Parliamentary Constituency, NTR, being the leader of the then opposition Telugu Desam Party, opted his party out of the race to ensure the Prime Minister PV’s smooth sail in 1991. Thanks to the grand gesture of NTR, the Prime Minister secured 89.48 per cent of polled votes and won the seat with a margin of about five lakh votes to enter



This is the story of India’s neglected heroes, ‘The Father of Indian Economic Reforms’ Pamulaparthi Venkata Narasimha Rao (28 June 1921 – 23 December 2004) and ‘The Flying Sikh’ Milkha Singh (20 November 1929 – 18 June 2021), who deserve to be bestowed with the Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award of the Republic of India. The award, instituted on 2 January 1954, was originally limited to achievements in the arts, literature, science and public services but was expanded to include “any field of human endeavour” in 2011. Both the gems fit the bill of “exceptional service/performance of the highest order” without an iota of doubt the Guinness book of records.

After the Telangana Assembly adopted a resolution asking the Centre to confer the prestigious Bharat Ratna on PV, in September 2020, KCR said Nehru laid the foundation stone for a “modern India” while PV was the creator of “global India.” As a follow up to the Assembly resolution, a TRS MP, Banda Prakash, participating in the motion of thanks to the President’s address in Rajya Sabha in February 2021, asked the Centre to confer the Bharat Ratna on PV. By now, as many as 81 Telugu Non-Resident Indian organisations across the world launched a joint campaign for mobilising public support to request the GoI to confer the country’s highest civilian award to PV.

Unlike the inaugural, much to my surprise, the centenary celebrations concluded without making a vociferous demand to confer Bharat Ratna on PV. The go-getter KCR limited his speech only to highlight the greatness of PV and the Governor, the Chief Guest, too echoed the same. Would it be wishful thinking to assume that Modi, who praised PV as ‘great son of India’ in one of the recent ‘Man ki Baat’ programmes, asked KCR to leave the issue to him without making much ado. It is, however, disheartening to see the deferment of the release of a commemorative stamp on PV by the Postal Department at the last minute on Monday.

On sports front, Milkha Singh, who

passed away due to Covid-19 this month at the age of 91, too deserves the Bharat Ratna for his legendary performance in the field of track and field. Milkha, who was bestowed with the Padma Sri in 1959 and Arjuna in 2001, used to say that he would have been happier with Padma Bhushan, the third highest award, for lifetime achievement. The cricket-fanatic nation conferred Bharat Ratna on Sachin Tendulkar grossly ignoring sporting titans like Dhyan Chand and Milkha Singh.

PV shied away from talking about awards and rewards but the outspoken Sardar came out in the open on this issue. With due respects to Sachin’s cricketer talent, Milkha went on record that the hockey wizard Dhyan Chand should have been the first sportsperson to be conferred with the country’s highest civilian award. Very true, Dhyan Chand powered India to three Olympic Gold medals in 1928, 1932 and 1936 and laid a strong foundation for Hockey India.

A trendsetter in Indian athletics, Milkha achieved unthinkable by finishing fourth in the 400m at the 1960 Rome Olympic Games, missing the bronze in a photo finish besides winning more than 70 international medals. What matters here is, not the Olympic medal but the Milkha’s success in busting a rock-hard myth that Indians are not cut for track and field. A victim of partition-time mayhem and adversities, Milkha rose to become an iconic athlete India ever produced in the absence of proper infrastructure. No other veteran sportsperson campaigned for a drug-free, unbiased and clean sports like Milkha.

Ideally, awards are meant to honour living legends in recognition of their contribution or service to the nation. But, more than dozen proud citizens of India got the most coveted Peepal leaf-shaped medallion after their demise. History will not absolve the Modi government if it fails to consider PV and Milkha for Bharat Ratna at least posthumously now.

(The author, a PhD in Communication and Journalism, is a senior journalist, journalism educator and communication consultant)

Mixing Covid doses may help boost immune response: Study

TAKING the first dose of Pfizer Covid vaccine and then AstraZeneca for the second can provide good protection against the pandemic virus, a study has found.

The Com-Cov trial, led by researchers from the University of Oxford, looked at the efficacy of either two doses of Pfizer, two of AstraZeneca, or one of them followed by the other. The results showed that all combinations worked well, priming the immune system, the BBC reported.

The study included 850 volunteers aged 50 and above, who were given the doses four weeks apart. The team found that people who took AstraZeneca shot followed by Pfizer showed higher antibodies and T cell responses than those who took Pfizer followed by AstraZeneca.

Both of these mixes induced higher antibodies than two doses of AstraZeneca, while the highest antibody response was seen after two doses of Pfizer, and the highest T cell response from AstraZeneca followed by Pfizer.

“We already know that both standard schedules are very effective against severe disease and hospitalisations, including against the Delta variant when given at eight to 12 weeks apart,” lead investigator Professor Matthew Snape, from varsity was quoted as saying.

He however, added that the findings did not undermine the UK policy of giving people the same jab twice.

But, they do offer such flexibility for vaccine rollout in the future.

“Mixing doses could provide us with even greater flexibility for a booster programme, while also supporting countries who have further to go with their vaccine rollouts, and who may be experiencing supply difficulties,” UK’s deputy chief medical officer, Prof Jonathan Van-Tam, was quoted as saying by the BBC.

Two doses are important to give the fullest protection and teach the body to make antibodies and T cells to block and kill Covid.

Meanwhile, a pre-print study suggests that a third dose of AstraZeneca vaccine, given more than six months after the second, boosts the immune system, the BBC reported.

But, there is currently no data to support that a Covid-19 vaccine booster shot is needed for the general population, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An extra dose may be needed for more-vulnerable groups, such as older adults or organ transplant patients. (GANS)

Nine of 11 US Spelling Bee finalists this year are Indian-Americans

LALIT K JHA

NINE of the 11 finalists for this year’s US Spelling Bee contest are Indian-Americans, reflecting the dominance young kids from the small ethnic community have had on this prestigious and high-pressure endurance test for more than a decade now. The 11 spellers, of which nine are Indian-Americans, will compete for the champion title during the 2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee Finals on July 8, a statement said on Monday.

During the in-person finals, the Bee will have the option of activating a spell-off if needed. The spell-off would be activated in the closing minutes of the competition if a champion has not yet been declared in a traditional, one-person, one-word round, it said. “We are honoured to introduce our 2021 Scripps National Spelling Bee Finalists. Round after round, this group of spellers proved their mettle, and we look forward to seeing them show off their knowledge and hard work as they square off against the dictionary on the national stage,” said Dr J Michael Durnil, executive director of the Bee.

