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

WINDOWS

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I've checked. Only lying for marriage is punishable, not lying for votes!

NEET postponed to Sept 12 from Aug 1

NEW DELHI: Medical entrance exam NEET, which was scheduled for August 1, will now be conducted on September 12, Union **Education Minister Dharmendra** Pradhan announced Monday. "The NEET-UG 2021, will be held on 12th September across the country following COVID-19 protocols. The application process will begin from 5 pm tomorrow through the NTA website," Pradhan said in a series of tweets. "To ensure adherence to COVID-19 protocols, face mask will be provided to all candidates at the centre. Staggered time slots during entry and exit, contactless registration, proper sanitisation, seating with social distancing etc. will also be ensured," he said.

9 arrested for illegal sale of meat in UP

MATHURA: Nine persons were caught red-handed while illegally selling meat in a dilapidated house near a mosque here, police said on Sunday Acting on a tip off, arrests were made from the house near Madina Masjid in Bhuteshwar area and 30 kg of meat was recovered, SP Martand Prakash Singh said. One axe, two gandasas (large blades used at slaughterhouse), two tarazus (balance machines) and weights were also seized, he said. The accused were arrested un-Sections of UP Govad Nivaran Adhiniyam.

Nepal SC orders appointment of **Deuba as PM**

KATHMANDU: In a landmark verdict, Nepal's Supreme Court on Monday directed President Bidya Devi Bhandari to appoint Nepali Congress chief Sher Bahadur Deuba as prime minister by Tuesday and reinstated the House of Representatives for a second time in five months. A five-member Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court led by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana issued the verdict stating that President Bhandari's decision to dissolve the lower house upon a recommendation of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli was an unconstitutional act, delivering a major blow to the veteran Communist leader who was preparing for snap polls.

> The bench issued a mandamus to appoint Deuba as the Prime Minister by Tuesday.

CARS, BUILDINGS SWEPT AWAY IN HP FLASH FLOODS

DHARAMSHALA

FLASH flood triggered by heavy rains swept away buildings and cars at tourist spots as bad weather also led to the closure of the airport here. The district administration also instructed tourists to postpone their visit to Dharamsala in view of the heavy rains. A drain near Bhagsu Nag in upper Dharamsala adjoining Mecleodganj changed its course owing to heavy rains, sweeping away four cars and several bikes, video clips showed. A government school building at Bhagsunag was also damaged and adjacent hotels

there were inundated, it showed. "Due to inclement weather and heavy rains, all incoming flights to Dharamshala airport at Gaggal have been cancelled," said airport's traffic in-charge Gaurav Kumar. Owing to flash flood at Manjhi Khad area adjoining Dharamsala, two buildings were swept away while several others were reported to be damaged, the video clips.

The flash floods also damaged a bridge on the Mandi-Pathankot highway after which traffic was stopped on both sides, leading to a traffic jam. I

In a tweet, Prime Minister Narendra Modi,"The situation in Himachal Pradesh



due to heavy rains is being closely monitored. Authorities are working with the State Government. All possible support is being extended. I pray for the safety of those in affected areas." Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Monday to take stock of the situation arising due to the floods in several districts of the state and assured him all possible help from the Centre.

Thakur also expressed concern over the losses due to heavy rain and directed the administrations of various districts to ensure speedy relief and rescue operation in

the affected areas. He also urged the local people and tourists to refrain from going near the river banks to avoid any untoward incident.

Deputy Commissioner Dr Nipun Jindal said, "All the tourists visiting Dharamsala have been instructed to postpone their tour so that they do not face any kind of inconvenience." He said the tourists who have already arrived in Dharamsala and its surrounding places have also been advised to stay where they are as roads etc. have also been damaged due to heavy rains, which may cause problems in their

Potential super spreaders for 3rd wave Immediately stop pilgrimage, tourist travel, says IMA

New Delhi

THE IMA expressed concern on Monday over governments and people being complacent and engaging in mass gatherings without following COVID-19 protocols, saying these events are potential super spreaders for a third wave of the pandemic. Stressing that tourist bonanza, pil-

grimage travel, religious fervour are needed, but can wait for a few more months, the Indian Medical Association (IMA), in a statement, said global evidence and the history of any pandemic suggest that "the third wave is inevitable and imminent". "However, it is painful to note that in this crucial time, when everyone needs to work for the mitigation of the third wave, in many parts of the country, both governments and the public are complacent and engaged in mass gatherings without following Covid protocols.

