



THE HANS INDIA

• Simultaneously published from Hyderabad | Warangal | Tirupati | Amaravati | Visakhapatnam | Khammam | Kurnool | Delhi: RNI No: DELENG/2017/74095 •

• Follow @ /thehansindia | /thehansindiaweb | /thehansindia | /thehansindia | /thehansindia •

Forecast: Sunny. Temp: Max.27°C. Min.15°C. Humidity: 14% Sunrise: 06:58 Sunset: 05:23



ART NO: PG1312 MRP: ₹279.00*

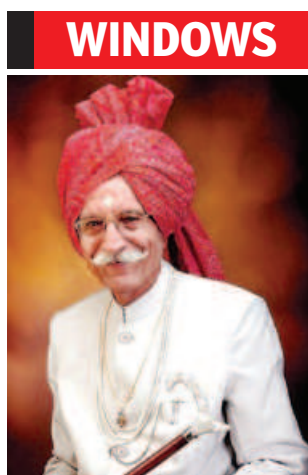
ART NO: PG1317 MRP: ₹249.00*

ART NO: 3522 MRP: ₹289.00*

ART NO: PL2002 MRP: ₹279.00*

ART NO: 8325 MRP: ₹249.00*

VEEKESY PLASTOMERS INDIA PVT. LTD., RAMA NAGAR, ANDHRA PRADESH - 520003. PH: +91 95539 73000



Spice King Gulati dies at 97

NEW DELHI: India's spice king and MDH Masala owner Mahashay Dharampal Gulati, familiar to all those who watched him in his company's ads over the years, died here on Thursday morning. He was 97. Gulati, who was awarded the country's third-highest civilian award Padma Bhushan last year, was undergoing treatment at the Mata Chanan Devi Hospital where he breathed his last, sources said. According to reports, he was undergoing post-Covid treatment and suffered a cardiac arrest in the morning. Gulati, popularly known as Spice King, was born in Sialkot (now in Pakistan) on March 27, 1923. He moved to India after Partition and set up his business in Delhi. Mahashian Di Hatti (MDH) was founded by his late father Mahashay Churni Lal Gulati. Tributes for the entrepreneur, whose face became synonymous with his brand, poured in on social media platforms. "Saddened by the demise of 'Mahashian Di Hatti' (MDH) President Shri Dharampal Gulati ji, who was honoured with Padma Bhushan. He was a well-known personality of the Indian industry. His social service activities are also commendable. My condolences to his family and fans," President Ram Nath Kovind tweeted in Hindi.



SC pulls up Centre, States for not following Covid norms

NEW DELHI

PEOPLE are violating "with impunity" the Covid-19 guidelines on wearing of face masks at public places and are not adhering to social distancing norms, the Supreme Court said on Thursday while pulling up the authorities for not ensuring strict compliance of these measures to contain coronavirus.

The apex court questioned the authorities over large gatherings, including political and social during the pandemic time and said the Centre and states should give suggestions so that appropriate directions can be issued to implement these guidelines and also for ensuring its compliance. "You give suggestions on what is needed to be done for implementation of these guidelines on face masks and gatherings. People are violating them with impunity. What should be done you tell us. We will fill up the gaps," a bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said. The bench, also comprising Justices R S Reddy and M R Shah,

made the remarks while hearing a matter in which the apex court had taken cognizance on the issue of proper treatment of Covid-19 patients and dignified handling of dead bodies in hospitals.

The top court said there are guidelines in this regard, but the problem is of lack of will to strictly implement them. "These guidelines are not implemented strictly," the bench observed. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and Gujarat government, referred to the affidavit filed by the Central government and said there are deficiencies which

needs to be addressed by the states.

"It has been pointed out that guidelines with regard to wearing of masks and keeping social distancing are not being followed in almost all of the states. It is submitted that even though there are stringent regulations including imposing of fine on non-wearing of masks, yet desired results have not been achieved. It has also been submitted that there has been large public gathering including political, religious, ceremonial where the social distancing is given a go-bye and there are no appropriate mechanism to

check such social gatherings," the bench noted in its order.

"The Solicitor-General and other counsel appearing for different states have requested time to give appropriate suggestions in the above regard so that appropriate directions may be issued by this court to implement the guidelines and to ensure the compliance. The suggestions may be given by December 7," the bench said and posted the matter for hearing on December 9.

Earlier, the apex court had expressed concern over the spurt in number of COVID-19 cases across the country.

Pfizer committed to vaccine for India

NEW DELHI

GLOBAL pharma major Pfizer on Thursday said it remains committed to engaging with the Indian government to explore opportunities to make Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine available in the country.

The UK on Wednesday became the first country to approve the Pfizer/

BioNTech vaccine against Covid-19 with the UK regulator Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) granting a temporary authorisation for its emergency use. "Right now, we are in discussions with many governments around the world and remain committed to engaging with

the Government of India and explore opportunities to make this vaccine available for use in the country," a Pfizer spokesperson said in a statement.

Pfizer is committed to ensuring everyone can have access to the vaccine, and is working closely with governments, it added.



No one will be more happy than me even if I happen to lose my life for people's sake. I will never fail to keep my word. A political change is compulsory and very important. It is the need of the hour. If such a change does not happen now, it will never materialise. We have to change everything

Rajini party in Jan; to fight 2021 polls

CHENNAI

SUPERSTAR Rajinikanth on Thursday asserted that he would launch his political party in January 2021, ending years of suspense and in a big morale booster to his supporters and fans.

The top star, promising his brand of spiritual politics, dramatically asserted that he was even ready to risk his life for the sake of people's welfare by making a foray into politics. The 70-year old actor categorically

said that his party would fight Assembly elections in 2021 and "emerge victorious." Assembly elections are due in Tamil Nadu during April-May 2021. He expressed confidence that his to be floated outfit would be able to "win elections with the huge support of people."

"In the upcoming Assembly elections, the emergence of spiritual politics will happen for sure. A wonder will happen," he said on his twitter handle. **Continued on P5**

Shahbuddin gets custody parole to meet kin in Delhi

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court has granted custody parole for three days to jailed former MP Mohd Shahabuddin, who is lodged in Tihar Jail

and serving life term in a murder case, to meet his family in the national capital, noting that the police departments of Bihar and Delhi are in union that they cannot assure his safety in Siwan.

The former Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) parliamentarian, a convict and an undertrial, was shifted to Tihar jail in 2018 by the Supreme Court from Siwan jail in Bihar. He had prayed for granting custody parole to visit Siwan to meet his family on account of his father's death. Justice A J Bhambhani, who said this is not an ordinary case, noted the police departments of both Bihar and Delhi are saying in union that they cannot assure Shahabuddin's custody and safety and alternatively, they are saying that they would need to deploy inordinately vast resources, if his custody and safety is to be ensured.

"Rare is it to come-upon a case where State Governments are unsure and dithering to make a commitment that they can ensure the custody of a prisoner.



Guide States on prudence of funds: Suresh Prabhu suggests PM

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

RAJYA Sabha member from Andhra Pradesh and former Union Minister Suresh Prabhu on Thursday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to guide the State Governments in striking "a fine balance" in

utilizing funds for their development while adhering to the norms of FRBM principles.

He said, "while the State Government provides welfare measures, they do so with long-term financial stability of their public finances in mind, follow FRBM principles".

On Wednesday, the MP had forwarded a suggestion to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman against the State Governments' practice of exceeding the FRBM limits in their borrowings and spending the same on welfare measures. **Continued on Page 5**

Brahmaputra Bridge will link Bhutan with Vietnam

ATUL ANEJA NEW DELHI

THE longest bridge over the Brahmaputra, which has been cleared for construction will become the lynchpin of a giant trans-Asian corridor that will connect landlocked Bhutan and Northeast India, with Dan Nang in Vietnam.

The giant project showcases the growing strategic partnership between India and Japan, balancing China's inroads in the region. The ambitious undertaking will also impact several ASEAN countries, especially



Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. With Bhutan at the back-end, the 19-kilometre Dhubri-Phulbari bridge connects Dhubri in Assam with

Phulbari in Meghalaya. The flagship project acquired sharp focus after a 2018 agreement between India and the Japan International Cooperation

Agency (JICA), for the infrastructure development of the north-east.

The gigantic effort will merge two parallel initiatives - the New Delhi-led India-Myanmar- Thailand trilateral highway and the East-West, Economic Corridor (EWEC) marshalled by Japan in partnership with Thailand, Laos and Vietnam. The joint foray is a fusion of India's 'Act East' policy and Japan's 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' strategy. From the Indian end, the trilateral highway starts in Manipur from the border town of Moreh, The Hindu reported. **Continued on Page 5**

upto **9% +** returns

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY MULTIPLIER

WITHOUT ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT

High yield monthly income + Long term wealth asset

The legendary opportunity is here

Limited units left, grab the advantage today

+91 95337 76694

www.kapilkavurihub.com
sales@kapilproperties.com

Womenia

TWEET PATROL



TAAPSEE PANNU
@TAAPSEE

And both stood their ground till the end for the dignity!
And both had some kickass dialogues ☺
@anubhavsinha ☐



Look good when it's too cold to deal



Let your boots steal the show

Great winter style really boils down to a good pair of boots. Got a fab pair of over-the-knee beauties? Show them off by pairing them with a short dress and patterned tights. Have killer ankle boots that the world deserves to see? Style them with cuffed jeans and a chunky knit.

Belt your coats to give them new life

By the middle of winter, it's pretty inevitable that you're going to start to feel some fatigue when it comes to putting on your boring old winter coat day after day. Add new life to your coat simply by belting it. Cinching your waist will not only define your silhouette, but also make it seem like you have a brand new coat. This styling trick will work with just about any coat style, we've even seen some serious fashionistas belt puffer coats.

Embrace (faux!) fur

There aren't many redeeming factors about living through really cold weather fashion-wise, but it is the only time during the year that you can wear fur (faux, of course). So just have fun with it! You can wear fur with just about anything to give your outfit a majorly-luxe upgrade. If you're intimidated by a fur coat, opt for fur mittens, a furry scarf or a beanie with a fluffy pom-pom. If you're ready to compete in the big leagues, treat yourself to an Apparis coat like the Sasha, available in eight colour ways in the brand's iconic, oh-so-soft Pluche faux fur.

Become a layering pro

There is a reason layering is always on-trend in the winter: It's a massively practical way to dress when it's really cold. Don't be afraid to pile on the layers, and don't worry about them ruining your look. The key is to find items you can layer discreetly under trendier pieces, so you stay warm and still look cute. You can buy an ultra thin, lightweight puffer or vest from Uniqlo, which can be paired over sweaters and under jackets for an extra layer of warmth.

Try out trendy hats

Your first instinct in the winter may be to splurge on a pair of boots or a coat, but we're here to advise you to also hunt high and low for the winter hat of your dreams. You're going to be in that thing for a solid two months from here on out it should be something you love. Trendy bucket hats are in, like the above super cute plush pick from Hat Attack, but if you're looking for something you'll wear year after year, a classic beanie will never fail you. If you're all about that beanie life, consider snagging a designer one!

Save hair from pollution this winter

Smoky, polluted air, dry climatic conditions can cause hair quality to deteriorate, making it brittle and more susceptible to breakage and split ends . Be extra gentle when styling and always start combing from the ends of your hair, up



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Swearer weather is here. Research has shown that people can experience increased hair shedding in winter months compared to summer due to dry weather and pollution. People regularly exposed to pollutants in their day-to-day lives during winters face the problem of hair fall, dandruff and frizz. If you are already facing this issue, pollution and cold waves can worsen your problems, especially if you're living in urban areas and hilly regions.

The scalp skin is more delicate having a higher number of sebaceous glands, sweat glands, and hair follicles. The pollutants

enter the skin barrier and produce free radicals which further aggravate your scalp leading to inflammation, dehydration and ageing. This makes scalp care essential.

Smoky, polluted air, dry climatic conditions can cause hair quality to deteriorate, making it brittle and more susceptible to breakage and split ends . Be extra gentle when styling and always start combing from the ends of your hair, up. Gentle brushing removes old hair, dead skin cells and other chemical products. Brushing also increases blood circulation. Use the nozzle on hair dryers to minimize heat exposure and keep irons less than 400 degrees for fine hair and 410 for thick hair.

Adjust your styling routine

Minimise the amount of heat you use and always use a heat protecting product .If you have long hair, it's better to avoid opening them while you are going



out as it will expose all hair with pollutants. Most of us leave home when our hair is still wet from showers due to time constraints and reach workplaces in time . But please remember that wet hair attracts dust and grime even more, and the same goes for applying too much cream and oil-based products. If you don't have time to completely dry your hair with a blower, use paper towels available in your kitchen which are made with highly absorbent material. After gently towel-drying your hair, pat your



hair with paper towels. This is one way to protect hair as dust and dirt particles easily stick to wet hair.

Hydration

Your dull and dry locks

need to be hydrated for them to look healthy and shiny after being exposed to extreme cold conditions and pollution in cities. Staying hydrated is highly beneficial for your hair follicles from within and for your hair shafts to stay healthy. Ensure that you are drinking a minimum 3

and use it at least once a week. Oil your hair regularly. This is a serious game changer and will definitely help you get rid of your hair problems.

Nothing works like Champi once every two weeks or so.

Mix one teaspoon each of vinegar and honey with one egg. Massage the mixture lightly into the scalp. Leave on for half an hour and then wash the hair. Rinse well with water. Heat pure coconut oil and apply on the hair. Then dip a towel in hot water, squeeze out the water and wrap the hot towel around the head, like a turban. Keep it on for 5 minutes. Repeat the hot towel wrap 3 or 4 times. This helps the hair and scalp absorb the oil better. Leave oil on overnight and wash hair the next day. The best advice about protecting the hair is cover your head when in open, tone down on the styling and keep it clean.