“Congratulations to all of this year’s 209 national qualifiers – they’ve persevered over a year that has been challenging in many ways, and our team is proud to have witnessed their journey,” he said. The National Bee is a high-profile, high-pressure endurance test as much as a nerd spelling match and spellers spend months preparing for it.

The final rounds of this year’s contest will be hosted in person at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort near Orlando, Florida, and will be broadcast live in prime time on ESPN2. The 11 finalists are Roy Seligman, 12, from Nassau, The Bahamas; Bhavana Madini, 13, from New York; Sreethan Gajula, 14, from Charlotte, North Carolina; Ashrita Gandhari, 14, from Leesburg, Virginia; Avani Joshi, 13, from Illinois; Zaila Avant-garde, 14, from New Orleans; Vivinsha Veduru, 10, from Texas; Dhroov Bharatia, 12, from Dallas; Vihaan Sibal, 12, from Texas; Akshainie Kamma, 13, from Texas and Chaitra Thummala, 12, from San Francisco.

Over the past 20 years, Indian-Americans have been dominating the Spelling Bee contest even though they comprise only about one per cent of the US population. The Bee was cancelled in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. But there were eight co-champions in 2019, seven of whom were Indian-Americans, bringing the total number of Indian-American champions since 1999 to 26.

Half of India’s working population credit active: Report

HALF of the country’s working population of 400 million people is credit active, having at least one loan or credit card, a report by a credit information company (CIC) said on Tuesday. Credit institutions are fast approaching a saturation level in new customers as over half of the borrowers are from the existing customer base of a bank, the report by Transunion CIBIL said.

India’s overall working population was estimated to be at 400.7 million as of January 2021, while the retail credit market has 200 million unique individuals who are credit active, it said. It can be noted that for long, there have been concerns about borrowers ending up in the traps of usurious money lenders who are not regulated and efforts have been mounted to deepen the access to finance. Over the last decade or so, reverses faced on the corporate lending side made banks prefer retail credit but concerns are being raised over the segment’s resilience after the pandemic.

The data from the CIC said there is an addressable market of 400 million people aged between 18-33 years in rural and semi-urban areas and pointed out that the credit penetration in this segment is only 8 per cent. In the new to credit (NTC) universe, there is a higher preference for products including personal loans and consumer durable loans in the segments of under-30 years and ones residing outside tier-1 cities, it said.

The composition of women, however, continues to be much lower in the NTC segment, it said, pointing out that the composition of female borrowers was only 15 per cent in auto loans, 31 per cent in home loans, 22 per cent in personal loans and 25 per cent in consumer durable loans. The CIC’s data also suggests that NTC consumers demonstrate higher loyalty to the credit institution that has provided them their first credit opportunity, the report said.

Borrowers also tend to prioritise payment on the first credit facility over the second in times of financial stress, it said. “Identifying emerging NTC consumers across segments and enabling access to financial opportunities for them is vital for driving economic resurgence and sustainable financial inclusion in our country,” the CIC’s managing director and chief executive Rajesh Kumar said.

He also added that lenders can assess credit risk associated with NTC customers as well with a product of the CIC for improving turnaround time and reducing cost of acquisition. The ‘CreditVision NTC’ scoring model is based on an algorithm that uses application and enquiry information of the borrower to help better assess their eligibility. (PTI)

LETTERS

Control inflation urgently

MANY poor and middle class people have lost employment/business in this pandemic and putting money in their hands is the best solution rather than encouraging them to avail more loans (Aatmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana extended till March 2022, June 29). If Modi government is really concerned about poor, it should control the prices of LPG and petrol rather than making them more debt-ridden. Appu Chesi Pappu Koodu is a well-known proverb in Telugu, forewarning about the ill-effects of debt. Further, governments should promote savings habit among people to face adverse times and natural calamities.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao, Hyderabad

Buck up, Congress!

CONGRESS is a national party with pan-Indian presence but can it really become fulcrum to any national coalition particularly when it is unable to set its own house in order? Congress is now in a do or die situation with one segment not yielding to anything other than the mother-son-daughter trio and the other advocating internal democracy and urgency in reviving it to its past glory. Congress should realise that people in large numbers are not really yearning for its comeback because they are fed up of its reluctance in having a strong structure that promises stability of the party.

It is a fact that Gandhi family sacrificed mother and son through assassinations but times have changed and they have to come forward with a different form of sacrifice ie handing over the mantle to others for keeping the

party alive and who knows its new avatar may even catapult it to power, albeit in a coalition set up. Magnanimity on the part of Gandhi’s family is the need of the hour.

Alternately, they should be assertive that they are there to lead it, come what may. Unless the party has stability, how can one expect it to promise stable India. With out any further delay, unless Congress buckles up there seems to be a bleak future on its horizon.

D Nagarjuna, Hyderabad

Encourage more Deepika Kumaris

IT is heartening to see that the ace archer Deepika Kumari winning three gold medals in the World Cup Stage-3 in Paris and soaring to the rank of World No.1 in recurve women’s individual world rankings. The life story of this 27-year-old archer is very inspiring. Being born in a small village in a family of auto rickshaw driver and accomplishing this feat is phenomenal. Representing India in various international events such as Commonwealth games, Asian games and World Archery Championships and winning several medals and getting laurels for the country are outstanding achievements. Recognizing her contribution to the sports, the Government of India felicitated her with Arjuna and Padmashree awards. There are many more Deepika Kumaris in rural areas of our country, who remain throughout their life as simple homemakers or daily wage labourers or they choose some jobs which are inferior to their stature due to poor financial conditions. For instance, the recent incidents like one Dilraj Kaur, India’s one of the first para shooters, who won several medals in national and international levels was forced to sell chips and biscuits due to the financial crisis is heart wrenching. It’s high time that the government came forward to support the talented sportspersons in the coun-

try, the fruits of which will definitely result in making India proud.

Dr Mejari Mallikarjuna, Nadigadda

Please attend to public, CM Sir!