Tourist bonanza, pilgrimage travel, religious fervour, all are needed, but can wait for a few more months. "Opening up these rituals

and enabling people without vaccination to go scot-free in these mass gatherings are potential super spreaders for the Covid third wave," the IMA said. The statement by the doctors' comes on a day when the annual Rath Yatra began in Puri and amid talks of allowing the "Kanwar Yatra" in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarak-The IMA appealed to all the states

to control mass gatherings. Based on the experience of the last one-anda-half years of the war with the virus and the emerging evidence, it is obvious that by making the universal vaccination drive reach the maximum number of people and strictly following Covid-appropriate behaviour, people can face the third wave with confidence and mitigate its impact, the doctors' body said.

"The consequences of treating a patient with Covid in a hospital and its impacts on the economy will be much better than the economic loss we suffer by avoiding such mass gatherings. It is the duty and responsibility of everyone at this moment to strictly enforce Covid-appropriate behaviour for minimum three more months and ensure that everyone near our houses is getting vaccinated," the statement said.

Water issue: Vij hits out at AAP

CHANDIGARH: Haryana Minister Anil Vij on Monday dismissed as baseless the Delhi government's charge that his state was withholding the national capital's share of 120 million gallons of water a day and alleged that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had "done a Ph.D in speaking lies".

Delhi Jal Board (DJB) vice chairman Raghav Chadha on Sunday had said that the water utility has moved the Supreme Court, seeking directions to Haryana to release the capital's legitimate share of water. He claimed that Haryana has been withholding 120 million gallons of water a day (MGD) meant for Delhi and that the raw water being discharged into the Yamuna river by the neighbouring state is at an "all-time low"

When asked about the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government's claims, Haryana Home Minister Vii told reporters that "Kejriwal (the Delhi chief minister) has done a Ph.D in speaking lies". "First, they the (AAP government) presented false figures during Covid second wave to procure oxygen, much above the requirement, and now Kejriwal is doing the same on the water issue to hide his own fail-

They are levelling baseless allegations," he said. Haryana is continuously providing 1,049 cusecs of water at Munak through its canal system to Delhi. Vii said and accused the AAP dispensation of making baseless allegations against Haryana "by misleading the people of Delhi to cover up their own mismanagement".



A protester being hit by police water cannon during a protest by BJP over water crisis outside Delhi Jal Board Chairman Satyendar Jain's residence in New Delhi on Monday

Court grants bail to two men accused of damaging Red Fort

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday granted bail to two men arrested in a case filed by the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) alleging their complicity in damaging of her-

itage Red Fort during the Republic Day violence this year. Accused Boota

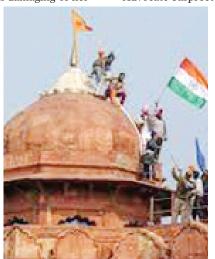
Singh and Gurjot Singh were arrested on July 8. The arrest was made on the day Boota was granted bail in another matter related to the violence. Gurjot was admitted on bail in the same matter a day after his arrest in the ASI case. While granting re-

lief, Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Gajender Singh Nagar said

that they have been made accused in both cases on the basis of the same act and no specific role is attributed to them. The judge granted bail to them on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 50,000 with one local surety of like amount. He also imposed

various other conditions on them. Boota and Gurjot have been directed to join the investigation as and when called, not threaten the witnesses or tamper with the evidence.

Advocate Jaspreet S Rai, representing the two accused,



said argued that even though they were present at the Red Fort, no overt act was committed by them. Meanwhile, Public Prosecutor Rajiv Kamboj asserted that if they are released on bail, they might run away from justice, destroy the evidence as they have done in the past by destroying their clothes and phones.

For Gurjot, the

police said that he was seen in at least three photographs at the spot of hoisting of flag at the Red Fort with the riotous mob. This case was registered on the complaint of Gunjan Shrivastava of the Archaeological Survey of India

SC defers hearing on plea against sedition law

New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Monday deferred the hearing on a petition challenging the constitutional validity of section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) 1860, which penalises the crime of 'sedition', to July 27.

A bench of the top court, headed by Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, adjourned the matter after it was informed that Attorney General (AG) KK Venugopal and Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta will need more time to file replies in the issue.

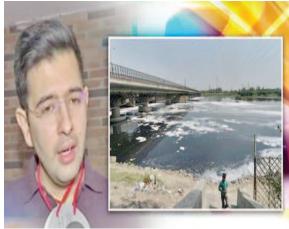
During the last hearing in the matter on May 1, the apex court had issued notice to the Union of India (UOI) and sought its detailed response by July 12 to take a decision on examining the constitutional validity of section 124-A of the IPC

Water levels in Yamuna at lowest point in 56 yrs: Chadha New Delhi

DELHI Jal Board (DJB) Vice-Chairman Raghav Chadha on Monday said the water levels of the Yamuna river at the Wazirabad barrage have hit the lowest point in 56 years as Harvana has withheld Delhi's legitimate share of water.