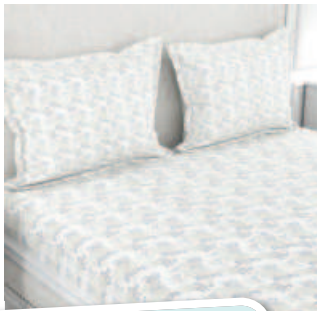
Style your bedroom with French concept of apprivois

AMI SATA

Apprivoise means 'to tame' in French. Taming something generally indicates submissiveness and domestication. In common terms, it usually implies 'torturing' or 'controlling' someone. But, in the French language, Apprivoise means to connect. In this world of building walls, it is an act of building bridges to link people. Apprivoise means to make a bond with someone who is unknown. When you meet someone for the first time, you are always strangers. Slowly, you begin to unravel your inner selves. You share endearing moments, and become close to each other. And, a bond is formed. You love each other and build it up through small moments of closeness and connection. Similarly, you can design your bedroom with a really warm and cozy vibe.

Balcony

Most of the French homes have a balcony attached to their bedroom. Most



Choose whites and pastels that can lend your room that much needed solace when you go back home after a hard day's work

people enjoy a glass of wine or two and look at the roads from their balcony. You can observe nature and all the people around you. It helps to promote Ap-

privoise. If you stay locked up in a room, without any interaction with the outside world, it could be detrimental for your mental state. Even for introverts, it is necessary to get a little sun once in a while. Contrary to popular belief, introverts don't enjoy small talk, but



would apprivoise over the most random topics if given the atmosphere.

Long flowy curtains and huge windows

A signature trademark of French homes is long flowy curtains with huge sliding windows. This looks very inviting. To give your room an artsy touch, you can have white embroidered or lacy curtains. Keep

some printed cushions on your bed to make it look more inviting. Open those windows and let those good vibes rush in.

Minimal, organic bed sheets & towels

Having a cluttered bedroom will disrupt your calm. You must clean that space. You can choose organic cotton bed sheets as an alternative to those polyester and mixed cotton ones. They are made naturally through sustainable methods and are free from synthetic additives. Choose whites and pastels that can lend your room that much needed solace when you go back home after a hard day's work. Also, choose bath towels that give you a spa-like, luxury feel and a deep sense of contentment after a hot shower. The key to incorporate more apprivoise in your life is to go for more plant-based/sustainable products. They are safer and help the environment.

Potted plants

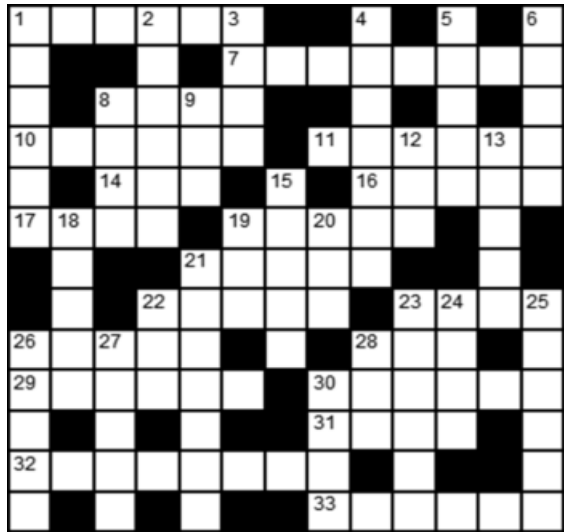
Having more greens in your room

is an excellent start. It makes the air in your room clean and breathable, not to mention how cute they look. Being a plant mom, you have responsibilities. It makes you grow as a person. So, when you see a stranger, you make them feel welcome, instead of shying away.

Neutral shades

Monotones and warm tones are a characterizing feature in French homes. It looks very cozy. And, it also has that autumnal fall charm. The French don't like to over-do things. They prefer natural charm over artificiality. So, your walls should be simple. You can never go wrong with warm neutral tones. Add to that a small swing set, and you have the perfect charm of a French house in your bedroom. You can add a collage of your memories, some string lights to make it even more cozy.

(The writer is the Founder of Amouve, organic bedding and bath brand in India)



SOLUTION TO DECEMBER 3

CROSSWORD

Across

- French author Proust (6)
- Eastern (8)
- Explosive device (4)
- Snapshots (6)
- Siding; border (6)
- It may be said in surprise (3)
- Central point (5)
- Gun shop purchase (4)
- Small tree (5)
- Like some fevers (5)
- Direction indicator (5)
- Price (4)
- Constellation : The dragon (5)
- French vineyard (3)
- Common bird (6)
- An upset stomach (6)
- Prepare for publication (4)
- Disparaging suggestion (8)
- Sewing tool (6)

Down

- Near-sightedness (6)
- One of the Fates (6)
- Tosses slowly (4)
- Necessary (7)
- A code of moral conduct ? (5)
- Blocks up or obstructs (5)
- High time (4)
- Cow call (3)
- Lump (3)
- Deadens (5)
- Paroxysm (5)
- New Zealand native (5)
- Dear ____ : how to start a letter ? (3)
- Not cooked (3)
- Roared (7)
- Highest in cards (3)
- Drive or sail about for pleasure (6)
- Depose (4)
- Go into a ____ : faint or be in deep thought (6)
- A British doctorate (5)
- Extreme pain (5)
- Scoundrel (3)
- Noble gas (4)

SUDOKU



NEWS ROUNDUP

Amyra Dastur shares recipe of grandma's 'kadha' to boost immunity and digestion

Amyra Dastur on Thursday shared the recipe of her grandma's kadha, which helps boost immunity and also takes care of digestion.

Amyra took to her verified Instagram account on Thursday to talk about her "morning ritual", which includes a daily intake of a glass of lemon juice and water followed by the kadha. The actress also shared a video where she can be seen preparing it.

"My morning ritual. 2 full glasses of saada paani (plain water). Squeeze some nimboo into one glass only. Drink the nimboo paani FIRST. Drink the plain glass of water after. Make sure you have a cup of garam garam paani and add your "grandma's Kadha" with a tea-

spoon of haldi (Oh and btw, haldi is really good for your skin)," Amyra wrote on her Instagram post. If you want to make the #kadha yourself then just mix together tulsi, black pepper, amla, ginger, mulethi, coriander and haldi. Drink the Kadha last. And that's it folks. My every-day morning ritual to keep my tummy healthy and boost my immunity."

Amyra, who is a vegan, calls it the best way to start the day if you want to have a healthy lifestyle.

The actress will next be seen in the film "Satyameva Jayate 2". The Milap Zaveri directorial also features John Abraham, Manoj Bajpayee, Nora Fatehi and Divya Khosla Kumar in key roles, and is set to release on May 12, 2021, coinciding with Eid.



Badal returns Padma award

‘We brought our own food’: Farmers refuse lunch at meeting

Amarinder urges Centre to resolve issue, says nothing in his hand

CHANDIGARH

EXPRESSING solidarity with the agitating farmers over the Centre’s farm laws, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) patron Parkash Singh Badal on Thursday returned his Padma Vibhushan award in protest against “the betrayal of the farmers by the government”. 91-year-old Badal, in a missive to President Ram Nath Kovind, said he was returning the award due to “the shocking indifference and contempt with which the government was treating the ongoing peaceful and democratic agitation of the farmers against the three farm Acts”.

The Akali stalwart had received the country’s second-highest civilian honour in 2015. The letter further says, “When the government of India had brought the ordinances, assurances were given that the farmers’ apprehensions on these legislations would be addressed to their satisfaction while bringing the relevant Bills and subsequently the Acts.

“Trusting these assurances, I even appealed to the farmers to believe the government’s word. But I was shocked when the government simply went back on its word.”

“That was the most painful and embarrassing moment in my long political career. I just cannot put in words the emotional stress which I have been going through since then. I have truly begun to wonder why has the government of the country become so heartless, so cynical and so ungrateful towards the farmers,” said the former Punjab Chief Minister Badal.

Representatives of the farmers’ organisations which had a crucial meeting with the government, refused to break bread with the Union ministers . At the lunch break, farmers said “no” to the food offered by the government and stuck to the langar, which was brought in by a waiting van.

Visuals from inside Vigyan Bhawan, where the meeting is being held, showed the farmers’ representatives assembled at a long table for a hurried lunch. Some sat on the ground in a quiet corner.

“The government will consider giving more legal rights to farmers. MSP will continue, we have assured farmers of MSP,” Union minister Narendra Tomar said after the meeting. “It would be good if the farmers can call off the protest,” he said.

A media report said the fourth round of talks between govenment, farmers re-

Farm laws: Deadlock on

Key routes connecting UP-Delhi closed

Police closed routes on two national highways connecting Ghaziabad to Delhi as farmers remained adamant on their demand for scrapping of the Centre’s agriculture reform laws and stayed put at the national capital’s borders with Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

The protesting farmers had on Wednesday threatened to block other roads of Delhi if their demands were not met.

“The local police have closed the routes on NH-9 and NH-24 from Ghaziabad to Delhi. On NH-1, both sides of the route have been closed near Shani Mandir,” the Delhi Traffic Police tweeted.



Farmers’ representatives, holding talks with the Centre, have their own food during the lunch break, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Thursday

mained inconclusive; next meeting was proposed on Saturday.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said ‘there was nothing for him to resolve’. He urged the Centre, which is holding discussions with the farmer representatives, to resolve the issue quickly.

Singh’s statement comes after he discussed the farmers’ issue with Union Home Minister Amit Shah at his residence in about half-an-hour meeting. The meeting happened before the fourth round of talks between the Central government and over 34 farmer union leaders started at the Vigyan Bhawan around 12.30 p.m.

The Punjab Chief Minister told reporters after the meeting that he requested Shah to “resolve the issue as it was adversely impacting the state’s economy and also posed a serious danger to the national security”.

Rahul: Accepting less than scrapping farm laws will be deceit to farmers

NEW DELHI

The Congress has stepped up the demand of immediately scrapping the farm laws in the wake of the farmers’ protest in the national capital. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet, “Accepting less than scrapping of three black farm laws will be deceit to farmers and the country.”

The BJP’s coalition partner JJP demanded the withdrawal of cases registered in Haryana against farmers who participated in “Delhi Chalo” march against the Centre’s farm laws.

Jannayak Janta Party leader Digvijay Singh Chautala said the cases against farmers must be withdrawn to ensure that the situation does

Cop serves food to farmers

NEW DELHI

While the protests against the new farm laws entered their eighth day on Thursday, a police official from the Punjab Police was seen doing ‘seva’ (serving food) at the langar at Delhi’s Singhu Border.

In a rare sight, Sub Inspector Balvinder Singh from Punjab Police took forward the tradition of community service, one of the integral principles of Sikhism, as he was seen serving meals to farmers and others who were protesting at the Singhu Border.

When IANS tried to speak to Singh, he refused to do so saying that he does not want any publicity because he is only following the principles of Sikhism of serving and feeding people.

The protests at the Singhu border began soon after morning prayers. Security arrangements in the area have been beefed up with addition of one more layer of barricades. Farmers have been sitting on protest for the last eight days at Delhi-Haryana and Delhi-Uttar Pradesh borders. Thousands of farmers have been camping at the Singhu border, while several other groups have blocked the entry at the Delhi-Haryana border in Tikri, the Delhi-UP Ghazipur border and the Delhi-UP Chilla border.

Modi govt opposes to ban convicted politicians for life

NEW DELHI

THE Centre has opposed the life ban on convicted politicians from contesting MP/MLA elections, forming a political party or becoming an office bearer of a party, telling the Supreme Court that the life ban on bureaucrats cannot be equated with similar ban on lawmakers, if convicted in a crime, as the latter are not bound by service conditions, but an oath of office instead. An affidavit filed by the Ministry of Law and Justice said: “It is stated that there are no specific service conditions laid down in respect of elected representative albeit, the fact that the people’s representatives are public servants.

The elected representatives are ordinarily bound by the oath that they have taken, to serve the citizens of their constituency in particular and the country in general.”

The Centre said the public servants are debarred from their service for lifetime if convicted of offence punishable under provisions of various laws, but a legislator, who is disqualified for an offence, only for a period specified in the Representation of Peoples Act.

The affidavit added that lawmakers’ conduct is bound by propriety, good conscience and they are expected to generally work in the interest of the nation, and they are not above the law.

“In so far, as the conditions of service of public servants, not being elected representatives, is concerned, the same is regulated by their respective service laws, including retirement rules etc. Thus, there is no justification for the challenge to vires of the said provision of the Representation of Peoples Act,” said the affidavit. The response has come on a plea by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay who amended the prayer of the application urging the Supreme Court to issue direction to Centre to debar the convicted persons uniformly from legislature, executive and judiciary for life in spirit of Article 14 read with Article 15 and 16 of the Constitution.

The affidavit, opposing the amendment, said the petitioner is now seeking to declare the vires of Section 8(1)(ii), 8(2) & 8 (3) of the Representation of Peoples Act and sever the same from Section 9 (1) of the said Act.

“It is submitted that the application for amendment is devoid of any merits and does not justify the challenge to the vires of the statutory provisions under Representation of the People Act, 1951,” said the affidavit.

The Centre has emphasised that the amendment application does not indicate existence of any conclusive and factual material to substantiate the contention. Therefore, it should be dismissed. On September 10, the apex court had sought to know the Centre’s stand on a plea seeking lifetime ban on convicted criminals contesting any elections.