PV our revered former PM was instrumental in initiating economic reforms and opening of our economy. Duly supported by him, his finance minister Manmohan Singh went all out to reform the setup. PV is respected by a core group of Congress men for having withstood an onslaught from Gandhi clan and in the process bore with a stoic face all the insults heaped on him by the family mafia. Ultimately the family stooped down so low as to deny him his due honour post his demise. Brahmins nurture a certain amount of regard for him to have survived magnificently all the manipulations. Sudden fondness and love for PV displayed by KCR is purely for political reasons and not out of any special regard for PV. He is all out to honour him by installing his statue, renaming road and district. He was not, possibly aware of the greatness of PV till last year. He went on to anoint his daughter. As his new-found concern for Dalits is purely for his own benefit, so is his for PV. He wants to project himself as the messiah for anyone/ group as long as it results in votes for him. The present mess in his govt., party with the impending departure of some senior TRS leaders compels him to go to any extent to please people. It’s time he did something for the citizens apart from handing out freebies like 20,000 litres of free water to public. Roads are in horrible shape untended for several years. Let the rains come, the state will float.

J Kannan, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com

Women safety top priority: Jagan

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

EMPHASISING on the need to ensure the safety of women in the State, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Tuesday directed the officials to take up a door-to-door campaign in creating awareness about the Disha App ensuring that every woman downloads it.

Disha App is developed in such a way that can it alert the police control room when a woman or a girl in distress shakes the smartphone with the App three times or touch the SOS button to ensure speedy response.

The App has the option called 'Track My Travel' for safety and guidance during travel.

The Chief Minister said the safety and security of women shall not be compromised.

The Chief Minister said that the unfortunate incident that took place at Prakasam Barrage had upset him. Hence the government decided to create awareness on Disha App, which

Door-to-door campaign to popularise Disha app



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy attends as chief guest at an awareness programme on Disha app at Gollapudi in Vijayawada on Tuesday

can protect girls and women in danger by alerting the police. He said that every house should be made aware of the importance of the App and women police and volunteers should be ambassadors in this awareness campaign.

He explained that over 17 lakh people have already downloaded the Disha App. It should

reach one crore downloads. This App, he said, has received four national awards.

Further, the Chief Minister said that the government had brought 900 mobile patrolling teams which were also set up especially in those sensitive areas where crime is likely to occur and a woman police officer has been appointed in the vil-

lage and ward secretariats. During the event, volunteers demonstrated the use of the Disha App in the presence of the Chief Minister. Soon after pressing SoS, Bhavanipuram police responded immediately and reached the location in minutes. The Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the performance of the App.

AP CM shares vax shift idea with PM

HANS NEWS SERVICE

AMARAVATI: Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to divert Covid vaccine stocks not lifted by private hospitals to State Governments to boost vaccination drive.

In his letter, Jagan stated that 17,71,580 vaccine doses have been earmarked for private hospitals for the month of July. He said the private hospitals are not utilising the huge quantity allocated to them as people were not showing much interest in getting vaccinated in private hospitals. The Chief Minister recalled a similar opinion expressed by some other States during the video conference conducted by Union Cabinet secretary with chief secre-

Jagan writes to Modi seeking diversion of unutilised doses from private hospitals to State Government

aries on June 24 and said that the Centre should take a decision to lift the unused stocks with private hospitals and give them to the State Government so that the ongoing vaccine programme can be put on fast-track.

The Chief Minister said the State Government had demonstrated its capacity by vaccinating 13,72,481 people on a single day on June 20. He said Andhra Pradesh is in a unique position to vaccinate lakhs of people daily as it has 15,004 village and ward secretariats all over the state aided by 2.66 lakh volunteers, 40,000 Asha workers, and 19,000 ANMs.

AP logs 3,620 new cases, 41 fatalities

AMARAVATI

THE number of active coronavirus cases in the state came down to 40,074 on Tuesday even as the state registered 3,620 fresh infections. In the 24 hours ending 9 am on Tuesday, 5,757 patients had recovered from the infection while 41 more succumbed, according to the latest bulletin. The gross positives now stood at 18,85,716, recoveries 18,32,971 and toll 12,671, the bulletin said. East Godavari reported 617, West Godavari 565 and Chittoor 451 new cases in 24 hours. Kurnool added 44, the lowest in a district in a day in more than three months while Vizianagaram added 95. The remaining eight districts logged between 100 and 400 fresh cases each. Chittoor recorded seven fatalities, Krishna six, East Godavari and Prakasam five each, Guntur and West Godavari four each, Srikakulam three, Anantapur and Visakhapatnam two each, Kurnool, Nellore and Vizianagaram one each in a day.

Woman techies murder case: Husband arrested near Vijayawada

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

IN the sensational woman techie Bhuvanewari murder case, the police on Tuesday arrested her husband Srikanth Reddy, who was the prime accused in the case, near Vijayawada and brought him to Tirupati on Tuesday.

Using mobile tracking system, police were able to find out his movement leading to his arrest.

A police party rushed to Vijayawada after getting vital clue from the mobile tracking system and nabbed him.

It may be recalled that, after her half burnt body was found near Ruia hospital on June 23, the Tirupati Alipiri police who took up investigation arrested a taxi driver on suspicion the next day i.e. June 24.

In the interrogation that followed, the taxi driver spilled the beans, revealing that the accused Srikanth Reddy was carrying a heavy suitcase and a his child travelled in his cab from the apartment to SVRR and back after burning the body (on June 23).

The child was left in the vehicle while the accused set ablaze the

body, the driver added.

The CCTV footage, provided by Bhuvanewari's relative Mamatha who is at trainee SI in Kadapa, of the apartment where Srikanth was staying for the last three months showed Srikanth carrying 18-months old baby and pulling the suitcase while approaching the lift.

The CCTV footage coupled with the information got from the taxi driver helped them zero in on Srikanth Reddy, police added.

Police said Srikanth in the interrogation denied killing his wife and maintained that her death was due to an accidental fall on the floor at their home in the apartment complex while they were tussling after a heated argument.

It may be noted that Srikanth and Bhuvanewari got married two-and-half years back after they fell in love with each other. Both were working in the same Hyderabad-based software company and she came to Tirupati on the request of husband, according to police.

It is learnt that the couple had frequent quarrels during the last few months.

Lokesh describes Disha downloads a diversionary tactic

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MANGALAGIRI

TDP national general secretary and MLC Nara Lokesh on Tuesday accused the Jagan Mohan Reddy government of trying to divert the attention of the people instead of making proper efforts to nab the culprits involved in the Sitanagaram gang rape.

Lokesh said the Chief Minister was issuing fake advertisements on the Disha app download while his regime failed to arrest the miscreants even 10 days after the ghastly incident. How can Jagan Reddy rescue crores of sisters and women in the State when he could not do justice for his own sisters, Sharmila and Suneeta, he asked.

In a statement here, Lokesh demanded the Chief Minister to explain to the public as to why his government failed to prevent the Sitanagaram gang rape which happened within close

vicinity of the CM's residence. In the name of the Disha app, the government was only releasing crores of rupees worth advertisements to his own newspaper and media.

The TDP MLC said that as of now, one sister of the Chief Minister was staying in Telangana due to lack of security and another sister was knocking the doors of police stations due to threat to her life.

Lokesh asked whether it was not a fact that the culprits in the Sitanagaram gang rape were roaming in the vicinity of the CM's residence. Instead of doing justice to the gang rape victim, the YSRCP government began a false drama in the name of mass download of Disha app, he remarked.

Lokesh slammed the Chief Minister for starting a 'publicity stunt' in the name of Disha App which was unveiled in 2020 itself when the still-unapproved Disha Act was announced.



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy chairs SIBP meeting at Tadepalli on Tuesday

Jindal Steel to set up ₹7,500 cr plant in AP

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

SEVERAL key proposals have been approved in the State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB) meeting chaired by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister directed the authorities to ensure 75 per cent employment to the local candidates is being provided by the companies and also emphasised on environment protection by taking precautions for lowering the impact and moving forward in industrial progress.

SIPB approves allotment of 860 acres to Jindal Steel Andhra Limited at Thamminalapattanam in Nellore district to set up an integrated steel plant with an annual production capacity of 2.25 million metric tonnes (MMT) at a total invest-

ment of Rs 7,500 crore. The organisation would provide employment for 2,500 people in four years. Also, the board approved extension of the deadline to June 2022 for setting up of St. Gobain industry in Visakhapatnam district. The company had requested for an extension due to Covid conditions and came forward to invest Rs 2,001 crore in three phases.

The board has given approval to Pitti Rail Engineering Components Ltd at Kopparthi near Kadapa for manufacturing of electrical, locomotive, and industrial infrastructure with an investment of Rs 401 crore by creating direct employment to 2,000 people. Similarly, Neelkamal Limited has been given permission to furniture unit proposed to be set up at a cost of Rs 486 crore at Kopparthi by employing around 2,000 people.

Also, the board approved expan-

sion of GreenTech Industries in Naidupet area of Nellore district, which supplies steel and iron products to companies such as Ford, Hyundai, Volkswagen and others. GreenTech, which has already invested Rs 750 crore and will invest another Rs 627 crore for the expansion and an additional 2,200 direct jobs will be provided. SIPB also gave an approval for Ammayapper Textiles Pvt. Ltd. in Chittoor district, who has come forward to invest Rs 30 crores, and provide 90 per cent jobs to women.

Besides these, SIPB approved construction of a mega retail park for textiles and garments in five acres at Tadepalli, Guntur district by investing Rs 194.16 crore. The retail parks will be housing around 900 retail units by creating direct employment to nearly 5,000 people, which is indeed a hub for national and international business.



POLICE FOIL BJYM BID TO LAY SIEGE TO TSPSC OFFICE

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

ACTIVISTS of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) along with BJP youth wing, on Tuesday tried to lay siege to the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) office, here, protesting against non-payment of unemployment allowance and government's failure to fill vacant posts in its de-

partments. However, they were stopped by the police resulting in tension. The protestors staged a sit-in on the road, resulting in a traffic blockade. The police arrested the agitating activists and shifted them to the nearest police station. Bhanu Prakash, the BJYM president, addressing the protestors alleged that the government was adopting a negligent attitude towards the unemployed in the State. He demanded

immediate filling of about two lakh vacant posts in government departments by releasing the TSPSC notification and payment of dole to the jobless. Prakash claimed that the number of suicides by jobless persons across the State was increasing. He questioned the delay in the release of employment notifications by TSPSC, while threatening to intensify the agitation by organising protests in the districts.

TS Govt to unveil 'container libraries' in Rangareddy soon on pilot basis

ESA BIN ABDUL REHMAN
RANGAREDDY

IN order to bring the rural children closer to books with variety of subjects to increase their horizon of knowledge and to stimulate reading habits among the rural youth, the Zilla Grandhalaya Samstha Rangareddy is embarking on introducing 'Container Libraries' in high schools under Rangareddy District on pilot basis from next month.

These libraries will be set up in schools where the sufficient space or accommodations are not available for setting up separate libraries. To begin with, the Koukuntla village in the district, which is also a native place of Minister for Education P.Sabitha Indra Reddy, has been selected to launch the program on pilot basis.

Considering the libraries as trajectories of knowledge, the Minister of Education P.Sabitha Indra Reddy went into huddle with the officials to plan setting up 'container libraries' in High Schools of Rangareddy District and have selected 100 schools where no such facilities are available. This program is scheduled to kick start from July next month and initially the first such container library would be set up in a high school at Koukuntla village on pilot basis.

"At Rangareddy level around 100 high schools have been selected by the district level committee headed by DEOs for setting up of 'container libraries' to facilitate students to read books of variety of subjects that



may help them improve their horizon of knowledge with regular reading habit," informed Manoj Kumar, Secretary In-charge Zilla Grandhalaya Samstha Rangareddy.

"These container libraries would have proper chairing arrangements inside the carrier to help students read books as per their interest conveniently," he said, adding that "Presently the container is getting ready and the program would begin from July next month." "After initial assessment and formative evaluations, the program will be extended to other areas in a similar way," he asserted.

As far as the libraries are concerned, he said, "There are a total 24 branch libraries and five village libraries spread through-

out Rangareddy District with one main operational building dubbed as 'District Central Library' located in Saroornagar Mandal with a full-fledged administrative block."

Out of 24 mandals in the district, only Manchal, Rajendranagar, Serilingampally and Saroornagar mandals are having branch and village libraries together while all the other mandals are having only branch libraries. The district library headquarter approves setting up of libraries as per the requirement and on the basis of requests made by the locals.

However, the secretary said, soon after the curving out of 33 new districts in the state the state government planned to shift the District Central Li-

brary from Saroornagar to an extremely specious and a herculean ground plus two floor structure in Badangpet village under newly formed Badangpet Municipal Corporation.

"The Telangana State Education Welfare Infrastructure Development Corporation (TSEWIDC) is constructing the District Central Library building at Badangpet with an outlay of Rs.4 crores. The mammoth building of Zillas Grandhalaya Samstha will have six different sections under a single room that include General Section, Reference Section, Children Section, Women's section, Internet enabled computer section and paper section besides district administrative wing," he elaborated.