UP makes 1st arrest under ‘love-jihad law

BAREILLY

THREE days after registering the first case under the newly-promulgated anti-conversion law, the Bareilly police have made the first arrest in the case.

Uwaish Ahmad, 22, was booked on Sunday, hours after the ordinance against “forced” religious conversion came into effect.

Ahmad was booked under the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance, 2020, for “threatening to kidnap” and convert a 20-year-old married woman in Deorania area of the Bareilly district.

The accused had been in hiding since. He said he “feared being shot in an encounter”. “He may be under this impression, but police never intended to do any such thing as he is not a history sheeter,” ASP(Rural) Sansaar Singh said. “We were only searching for him and several teams were deployed in neighbouring districts as well. He was produced before a magistrate on Wednesday who sent him to judicial custody for 14 days. “We will now record the statement of the complainant and the witnesses and complete the investigation in this case.”

Ahmad and the woman were school friends. The girl’s family had registered a case against him last year also when she had gone missing.

Indian-American named first-ever TIME ‘Kid of the Year’

NEW YORK

15-year-old Indian-American Gitanjali Rao, a “brilliant” young scientist and inventor, has been named by TIME magazine as the first-ever ‘Kid of the Year’ for her “astounding work” using technology to tackle issues ranging from contaminated drinking water to opioid addiction and cyberbullying.

“The world belongs to those who shape it. And however uncertain that world may feel at a given moment, the reassuring reality seems to be that each new generation produces more of what these kids... have already achieved: positive impact, in all sizes,” Time said.

Rao was selected from a field of more than 5,000 nominees as TIME’s first-ever Kid of the Year. She was interviewed by actor and activist Angelina Jolie for the TIME special. “Observe, brainstorm, research, build and communicate,” Rao told about her process during a virtual talk with Jolie from her home in Colorado.

She spoke about her “astounding work using technology to tackle issues ranging from contaminated drinking water to opioid addiction and cyberbullying, and about her mission to create a global community of young innovators to solve

problems the world over.

“Even over video chat, her brilliant mind and generous spirit shone through, along with her inspiring message to other young people: don’t try to fix every problem, just focus on one that excites you,” Time said. “If I can do it,” she said in the interview, “anybody can do it.”



Rao said her generation is facing many problems that they have never seen before.

“But then at the same time, we’re facing old problems that still exist. Like, we’re sitting here in the middle of a new global pandemic, and we’re also like still facing human-rights issues. There are problems that we did not create but that we now have to solve, like climate change and cyberbullying with the introduction of technology,” she said.

Arnab seeks stay to filing of chargesheet in suicide case

MUMBAI

REPUBLIC TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami on Thursday filed an urgent application before the Bombay High Court, seeking a stay to the filing of chargesheet and further proceedings in the 2018 Anvay Naik abetment to suicide case.

Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, who ordered re-investigation by the state CID, had no power to do so as the previous probe by the Alibaug police in Raigad district had been closed last year, it said.

Goswami, one of the accused in the case which is being re-investigated, was arrested by Alibaug police last month before the Supreme Court granted him bail.

Stating that his arrest on November 4 was illegal, Goswami in his plea also urged the HC to transfer the investigation to the CBI or any other independent agency.

Deshmukh announced at a press conference in November that a “strong chargesheet” would be filed against Goswami, which showed that the state machinery was interfering in the case with a “malafide premeditated diktat to the law and order officers”, it said.

Criminals may sell fake Covid vaccine: Interpol

NEW DELHI

THE Interpol has warned law enforcement agencies across the globe that organised criminal networks could try to advertise and sell fake COVID-19 vaccines physically and on the internet.

In an Orange notice issued to all 194 member countries on Wednesday, the Lyon-based international police cooperation body warned agencies to prepare for potential criminal activity in relation to “the falsification, theft and illegal advertising of COVID-19 and flu vaccines”.

“It also includes examples of crimes where individuals have been advertising, selling and administering fake vaccines,” a statement from the Interpol said. The Interpol issues an Orange notice to warn of an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.

The CBI, which is the national central bureau for India, is tasked with coordination with the Interpol. The warning came on the day the UK became the first Western nation to approve a COVID-19 vaccine, vaulting past the US and the European Union in the race to approve a vaccine.

The Interpol has asked police organisations to ensure “the safety of

the supply chain” and said “identifying illicit websites selling fake products will be essential”.

“Criminal networks will also be targeting unsuspecting members of the public via fake websites and false cures, which could pose a significant risk to their health, even their lives,” Interpol Secretary General Jurgen Stock said in a statement. “It is essential that law enforcement is as prepared as possible for what will be an onslaught of all types of criminal activity linked to the COVID-19 vaccine, which is why INTERPOL has issued this global warning,” the official said.



‘Work at Covid Centres for not wearing masks’ order stayed

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court on Thursday stayed the Gujarat High Court direction to send people caught without wearing masks to do community service at the COVID-19 patient care facilities.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan took note of the appeal of the state government against the high court’s order of Wednesday alleging that the directions were “judicially unmanageable” and were without any “authority of law”.

In the hearing conducted through video-conferencing, the bench, also comprising Justices R Subhash Reddy and M R Shah, took note of the submissions by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the high court order was also harsh, having serious repercussions on the health of the violators.

The top court also expressed displeasure over the fact that the COVID-19 guidelines of the Centre and the state were not being followed scrupulously there.

The state’s additional chief secretary (home) should ensure that the guidelines on wearing of masks and social distancing are vigorously followed, it said.

Bollywood drugs nexus probe: 2 NCB officials suspended

The role of the two investigating officials whose identities are not disclosed came under a cloud after accused Limbachiya, husband of high-profile television comedian Bharti Singh and suspect Karishma Prakash got bail and interim bail

MUMBAI

In a big embarrassment, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has suspended two officials of its Mumbai Zonal Unit for their alleged suspicious role which enabled two persons in the ongoing Bollywood-drugs mafia investigation get relief, official sources said here on Thursday.

The role of the two investigating officials - whose identities were not disclosed - came under a cloud after accused Harsh Limbachiya and suspect Karishma Prakash got bail and interim bail, respectively, in November, an official requesting anonymity told IANS.

Limbachiya is the husband of high-profile television comedian Bharti Singh while Karishma Prakash

is the manager of leading Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone. Some other officials are likely to be under the NCB scanner for their questionable lapses in the matter that has shaken up the organisation which is probing the high-profile cases since the past nearly four months.

Both - Limbachiya and Karishma Prakash - had been raided by NCB teams last month and certain quantities of drugs recovered in the actions.

While Bharti Singh and Limbachiya were arrested and later got bail, Karishma Prakash had ignored the NCB summons to join the probe and later secured an interim bail - and in both the developments, the alleged role of the two IOs is now under the scanner.

The NCB move follows the preliminary report of an internal probe ordered by the Zonal Director Sameer



Wankhede, and the suspensions preceded a full departmental enquiry in which the possible involvement of some others, including lawyers, could also come up, indicated the official.

In a serious transgression, the two officials, along with a lawyer, did not appear during scheduled court hearings in the two cases which enabled them get bail.

Following a tip-off from an arrested drug peddler, the NCB had raided Karishma Prakash when she was away from her home, and later a case was lodged along with summons issued to her.

While she ignored the summons, she also applied for an anticipatory bail which she got though the court directed her to appear before the NCB, which she complied with. The NCB sought custodial inter-

rogation for her as she was not cooperating in the probe and during the final hearing of her anticipatory bail plea, the official and lawyer did not appear in the court, after which the court granted her bail plea.

Bharti Singh and Limbachiya were arrested after raids at their homes and office on November 22 and sent to judicial custody for 13 days each.

They moved a bail plea in the court on November 23 which was granted ex-parte as the investigating officer and the NCB lawyer against remained absent, leaving the NCB teams agast.

While the reasons in both these instances of absence is not revealed, the NCB higher-ups smelt something amiss and ordered a preliminary probe after which the two IOs have been suspended.

Chinese ‘gibberish’ on Covid-19 genesis ridiculous

A new study titled ‘The Early Cryptic Transmission and Evolution of SARS-CoV-2 in Human Hosts’ claims that the novel coronavirus was circulating in the Indian subcontinent months before the Wuhan outbreak. The study was conducted by researchers at the Institute of Neuroscience under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), the Shanghai-based Fudan University and the University of Texas at Houston. This, of course, has neither the acceptance of the World Health Organisation nor does it have the nod of any world powers. It is just laughable that the Chinese Communist Party mouthpiece claimed that the finding was about to be published in The Lancet too. For a good measure - in the process to establish that it has no bias at

all and its intent is to just pin point with accuracy the origin of the virus - Chinese scientists also claimed that “the studies from Chinese researchers suggest, just as WHO experts have pointed out, that the coronavirus might have originated in multiple places around the world. The studies from around the world concerning the virus origin, no matter whether they are from China, India, Europe or other places, still need further investigation and collaborative efforts from the international community. It is a scientific task that needs to be treated with an open mind”. That the Chinese rulers are rattled is clear. Earlier, they sought to project the US as the origin and then turned their attention to the Europe claiming that Italy and Spain could have

been and now it is the Indian sub-continent. It is not a surprise that they turned towards us as it was only expected of them. Like its all-weather friend Pakistan which keeps claiming that India itself engineers terror attacks on its own citizens and armed forces, the Chinese too keep pointing their fingers at India. Nearly a year after doctors identified the first cases of a mysterious new disease in the Chinese city of Wuhan, the country appears to be stepping up a campaign to question the origins of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Chinese authorities finding packaged frozen food imports containing virus evidence is just a part of the game. There is little credence to the claims outside China. Not even all Chinese believe in it as the Wuhan files

reveal. research, if any, must and should be conducted only to establish whether it is a part of Chinese biowarfare. Pew Research has established through its survey of 14 nations that “a median of 61% say China has done a bad job dealing with the outbreak. The US, of course, is even worse in handling the pandemic (it scored 84 per cent in the same research). Director, UCL Genetics Institute and Professor of Computational Systems Biology at University College of London, Professor Francois Balloux described the paper by Chinese researchers as ‘gibberish’. “A piece of gibberish nonsense arguing SARS-CoV2 originated in India, submitted to the Lancet. I can only hope that the process of ‘peer review’ will weed this one out promptly,” he tweeted. Well that is what it is. You know what, the paper that attributed the origin to India has been pulled and not anymore available online now!



District polls mark paradigm shift in Kashmir politics

AHMED ALI FAYYAZ

IN what seems to be a paradigm shift in Kashmir politics, a large number of local independent candidates in the first District Development Council (DDC) elections are fiercely exploiting the dissatisfaction among the masses over the poor quality of governance delivered by the previous regimes, to pose a strong challenge to all the traditional political parties.

For instance, the Assembly constituency of Handwara in northern Kashmir has remained a major battleground between the mainstream political giants, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) and late Abdul Gani Lone's Peoples Conference (PC). Many of the Assembly elections have witnessed Kashmir's toughest electoral battles here.

Since 1967, Lone and his family have retained Handwara, directly and indirectly, as many as five times. His arch-rival, Choudhary Mohammad Ramzan of the NC, has been the winner four times. The valley's fiercest electoral battle happened in Handwara in 1983 when Ramzan polled 17,575 votes and Lone 17,565.

Now Lone's son, Sajad, who was returned in 2014 and has functioned as a cabinet Minister from the BJP quota in the PDP-BJP government until Mehbooba Mufti's dismissal in 2018, is holding the mantle for the PC. For the first time, the PC and the NC are both constituents of Farooq Abdullah-led Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) - a valley-based conglomerate "to keep away the BJP from power".

The NC, the PC, and also Mehbooba Mufti's PDP, are known to have fielded 'proxy candidates' to ensure one another's defeat in several DDC segments across Kupwara district. None of the PAGD constituents look satisfied over its share of seats in the alliance. Even as the senior leaders are tight-lipped, their cadres reveal how the PAGD constituents were 'undercutting' each other. Officially the 'proxies' are contesting as independent candidates but their affiliation to different parties and politicians is no secret. As of now, nobody knows the fate of the DDC candidates as only two phases of the polling have been completed and the results would be out on the day of the counting on December 22. The polling for the rest six phases would be completed on December 19.

However, the results of the Panches and the Sarpanches are potentially surprising for the PAGD parties in Kashmir. Alongside the DDC elections, by-elections are currently underway for around 12,700 vacancies of

The NC and the PDP had boycotted the Panchayati and the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) elections in 2018. Consequently, most of the winners in these elections were independent candidates. Many of them have been silently working for the BJP. It was because of this composition that the BJP managed to get an independent councillor elected as mayor in Srinagar Municipal Corporation last week. Elected Panches and Sarpanches have already dominated the Block Development Councils (BDCs). Chairpersons of the BDCs, the MLAs of a district besides the 14 representatives being elected currently in each of the 20 districts, would form a DDC. A multitude of highly excited voters was seen celebrating the victory of an independent contestant, Mohammad Yasin Bhat, with the trademark victory signs and slogans and firecrackers at Vilgam in Handwara area on Tuesday, December 1. Outsiders seem surprised that PC's candidate, Bashir Ahmad, supported officially by the NC and the PDP, has lost to an independent

Panches and Sarpanches. Most of the wards in Kashmir had remained vacant due to a lukewarm response to the elections in 2018.

Unlike the DDC elections, results of the Panches and the Sarpanches are announced at the end of the counting of such votes on a scheduled day of the polling.

The NC and the PDP had boycotted the Panchayati and the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) elections in 2018. Consequently, most of the winners in these elections were independent candidates. Many of them have been silently working for the BJP.