GEARING UP FOR GREEN DRIVE



Workers in a nursery busy arranging plants for use in view of launching of 7th phase of Haritha Haram tomorrow. Photo: Ch Prabhu Das

TODAY's QUOTE

Stakeholders' meet soon for auto industry

“ We will arrange a stakeholder dialogue very soon to think about both the topics - further acceleration for high growth of the automobile industry and what is the way forward for fast tracking and fast growth of e-vehicles. Many ideas are floating around on e-vehicles and there are newer solutions coming up.

— Prakash Javadekar, Union Minister



LARGEST SHAREHOLDER

Bharti to invest ₹3,700 cr in OneWeb

Bharti will invest an additional \$500mn (over Rs 3,700 cr) into OneWeb, to become the largest shareholder in the satellite communications company that billionaire Sunil Mittal-run Bharti Group along with the UK government had rescued it from bankruptcy last year. The investment is a result of exercise of a 'Call Option' by Bharti.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	75.18	South	
Euro	89.54	African Rand	5.5
UAE Dirham	20.62	Hong Kong Dollar	10.04
Thai Baht	2.43	Japanese Yen	0.77
British Pound	104.19	New Zealand Dollar	52.67
Australian Dollar	56.67	Saudi Riyal	21.77
Canadian Dollar	60.8	Swedish Krona	9.23
Swiss Franc	81.71	Singapore Dollar	56.22



DELHI WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Skoda Kushaq bookings open

Skoda Auto has opened bookings and announced prices of its most-awaited SUV under the India 2.0 Project –Skoda Kushaq. It will be offered at an ex-showroom price starting at Rs 10.49 lakh nationwide, taking forward its one-nation-one-price philosophy. It comes with four years warranty, extendable up to six years. Zac Hollis, Brand Director, Skoda Auto India, said: “The launch of Kushaq is a watershed moment for Skoda Auto India as we enter one of the most exciting segments in this dynamic automotive market. Kushaq is made keeping in mind what really matters to our customers and is localised and tailored to suit the Indian market. Built on the acclaimed MQB-A0-IN platform, Kushaq is well designed, robust, exceptionally well-built, safe, spacious.”

Schneider invests in Luminous

Schneider Electric has announced plans to infuse Rs 350 crore to Rs 400 crore in its Indian subsidiary Luminous Power Technologies, a leader in power backup, home electrical, and a top player in residential solar technology in India. These investments will be used to pursue aggressive growth plans such as doubling the battery and inverter production capacity, generating new employment opportunities, and ramping up its solar business. Vipul Sabharwal, Managing Director, Luminous Power Technologies, said: “The power backup and home electrical market demand in India is experiencing robust growth, especially with a large population transitioning to a remote working/ work-from-home environment. We were able to achieve high business value, engagement and expansion. We will continue this momentum and are eyeing a double-digit YoY growth to reach Rs 5,000 crore revenue.”

Anushka Shetty joins Koo

Actor Anushka Shetty has shared a throwback photo with her best friend forever on Koo. In the photograph, Anushka and her two friends can be seen smiling and enjoying their time together. Anushka wrote, “Our paths may change as life goes along but the bond between friends remains ever strong” #Throwbackmemories. As soon as Anushka Shetty's post was shared, her fans and followers rushed in to shower it with lots of love and comments. One of them shared sketches of her photographs, while several others have commented using various emojis. The actor has garnered a following of almost 25,000 in less than a week of opening her account on Koo. Anushka Shetty has a massive fan following in South India as well as in the Bollywood film industry.

IDBI Intech, Lemon in pact

IDBI Intech Ltd has announced strategic partnership with one of UK's most definitive technology advisory firms, Lemon Advisors UK Ltd., to extend their fin-tech products and services for the banking and financial services sector to new global markets. Some of the standard global technology offerings by IDBI Intech include combating financial crime, payment transformation, digital customer experience and digital technology integration, among others. Surajit Roy, MD&CEO, IDBI Intech, said: “It is estimated that the global spends by financial institutions on regulatory compliance is projected to grow at the rate of 21 per cent to over \$5.6 billion by 2024 and 75 per cent of this spending will be on financial crime prevention and detection.”

ORAL COVID-19 DRUG MOLNUPIRAVIR

5 pharma cos team up on clinical trials

Dr Reddy's, Cipla, Emcure Pharma, Sun Pharma and Torrent will collaborate for clinical trial of the investigational oral antiviral drug Molnupiravir during June-Sept across India

NEW DELHI

LEADING drug makers Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Cipla, Emcure Pharmaceuticals, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries and Torrent Pharmaceuticals have decided to collaborate for clinical trial of the investigational oral antiviral drug Molnupiravir for the treatment of mild Covid-19.

The five pharma companies have entered into a collaboration agreement, wherein the parties will jointly sponsor, supervise and monitor the clinical trial in the country, according to regulatory filings by Dr Reddy's and Cipla. As per the directive of the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation, Dr Reddy's will conduct the clinical trial using its product, and the other four pharma companies will be required to demonstrate equivalence of their product to the product used by Dr Reddy's in its clinical trial, the filings noted. The clinical trial will be conducted for the treatment of mild Covid-19 in an outpatient



setting and is expected to take place between June and September across India with the recruitment of 1,200 patients, they added. Such collaboration for a clinical trial is a first of its kind within the Indian pharma industry and will aim to investigate yet another line of treatment in the collective fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, the companies noted.

On successful completion of the clinical trial, each company will independently approach the regulatory authorities for approval to manufacture and supply Molnupiravir for the treatment of Covid-19 in India, it added. Molnupiravir is an oral

antiviral drug that inhibits the replication of multiple RNA viruses including SARS-CoV-2. It is currently being studied by MSD, through a collaboration with Ridgeback Biotherapeutics, in a Phase III trial for the treatment of non-hospitalised patients with confirmed Covid-19 globally.

Between March and April this year, the five Indian pharma companies had individually entered into a non-exclusive voluntary licensing agreement with Merck Sharpe Dohme (MSD) to manufacture and supply Molnupiravir to India and over 100 low- and middle-income countries.

Key indices drift lower as bank, auto stocks weigh

MUMBAI

EQUITY indices languished for the second straight session on Tuesday as investors pared back their exposure to riskier assets amid a cautious trend in global markets due to a fresh spurt in Covid-19 cases in many countries.

A weakening rupee and the fiscal impact of the government's new stimulus measures also sapped risk appetite, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 185.93 points or 0.35 per cent lower at 52,549.66. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty tumbled 66.25 points or 0.42 per cent to 15,748.45. “Despite the government's stimulus package to revive stressed sectors, domestic equities continued to trade weak due to new coronavirus outbreaks in Asia. Extension of emergency credit guarantee scheme to MSMEs and subsidised financing to small borrowers will be a boost to the microfinance and NBFC sectors,” said Vinod Nair, head (research) at Geojit Financial Services.