It was because of this composition that the BJP managed to get an independent councillor elected as mayor in Srinagar Municipal Corporation last week. Elected Panches and Sarpanches have already dominated the Block Development Councils (BDCs). Chairpersons of the BDCs, the MLAs of a district besides the 14 representatives being elected currently in each of the 20 districts, would form a DDC.

A multitude of highly excited voters was seen celebrating the victory of an independent contestant, Mohammad Yasin Bhat, with the trademark victory signs and slogans and firecrackers at Vilgam in Handwara area on Tuesday, December 1. Outsiders seem surprised that PC's candidate, Bashir Ahmad, supported officially by the NC and the PDP, has lost to an independent.

The insiders, however, have expected similar results across the valley. "The alliance has not per-

meated down to the grassroots. In all such alliances, we have bitter experience that a party's supporters do not vote for traditional rivals", said a senior NC leader. The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) president, Ghulam Ahmad

Mir, endorsed. "Most of the time, we fail to convert our vote for the party or the candidate we have opposed throughout", Mir asserted.

Reports from all ten districts in Kashmir indicate infighting among the PAGD constituents.

"Nobody knows who would emerge as the beneficiary but it is clear enough that some independent candidate or a proxy of a traditional giant in a segment would be benefited", said a senior politician who has contested six elections since 1972. An identical scenario is springing in Jammu where the Congress and the PAGD were failing to get much of a vote in some districts but the BJP too was losing ground to independents.

The Central Kashmir district of Budgam has completed polling in three DDC segments of Khanshab, Khag and Beerwah. According to independent observers, former Minister Hakeem Yasin's independent candidate fared well in Khanshab. The PDP rebel Nazir Khan, who gave a tough fight to Omar Abdullah in the 2014 Assembly elections but failed to get the PAGD ticket last month, is contesting the alliance candidate in Beerwah. Residents believe his victory is 'certain'.

Interestingly in Kupwara's Drugmulla segment, the BJP has fielded seven independent candidates in addition to one official candidate.

In Jammu too, where the BJP maintained a strong pro-Modi sentiment in almost all elections from 2014 to 2019, there is seemingly no wave in favour of or against any political party. The BJP has already shown some reverses in the Panchayati and the ULB elections of 2018 and consequently in the BDC polls of 2019. Only the Congress party's infighting and failure to come up as a strong opposition outfit could give some advantage to the BJP.

In all the Muslim-dominated districts of Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Ramban, Rajouri and Poonch, there are multi-pronged contests between different parties and independent candidates. It would not be surprising if the independents emerge as the 'single largest party' in the current DDC elections.

Coal Mining And India's Tribal People

Inequality as death knell of community

ITAY NOY

THE Adivasi village of Karampot, in Jharkhand, among India's most prominent coal-bearing regions, consists mostly of mud and some basic brick houses. Scattered alongside them, however, is a smaller number of much more conspicuous structures: Sizable, brightly coloured, gated concrete houses, most often with a large motorbike parking in the courtyard.

Only about a decade ago, such stark disparities in living conditions were not part of the landscape. It is all due to coal mining.

In recent years, the impact of coal and other mining projects on India's Adivasi communities who inhabit much of the country's resource-rich tracts has drawn significant public attention.

The problem is not only these projects' environmental footprint. Critics point out how mining brings about large-scale land dispossession for Adivasis and leads to the pauperisation and destruction of their communities, which are traditionally reliant on access to land and forests.

But there is another, more hidden effect of mining that could spell the death knell of tribal society: New, profound forms of inequality in these communities, which fracture their very social fabric.

This was what I discovered in Karampot and the area, where I lived and did fieldwork for 18 months between 2015 and 2017. Compared to the rest of Indian society, marked by pervasive social hierarchies along the lines of caste and class, Adivasi communities are considerably more egalitarian in their structure and values.

This is reflected, notably, in low-economic differences between households, and an age-old practice of mutual labour exchange, for example, to construct and repair their mud houses. I can ask my neighbour to help me seal my house's tiled roof before the rainy season, and I'll help him seal his in return.

All this existed in Karampot as well but has been steadily disintegrating since mining and dispossession entered the scene some 15 years ago. Here lies the nub of the matter: Rather than uniform impoverishment, as is often assumed, mining and dispossession have led to the emer-



gence of social differentiation within the community, producing salient internal disparities.

Paradoxically, the culprit is a relatively generous compensation policy for land that is dispossessed for state-run mining projects. In 2008, one such project located not far from Karampot announced that as part of an expansion plan, it would be taking over the entire territory of a neighbouring Adivasi hamlet to make room for a new opencast pit.

For their loss of land, and after a lengthy process of negotiation with the project by local Adivasi political leaders, most of that hamlet's residents were able to receive jobs in the colliery as assistants, as part of the existing but often poorly implemented compensation policy for dispossession. For many of these Adivasis, especially from the younger generation, relinquishing in exchange for a compensatory job wasn't in fact a bad deal. Like most Adivasis in rural India, they had been struggling to get by through subsistence agriculture, faced with demographic pressure and casual wage labour.

The possibility of a permanent, salaried job — a scarce, sought-after commodity in India's precarious labour environment especially for marginalized populations such as Adivasis — was certainly attractive.

The jobs that were meted out to Adivasis near Karampot can be seen as a success, or at least a relative one. Indeed, compared to the multiple reported cases where compensation for dispossession by mining was nowhere near adequate, the attainment of

jobs around Karampot — following pressure and mediation by local leaders — was a much more favourable outcome.

But it also had ruinous side effects, as it produced novel, striking inequalities within local Adivasi society. Having had to leave their old hamlet, taken over by the mine, some of the newly employed Adivasis have moved to neighbouring Karampot, where they built large cement houses and now make up a privileged minority with secure, gainful work.

The rest of Karampot's inhabitants, on the other hand, live a veritably precarious existence. While they still hold on to their modest farming plots, mining has affected them as well: From the blasting that cracks their mud house walls to the ubiquitous coal dust that pollutes the air and soil and to the expropriation of common grazing and forest areas around the village.

However, because they have not — as of yet — lost own land to the mine, they are ineligible for any kind of compensatory employment. Instead, they have taken to peddling coal on bicycles, gathered illicitly from the colliery's depot yard, as a way to survive.

While for those who gained it, compensatory employment has allowed pursuing upward mobility aspirations — increasingly common among younger Adivasi generations — their coal-peddling Adivasi counterparts feel excluded and left behind.

In addition to their concrete dwellings, employed local Adivasis usually own a motorcycle; throw relatively expensive wedding celebrations; and send their

children to private schools outside the village.

Non-employed locals, by contrast, usually inhabit earthen houses; travel by bicycle or on foot; hold simple, unpretentious village weddings; and send their children to the local, rudimentary government school. Employed, better-off Adivasis have been progressively diverging away from poorer community members engaged in precarious, informal labour.

Differentiation has emerged not only between households but also within them. Rajkumar and his nuclear family, for example, live on the same compound as his two younger, non-employed siblings and theirs.

As the older one, Rajkumar took on the compensatory job for the household's plot of land. As the employed brother, Rajkumar purchases rice grains and other basic foodstuffs for the entire household; nonetheless, disparities within the household are impossible to miss.

Rajkumar and his siblings, for example, live under two very different roofs. Abutting the same open courtyard, his brothers occupy a mud dwelling, while he, his wife and their baby boy live in a newly built cement house with a large television and speaker system.

Unlike land, which is a joint household resource, a job is an individual asset, and employees' salaries are ultimately intended for their and their own nuclear families' needs and wishes.

Compensatory jobs for mining-induced dispossession have then resulted in Karampot in the emergence of marked social dif-

ferentiation, between the group of employed Adivasis and all the rest.

While disparities between households in the community did exist before the onset of mining, they were minimal and transitory, which was very different from the inequalities of caste society in the Indian plains. Now, compensatory employment was leading to intra-community inequality of an unprecedented order.

Many villagers I spoke to, especially from the older generation, lamented that this has destroyed community solidarity. Displays of new relative wealth by recently employed Adivasis enhance the sense of marginalisation and have triggered resentment among worse-off villagers, who feel lagging behind in terms of upward mobility and lifestyle.

Cracks in solidarity and pre-existing values of egalitarianism have become progressively more evident. The Adivasi practice of mutual labour exchange, for example, is in decline. Employed and non-employed villagers now essentially occupy distinct types of houses, with different needs.

The formers' mud houses have clay roofs that repeated re-sealing, the latter's cement houses can easily withstand the monsoon rains. This kind of differentiation has eroded the material basis for reciprocity, which had not only been an important economic pillar of the community but also reflected an Adivasi egalitarian ethic.

Historically, this ethic represented an alternative and antidote not only to India's dominant caste-divided society, but also to its unequal capitalist economic trajectory. Now, however, it is being undermined by mining, dispossession and compensation.

While extractive projects, as Karampot's story illustrates, do not always necessarily pauperise Adivasi communities as a whole, they can create new and substantial inequalities and divisions within them, which chisel away at their egalitarian elements.

As is evident in Karampot, capitalist economic dynamics are beneficial for some, but detrimental to others. In some cases, rather than dispossession itself, it is the insidious processes of inequality unleashed by them that break down what was there before.

Courtesy: Down To Earth

NZ's carbon-neutral govt idea faces uphill task

MICHAEL TAYLOR

THE New Zealand government's goal to become carbon neutral by 2025 will only happen if backed by more funding and bold policies - including those targeting dairy farmers - rather than relying on carbon offset schemes, environmentalists said.

In addition to promising a carbon-neutral public sector in five years, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declared a climate emergency earlier this week, a move the main opposition party dismissed as "virtue signalling".

"It's an ambitious goal and it's good to see the government committing to lead from the front," Amanda Larsson, senior campaigner at Greenpeace Aotearoa, said on Thursday. "But in order to make a dent on emissions, what we really need is government policies to cut pollution from the agriculture and transport sectors."

Climate change was a key issue in October's election, won by Ardern's Labour Party, with many New Zealanders becoming more aware of the threat earlier this year as ash from bushfires in Australia turned its skies red and its glaciers brown.

Proud of being one of the world's most

pristine, naturally beautiful countries, New Zealand has introduced climate change into its school curriculum, while parliament approved a bill to cut carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050.

But according to analysis by research coalition Climate Action Tracker, the country's current climate policies are "insufficient" and inconsistent with limiting global warming to the Paris accord's tightest goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Methane from agriculture and waste accounts for more than 40% of New Zealand's emissions, it noted. "We need to see bolder action from the government, a commitment to fully decarbonise the state sector and a clear plan that sets out how they will do it," said Siri Andersen, co-director at climate campaign group 350 Aotearoa.

"Our government has the mandate and the numbers in parliament to lead a rapid, just transition to a low-carbon future, and the community is expecting (it) to take bold action," Andersen said.

The Pacific nation's "School Strike 4 Climate" marches last year put pressure on Ardern to be bolder with her climate policies but her efforts to do so were often ham-



pered by her coalition partners in government, green groups said. Under the new goal, government agencies will have to measure and report emissions and offset any they can't cut by 2025.

The programme will also be backed by a NZ\$200 million (\$141 million) fund to finance replacing coal boilers and help buy electric or hybrid vehicles. "The key challenge is, and always will be, funding," said Elliott Hughes, a spokesman at Generation Zero, a youth-led climate action organisation. "Without additional funding, it's difficult to imagine organizations already short on cash having the resources to decarbonize effectively."

However, this week's announcement would send a strong signal to households, businesses and investors that climate

change is a priority for New Zealand, green groups said.

This needed to be followed with policies, regulations and incentives that make climate-smart choices easier, said Greenpeace's Larsson. Government agencies will now need to look at replacing their fossil fuel vehicles with greener alternatives - like public transport, cycling or electric vehicles, environmentalists said. Improvements to public buildings - many of which use coal fired boilers - would also be needed to ensure energy efficiency and to prioritise renewable energy, they added.

In addition, the new pledge should provide incentives for government designers of public housing to consider energy efficiency - vital given the country's chronic housing shortage, said Denys Trussell of Friends of the Earth New Zealand. But the concern is that meeting the new emissions target will involve offsetting building emissions, which doesn't "green" the sector at all, said Cindy Baxter, a spokeswoman at Coal Action Network Aotearoa, a climate campaign group. "Buying offsets isn't proper climate action," she said. "We need to see this sector actually cutting fossil fuel use, but there needs to be funding for that."

AP CM furious over TDP ‘lies’ on pensions

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

SEVEN TDP legislators, including their deputy leader K Atchannaidu, were suspended from the Assembly on Thursday for a day amid ruckus. During a short discussion on Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT) schemes, the House witnessed heated exchanges between the ruling YSRCP and the TDP members. The TDP members protested and demanded that they be allowed to speak. As they trooped into the Well of the House, seven TDP legislators, including Atchannaidu, were suspended from the House for a day. This was the fourth consecutive day during the ongoing winter session that the opposition members were suspended from the House. Following this, the other TDP members too walked out in protest. Earlier, tension prevailed in the House as some ministers rushed menacingly towards the TDP benches after a verbal duel between Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and TD Legislature Party deputy leader Nimmala Ramanaidu. The Chief Minister alleged the TDP

leader was “deliberately misleading the House by telling lies.” “I am moving a privilege motion against him,” Jagan told Speaker Tammineni Sitaram. Ramanaidu, though off the mike, sought to hit back at the Chief Minister but the Speaker said it would not go into the record. The Speaker then announced that he was referring the Chief Minister’s privilege motion to the “privilege motion” (committee). “You have misled the House by telling lies. Don’t mislead the House,” Sitaram told the TDP MLA. Earlier, Ramanaidu alleged that Jagan had gone back on his pre-election promise that if YSRCP was voted to power, he would give Rs 3,000 per month to the pensioners and asked why they were giving only Rs 2,200 per month. The Chief Minister at this juncture intervened to ridicule the claim. He said he was prepared to discuss the allegations made by the Opposition. The Chief Minister said, “Until two months before the elections, when Chandrababu Naidu was the chief minister, anyone in the state would tell



- ▶ Ruling party members strongly objects to allegation by TDP member Nimmala Rama Naidu that Jagan has gone back on his promise of paying ₹3,000 pension per month
- ▶ Jagan asserts that their manifesto says ₹2,500 will be given to all the pensioners
- ▶ Points out Naidu paid only ₹1,000 for 4 years of his rule to 44 lakh people while they are paying pension to 61.94 lakh people
- ▶ After 7 TDP members including Atchannaidu were suspended for the day when they trooped into the Well of the House, others staged a walkout

how much the pension amount was. But we are giving a pension of Rs 2,250 after the formation of our government. Chandrababu Naidu was giving a pension amount of only Rs 1,000 for four years and 10 months during his tenure and

just two months before the elections, he raised the amount to Rs 2,000.” Six months before the elections (October 2018), the pensioners in the state were only 44 lakh but after they took over, they have been paying

pensions to 61.94 lakhs, he explained. “The pension bill was only Rs 500 crore during the TDP’s regime, whereas we are disbursing Rs 1,500 crore in the form of pensions,” he stated. He expressed his anger that the TDP leaders for engaging in “systematic lying and cheating people”. He pointed out that in the election manifesto, he had clearly stated that a pension of Rs 2,500 would be given to all the pensioners. “We are implementing the manifesto in letter and spirit, and treat it like the Bible, Quran and Bhagavad Gita,” the Chief Minister said. As the TDP members sought to raise a protest over this, the ministers rushed towards the opposition benches but some of the senior YSRCP MLAs intervened and pulled them back. The TDP members then staged a walkout from the House. The ministers then took turns to lash out at the TDP after which a video film of Jagan’s political rallies on the election eve last year screened in the Assembly, to ‘place on record the various promises he made to the people.

AP HC refuses stay on local elections

- ▶ Court rejects State govt’s argument that State Election Commissioner Ramesh Kumar has taken a unilateral decision to hold panchayat polls
- ▶ Countering this, SEC’s counsel produces evidence of SEC holding discussions with CS, officials of Medical and Health and Panchayat Raj Depts
- ▶ The hearing will continue today



HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE Andhra Pradesh High Court refused to grant stay on State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar’s decision to hold elections in February stating that there was no merit in the argument of the state government that the SEC had taken the decision unilaterally and adjourned the case to Friday. The state government’s counsel argued that Ramesh Kumar had never consulted it before making an announcement on the conduct of elections to the local bodies. “It is in gross violation of the Supreme Court directions,” he said. However, senior counsel Ashwini Kumar, arguing on behalf of the SEC, pointed out to the High Court that the SEC had consulted the state government not once, but thrice and had not taken any unilateral decision.

He produced evidence showing that Ramesh Kumar had held meetings with the chief secretary Nilam Sawhney and the officials of the state medical and health department and also that of the state panchayat raj department. He also said the SEC had written letters to the chief secretary to make arrangements for a video conference with the district officials to discuss the possibility of conducting the local body elections. Ashwini Kumar also sought to know why the state government had not brought it to the notice of the Supreme Court, if the SEC had really violated the Supreme Court guidelines. “The government has approached the High Court only to cover up its lapses,” he argued. The government counsel sought another opportunity to put forth the state government’s arguments in this regard and the High Court posted the case to Friday.

Guide States on prudence of funds: Suresh Prabhu suggests PM

Continued from P1

Referring to the just-announced economic output and GDP, he congratulated the Prime Minister for making the economy recover very fast and putting it on a positive course, Suresh Prabhu said it was evident that the Centre was doing a fine balancing act by fulfilling its social responsibilities too with sensitivity and compassion. Proper guidance would help States to steer clear of the pitfalls and hurdles in balancing the fiscal situation, he said. Suggesting to the PM that all State Governments be guided by the Centre to adhere to fiscal norms “by following best possible prudent norms in such a difficult situation”. He said he had brought to the notice of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Seetharaman, a suggestion against the State Governments’ crossing the FRBM limits while seeking her intervention in helping the State Governments on to the right path of expenditure (on welfare measures). As a representative of Andhra Pradesh, he said he was working closely with the AP Government to get more investment for the State and in starting skill development centres by assisting the State for its growth. Seeking support for the initiatives for the development of the State, he urged the Prime Minister to support his initiatives for faster growth of AP.

Minor students ‘wed’ in classroom for fun

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

IN a sensational incident, two minor students entered into wedlock in classroom in the Government Junior College here, allegedly for fun. Though the incident took place on November 17, it came to light on Thursday. The students, aged 17 years, are studying Senior Intermediate in the college. When contacted, the Government Junior College principal, Mary Sujatha said that the two students came to the college at 8.30 am on that day and exchanged garlands. She said there were no one in the classroom at that time as classes begin at 9.30 am. The two students used to make short films and TikTok videos. They told the college principal that they had done it for fun. On learning of this, the college officials informed their parents and sent them out of the college by issuing transfer certificates.

- The duo used to shoot short films and TikTok videos
- On learning of the incident, college sends them out by issuing TCs



- ▶ Laments he did not learn from the safeguards taken in Parliament like arranging partitions between members
- ▶ Points out that Home Minister attended Assembly after meeting an infected MLA
- ▶ Says YSRCP MLAs behaving like virus super spreaders

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MANGALAGIRI

TDP national president and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu strongly objected to the manner in which Speaker Tammineni Sitaram was not enforcing the Covid-19 preventive measures in the Assembly thus exposing all the MLAs and the MLCs who were attending the session to a serious risk. He expressed surprise that at a time when exceptional safeguards were being taken in Parliament by erecting partitions between members, the AP Assembly Speaker was not taking any care for the health of the members and all those working there. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here on Thursday, the TDP chief said that YSRCP MLA Karumuri Nageswara Rao had asked all his party leaders to go for self-quarantine since he had reported positive for the virus on Wednesday. The home minister attended a meeting with the infected MLA but still she came to the Assembly without a facemask. Almost all the ruling party MLAs and MLCs were not wearing masks nor observing social distance in utter disregard for the general health of everyone, he said. He said that the Speaker should act like a responsible custodian of the well-being



TDP legislators led by party president N Chandrababu Naidu take out a rally up to Assembly in protest against the atrocities on weaker sections, on Thursday

Oppn legislators decry ‘atrocities’ against weaker sections in AP

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE TDP MLAs and MLCs led by party chief and Opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu took out a rally up to the Assembly premises on Thursday in protest against the ‘deteriorating law and order situation in the state.

The wore face masks and observed coronavirus guidelines while participating in the rally. Former minister Nara Lokesh wore shackles on his hands to symbolically show how a diabolical regime was ruling the state. TDP deputy leader K Atchannaidu, former minister Nim-

- Party chief Naidu leads a rally of to Assembly in protest against the alleged attacks on SC, ST, BC, Minorities under the current govt
- Lokesh says YSRCP has turned Andhra Pradesh into ‘anarchic Pradesh’

makayala Chinarajappa and others were present. The TDP legislators alleged that never before in the 67 years history of Andhra Pradesh such attacks and humiliations were perpetrated on the weaker sections and the

backward classes. The state became a Ravana Kashtam (an ever burning Ravana’s pyre) as the lawless YSRCP leaders turned Andhra Pradesh into Arachaka (anarchic) Pradesh, they said. Stating that three tonsure incidents took place in three months in three districts, the TDP leaders said that one Vikram was murdered in Gurazala in a very heartless manner. Kiran Kumar in Chirala was killed just for not wearing the face mask. Dalit doctors Dr Sudhakar and Dr Anitha Rani and Dalit judge Justice Ramakrishna were subjected to insults and nonstop humiliations, they said.

Brahmaputra Bridge will link Bhutan with Vietnam

Continued from P1

On entering Myanmar, it heads for Mandalay, the historic city, on the east bank of the Irrawaddy river, 471 km away. From Mandalay, Myanmar’s last royal capital before British annexation, the highway heads towards the Thai border, with Myawaddy being the last destination on the Myanmar side. Myanmar’s officialdom is emphatic that Myawaddy - the gateway to ASEAN - has huge potential as it can be easily connected with the Yangon deep water port, as well as the Andaman Sea. The 1,360-km route terminates at Mae Sot in Thailand, 20 km away to the northeast. Myawaddy is the junction of the two projects. It is the starting point of the East West Economic Corridor (EWEC), which heads towards Da Nang in Vietnam - a port city on the South China Sea. During the Vietnam War, today’s Da Nang International Airport had be-

come one of the world’s busiest aircraft hubs from where the US Air Force launched its infamous bombing campaigns. The 1,450-km EWEC route passes through Thailand’s Province of the Mukdahan - the gateway to Laos, which is connected by the 1.6 km-long Second Thai-Lao friendship bridge over the Mekong, built with Japanese assistance. From Savannakhet in Laos, the next stop in the corridor, the passage heads east towards Da Nang, 486 km away. On the way, the Japanese have also been involved in constructing the 6.28-km Hai Van tunnel, the longest in Southeast Asia, which links Hue, a city in Central Vietnam, with Da Nang. Referring specifically to Myanmar, Manabu Fujimura, Professor at Tokyo’s Aoyama Gakuin University, said in an interview with the website Consult-Myanmar that Chinese eco-

nomic influence in Myanmar will continue to radiate “from Muse [in Shan State on Myanmar’s border with China’s Yunnan Province] to Mandalay and ‘upper Burma’ in general, while Japanese and Thai economic influence will continue to spill over from Myawaddy to Yangon and ‘lower Burma’ in general”. China, on its part is building a railway that will connect Kunming with Thailand via Laos. It has also signed the China Myanmar Economic Corridor, which ropes in the port of Kyaukpkyu in the Bay of Bengal. China also is keen to build the Kra canal, which will by-pass the more vulnerable and US dominated Malacca straits-a key commercial artery that links the Indian Ocean with the South China Sea. (HANS)

(This content is being carried under an arrangement with indiananarrative.com)

BIRRD to provide bionic hand for free

TIRUPATI

THE TTD run BIRRD (Balaji Institute of Research and Rehabilitation of Disable) launched on Thursday a programme under which it will provide bionic hand free of cost to poor amputees. The bionic hand christened KalArm helps the amputees with multi-articulating bionic and body-powered prosthetic hands for a near normal life. TTD chairman Y V Reddy formally kick-started the initiative through videoconference from Tadepalli on Thursday. He said that the latest facility which is first-of-its-kind in India made available in BIRRD would be a boon to scores of poor handicapped by enabling them attend their daily chores. “I earnestly believe the launching the bionic hand facility with the inspiration of former president A P J Abdul Kalam on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in BIRRD hospital as the blessing of Lord Venkateswara,” said adding that Chief Min-

- ▶ TTD chief Subba Reddy says KalArm will help amputees to lead a near normal life
- ▶ While this bionic arm will be fitted to the poor free of cost, others have to pay the cost

ister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is keen on developing BIRRD as a centre of excellence for extending all the required services to the persons with disabilities helping them get a new lease of life. Lauding the ‘Maker Hive Innovations’, the creator of KalArm for making it available at a cost of Rs 2.75 lakh here as against 35-40 lakhs in other countries, he said TTD would provide the facility to the poor free of cost under TTD’s SV Pranadana Scheme. The facility would also be provided to others who are in need of it on a cost basis and added that TTD would involve the donors for extending the facility to large



BIRRD honorary director Madan Mohan Reddy speaking with Gayathri, who was the first to get the bionic hand at BIRRD Hospital in Tirupati on Thursday

number of people. BIRRD which came into existence in 1985 is standing first at national level in the performance of surgeries, Subba Reddy said affirming that TTD would do its best to see the hospital emerge as No.1 in the country. He informed that TTD in association with the Maker Hive is contemplating to set up ‘amputees fitment and training centre’ in BIRRD. On the occasion, chairman interacted with Gayatri from Hyderabad who was the first to be fitted with the KalArm facility. TTD JEO and BIRRD Director P Basanth

Kumar said that TTD sent a proposal to Centre to offer a diploma course in training and artificial limb development in BIRRD hospital where the artificial limb centre would be modernised soon. Makers Hive representatives Pranav and Viswanath made a demonstration on the functioning of KalArm and informed that inspired by late president APJ Abdul Kalam, the firm named the facility KalArm (arm of the future). BIRRD honorary director Dr Madan Mohan Reddy was also present.