7Seas announces two new games

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

CITY-BASED game development company 7Seas Entertainment has announced two new under-production flagship mobile games Treasure King, an augmented reality (AR) based Shooting Game with unique advanced features. The company is planning to release the games worldwide during the Christmas season this year and also focus on Esports & Gamified learning in this gaming ecosystem. The Treasure King game is under production and brings connectivity with active, larger player community and has exclusive dynamic moving platform. The AR Shooting Game has zombies attacking from all directions including 360 degrees which comes with photo-realistic graphics and presents high-impact combo-based shooting actions.

“The growth in mobile gaming will be unmatched and beyond expectations. The growth potential will be more with influence of 5G, AI, and VR. The report of Visual Capitalist Data Stream shows that mobile gaming income accounts for more than 51 per cent of total gaming revenue. In 2020 it was estimated to be \$ 85 billion. Latest statistics of India Equity Research also project a bright picture of gaming as the fastest growing M & E segment to surpass films by 2023,” said L Maruti Sanker, Managing Director, 7Seas Entertainment.

Heritage Foods forays into ready to eat segment

Paneer Tikka at Heritage parlour, now

HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD-BASED Heritage Foods Ltd., one of the leading private dairy players in India, has announced its foray into the healthy Ready to Eat (RTE) segment with the launch of Heritage Tikka Paneer. Heritage Tikka Paneer comes with pre-marinated paneer, mixed with curd (both produced at Heritage's manufacturing facilities), and a right blend masala, and all it takes to be ready to eat is 30-60 seconds heating up either in an oven or a microwave.

The product promises to satiate the taste buds along with nourishing the nutrition quotient for all age groups. Heritage Tikka Paneer will be the time saviour, bringing a convenience for the working urban population which can be creatively used for multiple delicious

and nutritious cuisines. Heritage Tikka Paneer is available with microwaveable trays with simple and easy to understand instructions for use. Commenting on the introduction of Heritage Paneer Tikka, N Brahmani, Executive Director, Heritage Foods Limited, said, “In line with the company's strategy of expanding value-added product portfolio, Heritage Foods has entered into a new Ready to Eat, Heat n Eat segment. Heritage Paneer Tikka is the Company's first product in this segment, and the Company will expand the portfolio with many launches that will have synergies with the Company's inherent strengths. The RTE segment is one of the fastest growing and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 20 per cent.” Heritage Foods is expanding its yogurt footprint by launching it in Hyderabad.



Karix Mobile, Truecaller announce deal

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

KARIX Mobile, a wholly-owned subsidiary of city-based Tanla Platforms Limited, a CPaaS provider, and Swedish caller ID firm Truecaller announced their partnership to launch the verified business caller ID solutions for enterprises to enrich the user experience by fostering a communication ecosystem built on trust and safety.

Enterprises in India can now leverage this solution to connect better with customers over voice calls through increased brand visibility, identity, and credibility. With Truecaller Business Caller ID, Karix Mobile's customers will bear a verified business badge and a verified icon when calls are placed to their end-users. In addition, the appearance of the brand logo and brand name on the handset will help enterprises identify themselves and facilitate improved service delivery when they connect with their users.

Lexus India launches new scheme for buyers

HYDERABAD

LEXUS India has announced the launch of Lexus Life, an exclusive ownership program for Lexus buyers, who at Lexus are treated like guests at home. This further strengthens the brand's footprint in India and enhances the brands experience. The program will be a comprehensive ownership program offering a bouquet of benefits aimed at providing amazing experiences throughout the ownership period of a Lexus guest such as crafted plans for finance, service options, warranty, insurance and roadside assistance.

PB Venugopal, president of Lexus India, said: “This announcement represents our strong commitment to the Indian market. In this new era where consumers are more mindful about their purchases, we are constantly adapting our services to guests needs.

Nod on govt guarantee to bad bank soon

The IBA has pegged around ₹31,000-cr govt guarantee

NEW DELHI

THE Union Cabinet may soon clear a proposal to provide government guarantee to security receipts issued by the National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL) as part of resolution of bad loans.

Indian Banks' Association (IBA), entrusted with the task of setting up a bad bank, has pegged the government guarantee to be around Rs 31,000 crore. The proposed bad bank or NARCL will pay up to 15 per cent of the agreed value for the loans in cash and the remaining 85 per cent would be government-guaranteed security receipts. The government guarantee would be invoked if there is loss against the threshold value.

According to sources, the proposal is before the Cabinet and its nod is required to extend sovereign guarantee to security receipts issued by NARCL. Approval from the Cabinet that is expected soon will pave the way for operationalisation of the bad bank announced by Finance Minister Nirmala



The proposed bad bank or NARCL will pay up to 15% of the agreed value for the loans in cash and the remaining 85% would be government-guaranteed security receipts. The government guarantee would be invoked if there is loss against the threshold value

Sitharaman in the budget this year, the sources added.

The Finance Minister in budget 2021-22 announced that the high level of provisioning by public sector banks of their stressed assets calls for measures to clean up the bank books. “An Asset Reconstruction Company Limited and Asset Management Company

would be set up to consolidate and take over the existing stressed debt,” she had said in the budget speech. It will then manage and dispose of the assets to alternate investment funds and other potential investors for eventual value realisation, she had said. Last year, IBA made a proposal for the creation of a bad bank for swift

resolution of non-performing assets. The government accepted the proposal and decided to go for asset reconstruction company and asset management company model in this regard. Meanwhile, State-owned Canara Bank has expressed its intent to be the lead sponsor of NARCL with a 12 per cent stake. The proposed NARCL would be 51 per cent owned by PSBs and the remaining by private sector lenders. NARCL will take over identified bad loans of lenders.

The lead bank with an offer in hand of NARCL will go for a 'Swiss Challenge' wherein other asset reconstruction players will be invited to better the offer made by a chosen bidder for finding higher valuation of a non-performing asset on sale. The company has picked up those assets that are 100 per cent provided for by the lenders. Banks have identified around 22 bad loans worth Rs 89,000 crore to be transferred to NARCL in the initial phase.