Rajini party in Jan; to fight 2021 polls

Continued from P1

An announcement on matters connected to the party launch would be made on December 31, he tweeted. Later speaking to reporters at his Poes Garden residence, he recalled that he had announced on December 31, 2017 that he would launch a political party ahead of Assembly elections 2021 and contest from all the 234 constituencies in the state. Referring to his ‘resurgence’ remark earlier this year, when he had said that an upsurge among people was necessary to kickstart his political journey, he said to create an ambience for such a change, he had planned to tour the state. However, it could not be done in view of the coronavirus pandemic, he said. Recalling that he had undergone a kidney transplant in 2016 and the advice of doctors against venturing into politics since it involved active campaigning considering the pandemic, he said this

aspect made him ponder over the question of entering politics as reaching out to the people was necessary. Against this backdrop, he said, years ago when he was unwell and treated at Singapore, it was the prayers of the Tamil Nadu people that brought him back to life. Considering people’s love for him, he said even if his political entry endangered and ‘snuffed out’ his very life, he would only be happy as his political journey was intended for the welfare of the people. Asserting that he was only a tool, a catalyst for change, he said if he won in his political innings it would be people’s victory and even if he lost, it belonged to the people. Former Congress leader and Gandhiya Makkal Iyakkam chief Tamizharuvi Manian, renowned for his oratory in Tamil would take up the supervisory role in the proposed party and for its launch, he said.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Reducing caron footprint need of the hour

Investing in green power generation will help reduce the carbon footprint. We're investing over Rs 780 crore in green power generation, which will lead to a significant reduction of 5.61 lakh tons of carbon footprint annually

— **Neeraj Akhouri, MD & CEO, Ambuja Cement**



FLIGHT CAPACITY

Airlines can deploy up to 80% in domestic space

The Centre has allowed domestic airlines to deploy up to 80 per cent of their pre-Covid flight capacity from an earlier 70 per cent. Last month, the Centre had allowed domestic airlines to deploy up to 70 per cent of their flight capacity, up from 60 per cent capacity utilisation in the domestic sector allowed with effect from September 2

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------|--------------------|-------|
| US Dollar | 78.34 | South | |
| Euro | 93.98 | African Rand | 5.55 |
| UAE Dirham | 22.13 | Hong Kong Dollar | 10.96 |
| Thai Baht | 2.81 | Japanese Yen | 0.81 |
| British Pound | 102.98 | New Zealand Dollar | 54.83 |
| Australian Dollar | 57.64 | Saudi Riyal | 21.66 |
| Canadian Dollar | 60.04 | Swedish Krona | 10.01 |
| Swiss Franc | 85.96 | Singapore Dollar | 58 |

DELHI FRIDAY 4 DECEMBER 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

FreshToHome opens outlet

FRESHToHome has expanded its new daily delivery service that specializes in delivering milk, groceries, fruits, vegetables, daily essentials, bakery, and a variety of other food products right at the doorstep. It is now available in Hyderabad, Bangalore and Pune. FTH Daily delivers almost a million orders every month and offers free home delivery at the golden hour before 7:30 am every day. Shan Kadavil, Co-founder and CEO, FTH Daily said: "FreshToHome has launched FTH Daily to ease the lives of millions of consumers with their daily essential needs. We aim to become our customers' daily nutrition partner, catering to their food needs at competitive prices. Our free delivery platform allows our customers to order only what they want daily thereby preserving nutrition intact."

Insecticides launches product

INSECTICIDES (INDIA) Ltd has launched Tadaaki, an insecticide that effectively controls stem borer, leaf folder, and nematodes for a relatively longer duration than existing products. Tadaaki can be absorbed quickly by the plants through its excellent systemic and translocating action. It remains on the surface of the soil and does not leach underground, which makes it effective for longer control and also does not pollute the water. "Tadaaki is another new generation and promising product from OAT Agrio, Japan which will provide effective control of Stem borer and Leaf folder in Paddy. It also has good control over nematodes as well. We have made this available to Indian farmers from our ally OAT Agrio Co., Ltd. of Japan, after we successfully launched Chaperone with them last year," says Mr. Rajesh Aggarwal, Managing Director, Insecticides (India) Ltd.

Unacademy's IOI initiative

Unacademy has announced the Go-For-Gold Initiative for Indian school students participating in the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI) 2021. The IOI is one of the most prestigious UNESCO-recognized Olympiads in programming and informatics for school students. As part of the Go-For-Gold initiative, Unacademy will award a cash prize worth Rs 15 lakhs, along with a laptop and other rewards to any Indian student winning a gold medal at IOI 2021. Anup Kalbala, CodeChef Business Head at Unacademy, says "We are extremely elated that Unacademy has decided to carry forward CodeChef's Go-For-Gold initiative which aims to prepare Indian school students to excel at the prestigious IOI. With Unacademy at our side, we aim to accelerate our efforts to create awareness across the country about inculcating problem-solving & informatics in the school curriculum early on."

Nutreco forays into India

NUTRECO company on Thursday announced its maiden manufacturing foray into India with a state-of-the-art production facility at Jadcherla near Hyderabad. Nutreco, through its two reputed brands, Trouw Nutrition and Skretting, is a global leader in animal and aqua nutrition, bringing innovative feed additives, premixes and nutritional services. It is the animal nutrition division of the 125-year-old Dutch family owned SHV Holdings. SHV has interests in energy, retail, heavy engineering and investments and clocked sales of ₹19.2 billion in 2019, from its global operations.

PMI services growth softens

Eases to 53.7 in November from 54.1 in October

NEW DELHI

THE recovery in the Indian services sector was sustained in November as new work orders supported business activity growth and the first rise in employment in nine months, a monthly survey said on Thursday.

The seasonally adjusted India Services Business Activity Index posted above the critical 50 mark that separates growth from contraction for the second month in a row during November. Despite falling from 54.1 in October to 53.7 in November, the latest reading was still indicative of a solid pace of expansion amid better demand conditions and a relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions.

"The Indian service sector continued to recover from the coronavirus-induced contractions recorded from March through to September. Companies enjoyed a further rise in new work intakes and responded to this by lifting business activity and employment," said Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at IHS Markit.

Meanwhile, Indian private sector activity rose for the third straight month in November, but the pace of growth softened from October's near nine-year high. The Composite PMI Output Index, which measures combined services and manufacturing output, was down from 58 in Oc-

LUKEWARM PROGRESS

- Remained above the critical 50 mark that separates growth from contraction for the second month in a row
- Reported the first rise in employment for 9 months
- New export orders declining



- Upturn in total new work driven by the domestic market
- Input costs and output charges accelerating

tober to 56.3 in November. Both goods producers and services firms registered slower increases in sales. "Output and sales across the private sector have held up well, but there were some signs of growth losing momentum among goods producers and service providers. As has been the case in most nations worldwide, the manufacturing sector outperformed its services counterpart as the latter was hit harder by the Covid-19 pandemic," Lima said.

Services firms hired additional workers in November, ending an eight-month sequence of job shedding. That said, the rate of employment growth was marginal overall as some companies reported having

sufficient staff to cope with current workloads. On the prices front, the rates of inflation for input costs and output charges accelerated.

"Low interest rates aimed at mitigating the negative impacts of Covid-19 on the economy and the latest rise in services employment are supportive factors for domestic demand. However, a pick-up in inflationary pressures could threaten the recovery," Lima noted.

Meanwhile, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) began its three-day deliberation on Wednesday amid expectations of status quo on the benchmark lending rates in view of high retail inflation.

MPC review: RBI may maintain status quo

KUMUD DAS
MUMBAI

RBI is likely to maintain status quo in its bimonthly annual monetary policy review on December 4. Experts also hopeful that the RBI may raise its inflation and growth forecasts. The bimonthly three-day review meeting of the monetary policy committee (MPC) of RBI kick-started here on Wednesday. On conclusion of the meeting, the RBI governor, Shaktikanta Das will be declaring the apex bank's status on the key rates on December 4. "With frequency indicators and GDP data conveying meaningful rebound in economic activity and retail inflation remaining stubbornly high, we not only expect the RBI to maintain status quo in Dec-20 policy meeting, but the minimal chance of a 25bps rate cut in Feb-21 also appears to be fading away. We also believe that the MPC may not do much on the non-interest rate tools, as significant measures (OMOs, TLTROs) have already been unleashed during the last policy meeting. The fact that liquidity remains high, while growth is gaining traction, makes us feel that RBI will adopt a wait-and-watch ap-



Shaktikanta Das

Today RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das will announce the apex bank's status on the key rates

proach for next few months," said Amar Ambani, senior president & institutional research head at Yes Securities. He further said RBI upgrade its growth outlook, wherein the Central bank will scale down on its earlier pessimistic GDP projection of 9.5 per cent for FY21. Similarly, RBI will also update on the inflation trajectory, when compared with the earlier expectations of CPI moderating in Q4 FY21.

What should a central banker do when one is seeing rising yet likely-to-cool-off inflation? When you see a good Q2 GDP growth data, yet uncertainty exists with respect to coming quarters. When you need liquidity to provide credit to real sector yet grapple with not so high credit offtake. These could be the centre point for discussion ahead of the RBI monetary policy.

Nava Bharat Ventures inks pact with Tata Steel's arm

NEW DELHI

FERRO alloys manufacturer Nava Bharat Ventures on Thursday said it has entered into a five-year agreement with a Tata Steel's arm for conversion of high carbon ferro chrome.

In a regulatory filing, Nava Bharat Ventures said: "It has entered into a conversion agreement with Tata Steel Mining (TSML), wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Steel, with which similar arrangement subsisted, for conversion of high carbon ferro chrome. The duration of the conversion agreement with TSML is from December 1, 2020, to March 31, 2025".

The company added that the agreement postulates that the entire smelting capacity of the Odisha plant is dedicated to TSML to produce up to 70,000 metric tonnes of high carbon ferro chrome per annum. "Thereby, the arrangement should provide long-term operational stability for the ferro alloy plant and associated captive power plant at Odisha," the company said. Shares of Nava Bharat Ventures were trading 3.52 per cent higher at Rs 57.35 apiece on BSE. (PTI)

HCL's Roshni Nadar richest woman in India

A third of entrants in list self-made entrepreneurs

MUMBAI

IT major HCL Technologies' Roshni Nadar Malhotra has topped a list of the richest women in the country with a networth of Rs 54,850 crore, followed by Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw at Rs 36,600 crore, a report said on Thursday.

A total of 31 women in the list of 100 having a networth of at least Rs 100 crore, prepared by Hurun India and Kotak Wealth, are 'self-made', it said. This includes six professional managers and 25 entrepreneurs. Shaw leads in the self-made category, followed by Radha Vembu of Zoho (Rs 11,590 crore networth) and Jayshree Ullal of Arista Networks (Rs 10,220 crore), it said. Interestingly, all the three — Shaw, Ullal and Vembu — also feature in a global rich list prepared by Hurun.

The average age of women on the list, whose cumulative wealth is pegged at Rs 2.72 lakh crore, is 53 and 19 of the 100 women are under the age of 40, it said. Two of the women have promoted unicorns — retailer Nykaa's Falguni Nayar who has a wealth of Rs 5,410 crore and 34-year-old Divya Gokulanth of Byju's with a networth of Rs 3,490 crore. Some families contributed more than one person to the women's rich list. Apollo Hospitals Enterprise leads with four entrants, followed by three from the Godrej Group. From a sectoral perspective, pharmaceuticals leads with 13 en-

The list comprises 20 from New Delhi and 10 from Hyderabad, while Apollo Hospitals Enterprise leads the pack with four entrants

trants, followed closely by 12 from textiles and apparels and 9 from healthcare. Financial capital Mumbai contributed 32 individuals to the list, while 20 are from New Delhi and 10 from Hyderabad, it said. Only four of the 100 women find a place in the list of highest givers who champion social causes, it said. Anu Aga and Meher Pudemjee of Thermax are the most generous women, followed by Shaw, Renu Munjal of Hero Fincorp and Leena Gandhi Tewari of USV.



Roshni Nadar

RIL tops Fortune India-500 list

NEW DELHI

RELIANCE Industries Ltd (RIL) has been ranked number one in the 2020 Fortune India-500 list of largest companies in the country. According to Fortune India, Reliance pipped the public-sector Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) last year to top the Fortune India-500 for the first time ever.

Despite the challenges of a slowing economy, RIL has managed to come up at the top of the list in the 2020 listing as well. The Fortune India 500 list is based on revenue, and the figures this year pertain to fiscal year 2019-2020.

This year's Fortune India-500



list is evidence of the challenges India's largest companies had been facing even before the Coronavirus pandemic hit the global economy. However, it also demonstrates the might and resilience of the Indian corporate sector in dealing with the challenges and moving forward. The global economic landscape is changing rapidly, more so after the pandemic, and Corporate

Followed by IOC, ONGC, SBI, BPCL, and Tata Motors

India will need to navigate this new world to stay ahead, Fortune India said.

The top 10 companies on the 2020 Fortune India-500 list are Reliance Industries, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), State Bank of India (SBI), Bharat Petroleum (BPCL), Tata Motors, Rajesh Exports, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), ICICI Bank and L&T.

Gold, silver futures jump on spot demand

NEW DELHI

GOLD prices on Thursday rose Rs 420 to Rs 49,367 per 10 gram in the futures trade as speculators created fresh positions on a firm spot demand.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for the February delivery traded higher by Rs 420, or 0.86 per cent, at Rs 49,367 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 12,253 lots. Fresh positions built

up by participants led to the rise in gold prices, analysts said. Gold prices traded 0.76 per cent higher at \$ 1,844.20 per ounce in New York. Silver prices on Thursday rose Rs 785 to Rs 64,110 per kg in the futures trade as participants widened their bets on a firm spot demand. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, silver contracts for the March delivery gained Rs 785, or 1.24 per cent, to Rs 64,110 per kg in 11,971 lots. (PTI)

Rupee slips 12 paise lower against US dollar

MUMBAI

THE rupee slipped for the second straight day to end 12 paise lower at 73.93 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday as investors remained cautious ahead of the RBI policy meet outcome.

Analysts said investor focus is on the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee's three-day interest rate-setting meeting that started on Wednesday, with the decision due on Friday. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit witnessed a highly volatile trading session. It opened at 73.81 and saw an intra-day high of 73.68 and a low of 73.95. It finally closed at 73.93 a dollar, registering a decline of 12 paise.

"Indian rupee depreciated despite weakness in dollar and rise in risk appetite in the global markets as investors remained cautious ahead of the RBI monetary policy meeting outcome," said Saif Mukadam, Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Mukadam further added that "market sentiments improved on promising reports on efficacy of Covid-19 vaccine and on hopes for more fiscal stimulus from the US government.

India witnessing V-shaped recovery: FinMin report

GDP recorded a growth of 23% in the July-September quarter

NEW DELHI

THE Indian economy is witnessing a V-shaped recovery as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has recorded a quarter-on-quarter growth of 23 per cent in the July-September quarter of this fiscal, according to the Finance Ministry's latest Monthly Economic Review.

The decline in the GDP narrowed to 7.5 per cent in the second quarter of this financial year, over 23.9 per cent in April-June quarter. "The year-on-year GDP contraction of 7.5 per cent in Q2 of 2020-

21 underlies a quarter-on-quarter surge in GDP growth of 23 per cent. "This V-shaped recovery, evident at the half-way stage of 2020-21, reflects the resilience and robustness of the Indian economy. The fundamentals of the economy remain strong as gradual scaling back of lockdowns, along with the astute support of Atmanirbhar Bharat Mission has placed the economy firmly on the path of recovery," the Monthly



Economic Review for November said. The growth drivers have obtained the largest support from agriculture followed by construction and manufacturing, it said, adding, the contact-sensitive services sector has also contributed although mainly through logistics and communication. The recently celebrated festive season contributed to a rise in fresh Covid-19 positive cases in India. (AGN/BRS)

WORLD DISABLED DAY

Paralympics player, yet to get recognition

Despite representing the country at 35 national and five international stages, Mohammed Farooq Ahmed, 40, has not received any recognition so far for his yeoman services and is eking out bread and butter by driving auto for the past several years

ESA BIN ABDUL REHMAN
HYDERABAD

ON the eve of World Disabled Day, it is imperative to understand what it means for those physically challenged people who despite displaying exemplary grit and courage in proving their mettle have been miserably neglected by the government.

The case of Paralympic player Mohammed Farooq Ahmed gives us a deep insight of the doomed world of disabled people who are yet to get recognition from the government despite earning several laurels to the nation by representing the country on national and international platforms.

Despite representing the country at 35 national and five international stages, Mohammed Farooq Ahmed, 40, has not received any recognition so far for his yeo-



Home Minister Mohd Mahmood Ali felicitating Mohammed Farooq Ahmed

I didn't even get sponsorship from the government despite of several representations made to government including pleas to Minister K T Rama Rao, Former MP KK Kavitha and present Home Minister Mahmood Ali while all of them has felicitated me for my performances in different competitions," he bemoaned.

Papamma regrets leaving her business

This is not a lone case that demands sympathetic heed towards the state of grief-stricken disabled people. There are a number of divyang people in the state who are desperately in need of governments' empathy towards their plight and the case of S Papamma, a disabled Anganwadi teacher would also prove the point.

Serving the community since the last 24 years on different capacity from Vidya Volunteer to Aangawadi

teacher, her services haven't been recognised yet while she still continues the journey of imparting education to pupils of poor background in slum areas despite her disability.

"At a very young age I started looking after my family by selling vegetables in Gagan Pahad area besides enduring my schooling. Upon relatives' advice, I started working as a vidya volunteer to which I had undergone several training programmes.

Later, I was made Anganwadi teacher on temporary capacity. With a defect in my left leg, it is quite difficult for me to travel from one place to another to imbibe training and teach pupils, but I had to put up with this as I had to raise my children. Despite such a long journey I am still a temporary employee without a pension facility. To be honest, the days of selling vegetables were much better than what I am presently smarting under," said Papamma, with a cosmetic smile on her face.



Papamma

One can achieve anything with self-confidence: Harish

Informants that they are organising 34 free training camps for police aspirants on behalf of the State intermediate board

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

STATE Finance Minister T Harish Rao on Thursday asserted that everything in the world could be achieved with self-confidence. He also said that the continuous efforts would help people to reach their goal.

He made these remarks while addressing a gathering after inaugurating free police recruitment training camp in Siddipet. The camp was organised by State intermediate board.

Speaking on this occasion, he said that they were organising 34 such camps on behalf of the intermediate board across the en-

tire State. Rao also said that they were providing free coaching to various job aspirants since the year 2015 in the district. He also pointed out that several jobs aspirants, who have been trained in their coaching camps, had secured various jobs and urged the job aspirants to not only work hard to secure State-level jobs but also to get national-level jobs.

He informed that they would provide free food, study material, uniform and other facilities to all those who attend the training camp on regular basis. The Minister then urged the aspirants to focus their attention on securing good jobs and not waste their valuable time.



Cops warn against fraud in the name of Covid vaccine

HYDERABAD

POLICE officers have launched a campaign to warn the people against possible frauds in the name of Covid-19 vaccine. There are reports in the media of late about the availability of vaccine of different pharmaceutical companies of different countries, including India in the Cong weeks/months. Taking advantage of these reports, unscrupulous elements might resort to frauds to make easy money. So, be vigilant and do not believe in messages, phone calls and links in the name of supplying the vaccine on priority basis, said the Commissioner of Police, Rachakonda, Mahesh Bhagwat, in a twitter. He stated that cyber crimes are taking place in different forms and the fraudsters are inventing new tricks to cheat the people and even the educated persons are becoming victims of such frauds.

Victory rallies banned in GHMC

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TAKING out victory rallies by the winning candidates and the political parties in GHMC limits has been prohibited for 48 hours from Friday morning. As the counting of votes of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections is slated for Friday, the Hyderabad Police Commissioner, Anjani Kumar, has issued the ban order. The Commissioner said that 15 counting centres were arranged in the GHMC limits and elaborate security arrangements have been made at all these centres to prevent any untoward incidents. Those who were having the permission letter alone would be allowed into the counting centres, he added.

Plea filed seeking repolling in Ghansi Bazar

BJP candidate accuses massive rigging by MIM party workers and urges the court to direct the SEC to hold repolling

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

ALLEGING massive rigging by the AIMIM party workers, Renu Soni, who contested the GHMC elections on a Bharatiya Janata Party ticket from Ward no 49, Ghansi Bazar, filed a writ petition in the High Court urging the court to direct the State Election Commission to conduct repolling in the said ward. The petitioner added that though she had made a representation to the State Election Commissioner to beef up the security in Ward No. 49, going by the incidents which occurred in 2016 general elections during which there was a mass rigging and booth capturing, the plea fell on deaf ears of SEC and the same situation has now cropped up in the same area, which was a sensitive one. She further accused the MIM activists and their leaders of threatening her polling agents with dire consequences. Principal Secretary of Municipal Administration & Urban Development, Commissioner and Election Authority, GHMC, Election Returning Officer of Ward no 49 GHMC Ghansi Bazar, State Election Commission and the Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad are made respondents in the writ petition that is to come up for hearing before the Chief Justice bench on Friday.

Jammikunta PS ranks among top 10 in India

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Jammikunta police station in Karimnagar was among the top 10 best police stations selected by the Central government in 2020. This police station stood in tenth place.

The Home Minister of Telangana, Md. Mahmood Ali, said that, it is a matter of pride for the Telangana state that one of the police stations is in the top 10 list. He congratulated the police officers on such an achievement.

He noted, "Every year top 10 police stations across the country are selected by central government on the basis of various factors such as, management of the respective police stations, crime prevention and solving, response time to the public, public opinion etc"

The Home Minister also appreciated the efforts carried out by the DGP of Telangana, M. Mahender Reddy and Commissioner of Police of Karimnagar, V Kamalasan Reddy and urged them to ensure that the state of Telangana always stays on top in security. He further added, "Even previous year the Choppadandi police station in Karimnagar was selected as best police station and by taking inspiration from these police stations other officers of different police stations shall strive to work hard and achieve success."

The Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah said a vast majority of police stations were short-listed from the thousands of police stations located in small towns and rural areas in the



country. This indicates that while availability of resources is important, more important is the dedication and sincerity of the police personnel to prevent and control crime and serve the nation.

The objective was to rank the top 10 police stations out of 16,671 stations in the country through data analysis, direct observation and public feedback.

The ranking process commenced with shortlisting of the best performing police stations in each State based on addressing property offence, crime against women, crime against weaker sections, missing persons, unidentified found person and unidentified dead bodies.

The last parameter has been introduced in current year. The number of police stations selected initially from each State comprised three from each

State with more than 750 police stations. In the final stage, 19 parameters were identified to evaluate the standards of service delivery and identify techniques of improvement in policing. This part constituted 80 percent of weightage in overall scoring. The balance 20 percent was based on infrastructure of the police station and approachability of personnel and feedback of citizens.

The categories of citizens included were from nearby residential areas and markets and citizens leaving police stations. Citizens who were approached for feedback included 4,056 respondents, covering approximately 60 people at each shortlisted location.

All States participated in this year's survey with full co-operation to complete the survey during pandemic period.

CS holds meeting on preparedness of Covid-19 vaccination

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar directed the officials to prepare a data base of frontline health workers, police personnel and sanitation workers to cover on priority under Covid-19 vaccination in the State.

First meeting of State-level steering committee was held under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary at BRKR Bhavan on Thursday. The Committee discussed the preparedness of Covid-19 vaccination in the State.

Chief Secretary asked the departments to work in a coordinated way and make systematic arrangements for the first phase vaccination of Covid-19. He reviewed the logistical arrangements, transportation, training of health staff, cold chain facilities, IEC campaign, mapping of health facilities, etc. The Chief Secretary also directed officials to prepare a protocol for the vaccination centres.

Arvind Kumar, Principal Secretary, MA&UD; Jitender, Additional DG (L&O); Sabyasachi Ghosh, Principal Secretary, Youth Services, SAM Rizvi, Secretary, HM&FW Dept, Ravi Gupta, Prl. Secretary, Home, Rahul Bojja, Prl. Secretary and Secretary, SCDD, Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Secretary, PR&RD.

Stay on Dharani extended till Dec 8

Petitioners question the collection of personal details for feeding into the Dharani portal

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Raghavendra Singh Chauhan and Justice Bollam Vijaysen Reddy on Thursday heard a batch of seven public interest litigations on Dharani portal and extended the stay on collecting the data for the registration of non-agricultural lands till December 8.

Senior Counsel D Prakash Reddy, appearing for the petitioner I Gopal Sharma, vehemently opposed the State's action in obtaining the personal details of citizens i.e., Aadhaar card, caste, family details etc., for feeding them into the Dharani portal, which has no backing of either a statute or a law.

Further, there is no security to the data, which is being collected, Reddy added. The registrations pertaining to non-agricultural properties in the State were put on hold from September 8, even before the High Court, in its interim orders dated November 3, has directed the State government to refrain from collecting personal details from its citizens. "Now, the State government is telling its people that the registrations in the State have been stopped as the issue is sub judice in the High Court, which is wrong on the part of the State government," Reddy added.

Informing the bench that the mammoth data pertaining to non-agricultural properties, which has been collected and fed into the Dharani portal is at risk, Reddy sought a direction from the court to erase

LEGAL NOTES



such data.

"There is no backing by law for entries of properties, preparation, maintaining of such crucial data. Who has got the authority to enter such data and what if mistakes crop up during the entry of such data? If mistakes occur intentionally or inadvertently, who will be held responsible for such glaring mistakes?," Reddy wanted to know, adding that if there was a law, then such issues would be addressed and officials concerned would be held accountable.

Replying to Reddy's contentions, Advocate General Banda Shivananda Prasad informed the court that there was no need for a separate law to back the action of the State government to obtain and feed the entire data pertaining to the non-agricultural properties into the Dharani portal. "This programme will ease citizens to deal with their properties and it will put an end to the miscreants, who create third party rights resulting in large scale revenue litigations," he said. The court adjourned the matter to December 8.

Gurram Cheruvu bund works stalled

- The bund was breached in the recent floods
- For precautionary measures pillars were constructed to the pipeline
- Now people are forced to walk on pipeline to reach other side
- Some are seen riding bikes on the reservoir pipeline risking their lives
- The bund repair works have been stalled for two weeks due to elections

M M FAROOQUI
HYDERABAD

IT has been about 50-days since the lake bund of Gurram Cheruvu breached and wreaked havoc in several localities near Hafeez Baba Nagar. But the Irrigation authorities who began works after assessing the damages are yet to restore the bund.

The bund is still under construction and the road connecting Balapur to Baba Nagar also remains to be reconstructed. People are forced



to take a different route on foot through the 'reservoir pipe' to reach the other side by risking their lives.

After the heavy flooding which destroyed the normalcy of colonies of Balapur and Hafeez Baba Nagar areas due to the breach on the bund of Gurram Cheruvu lake are yet to come to terms with hard truth of life. As precautionary measures, even though the irrigation officials have stopped the water, they could

do bare minimal. After assessing they could only take up works for saving the existing reservoir pipeline, by constructing a base to support the massive pipe, which is now used by pedestrians to cross over the localities.

HMWSSB officer who was deployed during the works recently, said observing the flow of water and for future precautionary measures the pillars and base are being constructed. "To support the reser-

voir two pillars along with a base were constructed. The works of constructing pillars were completed within a week but the remaining works which come under civic body were pending, as soon as the works of construction of bund will be completed the road will be reopened."

Some youth also taking bikes on this pipe. It has been observed that, with the road being closed for the construction works the commuters are walking on the reservoir pipe and reaching the other side of road. "Some are seen taking their bikes on the water reservoir and reaching their destination. Earlier, some policemen were deployed to stop the commuters, but now there is no officer and people are risking their life," said Shaik Salaam, a resident of Balapur road.

The security personnel deployed there said that for the last three weeks no work was being carried out near the lake. Recently, an officer visited and inspected the area, but no further works were done. "As per my superiors, the civic body officers are busy in elections and the works would commence after the elections," he added.