Healpha to monitor Covid-hit cops

HYDERABAD

HEALPHA, a healthcare platform, has partnered with the Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC) to render close monitoring of health of Covid positive personnel to decrease fatalities. The health platform enables a comprehensive management of connected healthcare devices optimally utilizing smart phones through its companion app. Its features include teleconsulting, monitoring by physicians, paramedics and nurses.

Shikha Goel, Addl. Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad City, (Crimes & SIT) had made a tweet: “Had a wonderful review session with a great set of doctors and NGOs. Our tie up with Healpha helped provide close monitoring of health of our covid positive personnel to ensure zero fatalities. We believe such community apps are important for society at large.”

EURO 2020

Spain in QF after 8-goal thriller with Croatia

COPENHAGEN

LUIS Enrique's Spanish side held their nerve after Croatia netted two goals in the closing period for a 3-3 stalemate in regular time, hitting another two in the extra time to secure the 5-3 victory and reach the Euro 2020 quarterfinals here.

Alvaro Morata slotted home in the 100th minute to put Spain in front again before Mikel Oyarzabal sealed the match 5-3 three minutes later on Monday, reports Xinhua.

"When you're winning 3-1 with 10 minutes to go it's something you need to learn from," said Enrique.

"We don't have that much international experience in the squad and perhaps those sorts of mistakes are inevitable."

The 2018 World Cup runners-up fought back from 3-1 down in the 85th minute as goals from substitutes Mislav Orsic and Mario Pasalic temporarily saved the team and pulled the match into extra time.

But the drama of the match had begun much earlier. Spain's goalkeeper Unai Simon committed a bizarre mistake early in

the first half as he didn't look at the ball when Pedri passed back from 40 yards out, only to see the ball find its way into the net to give Croatia a lead.

"Unai gave a lesson to kids everywhere," Enrique said. "Football is made up of errors and his reaction -- making great saves -- was an example of why we have such confidence in him." It was the ninth own goal in this year's Euro, which has equalled the tally of all the previous editions since 1960.

Pablo Sarabia levelled the score in the 38th minute, while Cesar Azpilicueta scored his first international goal to help the Spaniards move ahead before Ferran Torres made it 3-1 in the 76th minute.

But it was Morata -- the man who has suffered a torrent of online abuse and even death threats after his poor performance in the group stage -- who became the decisive player of the match.

The Juventus forward controlled a cross with one deft touch and then sent a rising shot past goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic for his second goal of the tournament. Having netted

Swiss win appreciated; don't revile Mbappe, say ex-footballers

BUCHAREST

THE footballing world was left dazed following world champions France's defeat to Switzerland 4-5 in the penalty shootout during the Euro 2020 round-of-16 match here on Monday night.

Switzerland knocked France out of the tournament to secure a quarter-final clash against Spain after Swiss goalkeeper Yann Sommer denied French striker Kylian Mbappe's spot kick in the shootout.

Both teams were tied 3-3 at the end of extra time.

England footballer-turned-commentator Gary Lineker went all out to congratulate Switzerland on their achievement, posting a series of tweets to appreciate manager Vladimir Petkovic's boys.

"What a game. What a tournament. What a day. What a Sommer," tweeted the football great, appreciating Switzerland goalkeeper Yann Sommer's save.

Sommer dived to his right and got a strong hand to Mbappe's effort, swatting it away to send the Swiss through.

In another tweet, Lineker, who is regarded as one of the greatest English strikers, wrote, "Switzerland have been sensational and deserve massive credit for going for it and attacking from the first minute to the last. How football should be played."

Another England footballer, Michael Owen, who played for Liverpool and Spanish giants Real Madrid, tweeted, "What a day of football. I'm going to have to revise my predictions now that France are out. You guessed it It's coming home [emoticon: England flag]."

While the social media was unforgiving towards Mbappe posting memes of the PSG striker, the legendary Pele tweeted, "Keep your head up, Kylian! Tomorrow is the first day of a new journey, @KMBappe."

Daniel Sturridge, the 31-year-old striker who has donned the England

jersey and played for several top Premier League clubs such as Manchester City, Chelsea and Liverpool, said the social media should not revile Mbappe for the missed penalty.

"Everyone needs to chill with the jokes and show some love and support to the young talent @KMBappe. This guy is world class at 22! He will only get better and learn from tonight. Can't wait to see your comeback and be even better next season bro, stay strong [emoticon: heart]," he said.

French coach Didier Deschamps too said fans shouldn't be critical of Mbappe for the failed penalty, saying, "Kylian Mbappe is incredibly sad, as are all the players, but nobody can be upset with him as he took on the responsibility of taking the fifth penalty." (IANS)



France's Olivier Giroud (rear) and Switzerland's Ruben Vargas challenge for the ball during the Euro 2020 championship round of 16 match at the National Arena stadium in Bucharest, Romania on Tuesday



Gymnast Pranati wins quota for Olympic Games

NEW DELHI

PRANATI Nayak, the Asian Championships bronze-medallist in vault, earned a quota to compete at next month's Tokyo Olympics, the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) officially announced on Monday.

Pranati got a quota place through reallocation since the Asian Championships, scheduled to be held in Tokyo in May, was cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic.

"We have got official confirmation from the International governing body in gymnastics on Monday evening that Pranati has been reallocated continental quota place to compete at the Olympics," Pranati's coach Lakhan Sharma told IANS from Kolkata.

On May 1, IANS had reported that Pranati will be reallocated continental quota by the FIG to compete in Olympics on the basis of her performance in the 2019 Asian Championships as several Olympic qualification competitions were cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic.

The 26-year-old gymnast from Kolkata had won bronze in vault at the 2019 Asian Championships held in Mongolia. "Pranati was reallocated continental quota place as she had won bronze in the 2019 Asian Championships. Competitions in 2020 were disrupted by the pandemic," added Sharma.

Since the quota is by name (nominative), it can't be changed. According to an official of Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI), since the Asian Championships scheduled to be held in the last week of May in Tokyo was cancelled due to pandemic, the unused continental quotas were reallocated to the eligible athlete from the Asian zone only.

Messi leads Argentina to 4-1 rout of Bolivia

CUIABA (BRAZIL)

LIONEL Messi scored twice and provided an assist as Argentina secured the top spot in their Copa America group with a 4-1 rout of Bolivia here.

Alejandro Gomez was also on target for the second successive match before Erwin Saavedra pulled a goal back for La Verde early in the second half.

Lautaro Martinez put the result beyond doubt by coming off the bench to score his first goal of the tournament on Monday, reports Xinhua.

The result extended Argentina's unbeaten run to 17 matches and they will now turn their attention to next Saturday's (July 3) quarterfinal clash against Ecuador in Goiania. Bolivia exit

the tournament having lost each of their four group matches.

"We have been growing as the tournament has progressed," Martinez said after the match. "We know our next opponents very well. It's going to be a tough match but we're going to prepare as well as we possibly can to give the best account of ourselves."

Argentina took the initiative from the outset in unusually cold weather in Cuiaba, a city in Brazil's tropical Pantanal wetland region. Gomez struck in the sixth minute with a left-footed volley after Messi turned nimbly and lifted a perfectly weighted pass into the Sevilla forward's path. Messi then converted from the penalty spot after the lively Gomez was brought down by Leonel Justiniano.

Argentina's captain doubled his personal tally on the stroke of halftime by running onto Sergio Aguero's lofted pass and deftly chipping his shot over goalkeeper Carlos Lampe.

Bolivia reduced the deficit on the hour mark when Saavedra drilled a first-time finish past Franco Armani following Justiniano's cross from the right flank.

Argentina manager Lionel Scaloni replaced Aguero with Martinez and the Inter Milan forward scored with his first touch, thumping home a close-range effort after Gonzalo Montiel's initial shot took a deflection.

Argentina continued to attack, and Bolivia had Lampe to thank for not going further behind. The veteran goalkeeper showed lightning reflexes to

twice deny Martinez before also keeping out Messi's low attempt from a set piece. In Monday's only other Copa America fixture, Uruguay beat Paraguay 1-0 courtesy of a first-half penalty from Edinson Cavani. The result means Uruguay will meet Colombia in Brasilia on July 3 as both teams vie for a place in the competition's last four. Peru will face Paraguay in Goiania and Brazil will take on Chile in Rio de Janeiro in the other quarter-finals on July 2. (IANS)



Uruguay's Diego Godin (front) and Paraguay's Gabriel Avalos battle for the ball during a Copa America soccer match at Nilton Santos stadium in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, late on Monday

2nd ODI: Indian women look to avoid series loss vs England

TAUNTON

INDIAN women's cricket team will look to avoid a series loss against England when they take the field for the second of the three ODIs here on Wednesday. The Indians were hammered by eight wickets in the first match after they failed to put up a competitive total.

India's dashing opening batters Smriti Mandhana and youngster Shafali Verma failed to provide India the cracking start that was expected of them. It left the others with a bit too much to do. Even as skipper Mithali Raj tried to salvage some pride, scoring 72 a day after she completed 22 years in international cricket, India lacked the hard-hitters who could increase the run rate and take the team to a strong total. The 201-run total was too little for the English who coasted to an eight-wicket victory with ease. The visitors may also have to rethink their bowling strategy. While the new-ball bowlers couldn't provide early breakthroughs, the spin trio proved to be expensive and looked ineffective. Left-arm spinner Ekta Bisht, off-spinner Deepti Sharma and batting all-rounder Harmanpreet Kaur, who too bowls off-break, conceded runs at above six an over. They leaked 122 runs in 19.5 overs.

England, on the other hand, look a pretty balanced side. They have a good seam attack led by pacers Katherine Brunt and



Anya Shrubsole. Their left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone too looks very effective and has continued her good work from the Test matches. The Indian bowlers have to worry about England's batting too. Both Tammy Beaumont (unbeaten 87) and Natalie Sciver (unbeaten 74) shared a century partnership and could not be removed.

Squads:

England Women: Heather Knight (captain), Fran Wilson, Sophia Dunkley, Katherine Brunt, Natalie Sciver, Mady Villiers, Tammy Beaumont, Amy Ellen Jones, Lauren Winfield, Emily Arlott, Kate Cross, Freya Davies, Sophia Ecclestone, Natasha Farrant, Sarah Glenn, Anya Shrubsole.

Indian Women: Mithali Raj (captain), Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur, Punam Raut, Priya Punia, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Sneha Rana, Taniya Bhatia, Indrani Roy, Jhulan Goswami, Shikha Pandey, Pooja Vastrakar, Arundhati Reddy, Poonam Yadav, Ekta Bisht, Radha Yadav.

Murray returns to Wimbledon with dramatic win against Basilashvili

LONDON

TWO-TIME former champion Andy Murray made a memorable return to singles action at Wimbledon, overcoming 24th seed Nikoloz Basilashvili of Georgia 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 6-3 to reach the second round here.

Murray led 5-0 in the third set on Monday and was on the verge of closing out a straightforward victory. But after a stunning reversal that sent the match into a fourth set, the 34-year-old Murray battled to victory in three hours and 32 minutes.

Murray will next face either German



qualifier Oscar Otto or French qualifier Arthur Rinderknech.

"I definitely should have finished it up a lot sooner than what I did," said Murray after the late evening match on Monday. "(But) I don't think there

are that many players that would have won that fourth set."

The Scot was making his first Wimbledon singles appearance since 2017, when he reached the quarter-finals before falling to Sam Querrey of the US in five sets. He missed the 2018 event as he was recovering from a hip surgery, and competed only in men's doubles and mixed doubles here in 2019.

Playing in just his fourth tour-level event of the year, Murray fired 17 aces against Basilashvili as he improved his perfect record in Wimbledon first rounds to 13-0. He is now 3-3 on the season.

ICC confirms T20 World Cup to be held in UAE from Oct 17 to Nov 14

DUBAI


A day after the Indian cricket board said that it will not be able to host the T20 World Cup, the International Cricket Council (ICC) issued a statement confirming that the multi-nation tournament will be held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman from October 17 to November 14.

"The BCCI will remain the hosts of the event, which will now be held in Dubai International Stadium, the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Stadium, and the Oman Cricket Academy Ground, from 17 October to 14 November 2021," said a statement from ICC.

The initial stage of the tournament will likely be held in Oman and a venue in UAE soon after the remainder of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 ends in the country. "Our priority is to deliver the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 safely, in full and in its current window. Whilst we are incredibly disappointed not to be hosting the event in India, the decision gives us the certainty we need to stage the event in a country that is a proven international host of multi-team events in a bio-secure environment. We will work closely with the BCCI, the Emirates Cricket Board and Oman Cricket to ensure fans can enjoy a wonderful celebration of cricket," said Geoff Allardice, the acting ICC CEO, in a statement.

The president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), Sourav Ganguly, said that the Board would have been happier hosting the tournament in India.

"We would have been happier hosting it in India but considering the uncertainty due to the Covid-19 situation and the importance of a world championship, the BCCI will now continue to host this tournament in UAE and Oman," said Ganguly.





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