India's Thangarasu Natarajan (right) is congratulated by teammate India's K.L. Rahul after bowling Australia's Marnus Labuschagne for 7 runs during their ODI match at Manuka Oval in Canberra, Australia on Wednesday

India expected to pose stiffer challenge to Oz

Visitors bank on history, morale-boosting ODI win in T20I series opener

CANBERRA

AFTER registering a morale-boosting win over Australia in the third and final ODI to avoid a series whitewash, the Indian team will take on the hosts in first of the three T20Is to be played at the Manuka Oval on Friday.

India will, however, miss the services of pace bowler Shardul Thakur who was the standout bowler in Wednesday's ODI, picking three wickets including that of Steve Smith, to help his side win by 13 runs.

The Indian team management has made it clear that players from only the T20I squad, originally selected, will be picked for the three-match series which means that apart from Thakur and Kuldeep Yadav -- who contained the Aussies with one for 57 and Shubman Gill, who impressed with a 39-ball 33 as opener, both performances coming on Wednesday -- cannot feature in the T20 team unless there is injury concern to one of the main players.

The three - Thakur, Kuldeep and Shubman --

were part of only the ODI squad and featured only in the last ODI.

India's record in T20Is in Australia is superior to the hosts in their duels. Till date they have played nine matches against each other with India coming out winners on five occasions.

The Australians have won thrice with one game ending as no result.

Importantly, India have never lost a T20I series in Australia -- they lost a one-off game in 2008.

Skipper Virat Kohli had lamented Indian players' inability to switch to ODI mode from T20 mode soon enough after the loss in the first ODI. Thakur also said on Wednesday that the two formats are quite different.

The challenge for India as well as Australia will be to switch to the T20 format less than 48 hours of completing their ODI series. Though they played the long Indian Premier League season less than a month ago, the three-match ODI series forced them to switch their game to the 50-over format.

Thakur pointed out to the difficulty in adjusting to different formats quickly i.e. from IPL's T20 to ODI cricket which India failed to do in the first couple of games.

"Definitely (it is difficult to

adjust). It is a different format and different sort of cricket is being played in 50 overs. The game starts very fast you know, 10 overs of power-play. Then it slows down in the middle and then again if you see batsmen try to attack in 35-40 overs. After 40 overs the field restrictions open up and you get one extra fielder outside the ring. So the game goes up and down," Thakur said after the end of the third ODI.

Though India have a separate squad for T20Is, 14 of the 16 members were part of the ODIs with only Deepak Chahar and Washington Sundar not there in the 50-over format. The Aussie ODI and T20I squads are the same.

Squads

India: Virat Kohli (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul (vice-captain and wicket-keeper), Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Navdeep Saini, Deepak Chahar, T Natarajan.

Australia: Aaron Finch (c), Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Alex Carey, Pat Cummins (vc), Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Daniel Sams, Kane Richardson,

Addition of two new IPL teams on agenda for Dec 24 BCCI AGM

NEW DELHI

ADDITION of two new teams to the Indian Premier League (IPL) is amongst the long agenda for the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) 89th Annual General Meeting (AGM), to be held on December 24, for which a notice has been issued. At present, eight teams compete in the IPL.

Representatives of the state cricket associations will have to approve the addition of the two teams for inclusion in the IPL.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah has sent the notice to all the affiliated state bodies about the AGM, and has said that the venue of the meeting would be shared in "due course".

There are 23 points on the agenda, including election of the vice-president, a post that has been laying vacant after Mahim Verma, who had been elected unopposed to the position at the October 23 general body meeting last year, resigned this year.

Another important agenda item to be discussed is the "BCCI's stand on the inclusion of cricket" in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. (IANS)

24 wrestlers to represent India in Individual World Cup in Serbia

NEW DELHI

RAVI Kumar, Deepak Punia and Sakshi Malik are among the 24 Indian wrestlers who will be competing in the Individual World Cup scheduled to be held from December 12 to 18 in Belgrade, Serbia.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Thursday informed that India will be sending a 42-member contingent (24 wrestlers, 9 coaches, 3 support staff and 3 referees) to Belgrade for the tournament.

It will be the first international competition that Indian wrestlers will be participating in after the nationwide lockdown was imposed in March due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The participation in the tournament has been sanctioned by the government at an overall cost of more than Rs. 90 lakhs and will include air tickets, boarding and lodging, United World Wrestling licence fees, visa fees and out of pocket allowances for players, coaches and referees," a SAI statement read.

The UWW had last month decided to organise the 'Individual World Cup' as a substitute event for the 'World Championships' which could not be hosted this year due to the coronavirus outbreak. The following Indian wrestlers will participate in the tournament:

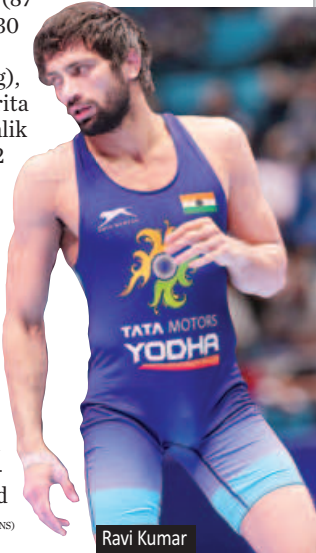
Men's freestyle: Ravi Kumar (57 kg), Rahul Aware (61 kg), Naveen (70 kg), Gourav Baliyan (79 kg), Deepak Punia (86 kg), Satyavart Kadian (97 kg), Sumit (125 kg)

Men's Greco-Roman: Arjun Halakurki (55 kg), Gyanender (60 kg), Sachin Rana (63 kg), Ashu (67 kg), Aditya Kundu (72 kg), Sajan (77 kg), Sunil Kumar (87 kg), Hardeep (97 kg), Naveen (130 kg)

Women's: Nirmala Devi (50 kg), Pinki (55 kg), Anshu (57 kg), Sarita (59 kg), Sonam (62 kg), Sakshi Malik (65 kg), Gursharan Preet Kaur (72 kg), Kiran (76 kg)

India have attained a total of four Olympic quotas in wrestling through Bajrang Punia (men's freestyle 65 kg), Vinesh Phogat (women's 53 kg), Ravi Kumar and Deepak Punia.

They will have two more opportunities to attain the remaining quotas at the Asian Qualification tournament scheduled in March 2021 and the World Qualification tournament scheduled from April 29 to May 2, 2021. (IANS)



Ravi Kumar

Willing to play senior opener's role in absence of Warner: Burns

NEW DELHI

THE Australian team management, that was facing contradicting opinions from former cricketers on who among youngster Will Pucovski and Joe Burns should open with David Warner in the first Test between India and Australia at the Adelaide Oval, might be saved from the trouble as Warner looks a doubtful starter due to his groin injury.

Australia may now be forced to open the innings with Pucovski and Burns if Warner doesn't recover in time for the first Test which starts from December 17.

The 31-year-old Burns, who is senior to the 22-year-old Pucovski, has played 21 Tests to the youngster's none. Burns says he is willing to take up the senior's role.

"In particular now that he (Warner) is out

injured, it's a great opportunity to play a senior role. In saying that, nothing changes drastically. It's about working with whoever you're batting with at the time and making sure you're executing your skills as best as possible," Burns told reporters on Thursday.

"It's a huge role to fill if Dave is not available, it's probably the responsibility of a few guys to step into that position," he added.

Burns said that he knows how to take sole responsibility, something he has done whenever Warner has gotten out early.

"I think Dave is such a world-class player, it's a nice luxury to have him at the other end. At the same time, I've always said I'll try and take as much responsibility in myself as well. I always talk about the games that Dave got out early, I always wanted to perform in those games."

The right-handed batsman added that he doesn't have much experience batting with Pucovski but said that he would use the 'A' games to plan with him for the Test match.

"I haven't had a chance to bat too often with Will. I think I batted with him once in an A game in Sussex last year. So games like this (the Australia A warm-up against India), it's a crucial part to our preparation for a Test squad, not only for me and Will, but a lot of guys in the squad just to get together and make sure our plans are good and to take the momentum of working together into the Test series."

India and Australia play a three-match T20I series starting on Friday in Canberra, following which they will play four Tests, which will be telecast live on Sony Ten 1, Sony Ten 3 and Sony Six. (IANS)



Chennaiyin look for win against Bengaluru



Bambolim (Goa): Chennaiyin FC will hope to get back to winning ways when they take on arch-rivals Bengaluru FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the GMC Stadium here on Friday. After a brilliant start to the season, trouncing Jamshedpur FC, Csaba Laszlo's men endured a frustrating draw against Kerala Blasters, a game in which they were forced to split points despite clearly being the better team. With Bengaluru struggling to develop momentum after two straight draws, Chennaiyin will fancy their chances of a win. Previous matches between Chennaiyin and Bengaluru

have always been heated affairs with the emotions between the two sets of fans usually adding to the rivalry. Laszlo may have just started his stint at Chennaiyin but the significance of the fixture is not lost on him. He will look to his defence to provide the platform for his attackers to grab the three points on offer. With just one goal conceded in their two matches, the Chennaiyin defence has made their best-ever start to the ISL. The likes of Eli Sabia and Enes Sipovic have looked regal at the back. There are problems aplenty for Bengaluru coach Carles Cuadrat. His team is struggling to find the attacking impetus that they've never been short of in the previous seasons. Bengaluru have attempted just 12 shots in their two games and got only three of them on target, the least by any team in the league so far in both respects. His front-three of Sunil Chhetri, Cleiton Silva, and Kristian Opseth have failed to fire so far. (IANS)

Match Result

ATK Mohun Bagan beat Odisha FC 1-0

NZ 234/2 at close on Day 1 against WI

Hamilton: Skipper Kane Williamson and opener Tom Latham on Thursday scored brilliant half centuries as New Zealand dominated the proceedings on the opening day of the first Test against West Indies being played at the Seddon Park. At the end of the day's play, the Black Caps were nicely placed 243/2 with Williamson and Ross Taylor batting at the crease on 97 and 31 respectively. Earlier, West Indies skipper Jason Holder won the toss and elected to field on a pitch which seemed to have a lot of assistance for the pacers. His decision did prove right as Shannon Gabriel drew first blood, sending Will Young back to the dressing room after the debutant scored five runs from 11 balls. Williamson who came in next, then steadied the ship and along with Latham made sure the hosts didn't lose any more wickets in the next one session. The duo stitched a 154-run partnership during which the two batsmen kept the scoreboard ticking at a nice pace. West Indies bowlers, however, came back strongly in the final session and showed a lot more consistency in their lengths bowling full, at the stumps, and asking pertinent questions. Latham fell to one such good ball bowled by Kemar Roach as he got cleaned up through the gate while trying to play booming drive away from his body after scoring 86 runs. Taylor, who came in next, made sure the visitors didn't make any further inroads as along with the skipper, he added 75 runs to the scoreboard to take the team's score to 243/2 at Stumps. Williamson is just three short of what would be his 22nd Test hundred. Brief Scores: New Zealand 243/2 after 78 overs (Kane Williamson 97*, Tom Latham 86; Kemar Roach 1/53).

Ronaldo scores 750th career goal as Juve beat Dynamo Kyiv

TURIN

STAR striker Cristiano Ronaldo scored his 750th career goal during Juventus' 3-0 win over Dynamo Kyiv in the Champions League game.

Federico Chiesa opened the scoring in the first half, before goals from Ronaldo and Morata put the result beyond a doubt at the Allianz Stadium on Wednesday evening.

"750 goals, 750 happy moments, 750 smiles on the faces of our fans. Thanks to all the players and coaches who have helped me reach this incredible number, thanks to all my loyal opponents who have made me work harder and harder every day," Ronaldo wrote in an Instagram post as he thanked coaches and fans.

Next stop: 800," he added.

The 35-year-old has so far scored 450 goals for Real Madrid, 118 for Manchester United, 102 for Portugal, 75 for Juventus and five for

Sporting. Wednesday's game was also the first time that a female referee -- Stephanie Frappart -- took charge of a Champions League match.

Ronaldo, along with Lionel Messi, Mohammad Salah and Robert Lewandowski, is among the candidates shortlisted for this year's Best FIFA Men's Player Award.

Thiago Alcantara, Kevin De Bruyne, Sadio Mane, Kylian Mbappe, Neymar, Sergio Ramos and Virgil van Dijk are the other nominees for the men's award which was won by Messi last year. The award ceremony, which was earlier scheduled to take place in September but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, will be held virtually on December 17. (IANS)



Juventus' Alvaro Morata (center) celebrates with teammates Federico Chiesa and Cristiano Ronaldo after a goal during a Champions League, group G soccer match against Dinamo Kiev at the Allianz Stadium in Turin, Italy late on Wednesday

Frappart first woman to referee in men's Champions League

TURIN

STEPHANIE Frappart has become the first female to officiate a men's match in UEFA Champions League. Frappart achieved the feat after she officiated in the Juventus-Dynamo Kyiv clash on Wednesday night at the Allianz Stadium.

"On Wednesday night, Stephanie Frappart became the first woman to referee a men's UCL match, when she took charge of Juventus vs Dynamo Kyiv. Congratulations, Stephanie!" UEFA said in a tweet from its official handle.

"You just love to see it. Stephanie Frappart becomes the first woman to referee a men's Champions League match. Way to blaze a trail, Stephanie," FIFA Women's World Cup tweeted.

Earlier in 2019, the 36-year-old had become the first woman to referee a major men's European match when she took charge of the UEFA Super Cup final between Liverpool and Chelsea.

Frappart had also officiated the 2019 Women's FIFA World Cup final between the United States and the Netherlands and became the first female referee to take charge of a French Ligue 1 match when Amiens played Strasbourg in April last year. (IANS)