Chadha, who reviewed the situation at the Wazirabad pond, said Haryana has not been releasing at least 120 MGD (million gallons per day) water that belongs to Delhi and this has led to a water crisis in the national capital. "The water treatment plants in Delhi are operating at a reduced capacity because of a less discharge of raw water from Haryana.

"With Haryana withholding Delhi's share of water, the Yamuna has dried up...so much that it can be used as a cricket or a hockey field. The water levels at the Wazirabad barrage have not been so low since 1965," Chadha said.



"Delhi is a landlocked city and relies on its neighbouring states for water supply.

Uttar Pradesh supplies to us a share of the Ganga water, Harvana of the Yamuna water, we get some from Punjab through (the) Bhakra Nangal (dam).

The biggest share of this is supposed to be supplied by Haryana," he added. Even if the water level in the Yamuna goes down by a foot, it causes

havoc in the capital, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader said, adding that it has gone down by 7.5 feet as Haryana has withheld Delhi's share of water and the BJP-led Haryana government must return to Delhi its rightful share of 120 MGD water. "With folded hands, I plead with the Haryana government, please give the citizens of Delhi their rightful share

Pvt schools allowed to charge annual fees; AAP govt to file reply in HC

THE Delhi High Court Monday asked the Delhi government and other parties to file written submissions in pleas challenging a single judge order allowing private unaided schools to collect annual and development charges from students for the period after the lockdown ended in the national capital last

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh listed the matter for July 14 after all the advocates said it be given final hearing on Wednesday. "Parties may file their written submissions before the next date of hearing. List on July 14," the bench said. The high court had on June 7 issues notices

and sought responses of the Action Committee Unaided Recognised Private Schools, which represents over 450 schools, on the appeals of AAP government, students and an NGO challenging the single judge's May 31 order. The division bench, however, had refused to stay the single judge's order.

It had earlier recorded the statement made by senior advocate Shyam Divan and lawyer Kamal Gupta, representing the action committee that till the next date of hearing, they will continue to follow the existing principles in relation to collection of fees from students. The Delhi government and the students and NGO 'Justice for All' have contended that the single judge's decision was based on incorrect facts and law. The



May 31 verdict had quashed two office orders of April and August last year issued by the Directorate of Education (DoE) of the Delhi government forbidding and postponing collection of annual charges and development fees, saying they were "illegal" and "ultra vires" the powers of DoE stipulated under the Delhi School Education (DSE) Act and the Rules. Senior advocate Vikas Singh and Delhi government standing counsel Santosh Kumar Tripathi, had argued that the single judge gravely erred in passing the directions on the basis of a Supreme Court order relating to collection of school fees. Singh had said the single judge overlooked the fact the Supreme Court judgment pertained to the State of Rajasthan and imposition

schools had physically reopened there, which is not the case in Delhi. The counsel for the action committee

had said the single judge had rightly ruled that there was no allegation of schools indulging in profiteering in this case and in the absence of such allegation, there could be no interference by the Delhi government. Advocates Khagesh Jha and Shikha Sharma Bagga, representing NGO Justice for All and various parents, had said the private schools were asking for paying charges for something which is not being provided to the students and the schools have started harassing the parents by asking to deposit money. The single judge, in the May 31 order had said the Delhi government has no power to indefinitely postpone collection of annual charges and development fees by private unaided schools as it would unreasonably restrict their functioning. The Delhi government has contended that its orders of April and August last year were issued in larger public interest as due to the COVID-19 lockdown people were in financial crisis. The single judge verdict, passed on the plea by Action Committee Unaided Recognised Private Schools, said that schools shall collect annual fees with a deduction of 15 per cent as allowed by the apex court in the Indian School case. It also said the amount payable by the students have to be paid in six monthly installments from June 10.

MADHURI DIXIT NENE@MADHURIDIXIT

Reminiscing some great and happy memories from the sets of Devdas. Even 19 years later it all feels so fresh! Thank you Sanjay for sharing these. Will Cherish these forever! Here's our ode to #DilipKumar, just like #Devdas, you will continue to live on...forever! #19YearsOfDevdas



Dentist by profession, photographer by passion

ASKARI JAFFER

amrata Motihar Rupani, a dentist by profession, tried photography and transformed into a professional photographer with her hard work and passion. She started a photo services company "Capture Life" in Hyderabad and conducting photography workshops and counts the wedding shoot of badminton star Saina Nehwal, among her memorable works.

"I am a qualified dentist and an accomplished commercial photo-grapher for the past 16 years. Born & raised in Delhi, I was inclined towards medicine, and graduated with Bachelors in Dental Surgery from Christian Dental College, Ludhiana after which I furthered my education by doing Fellowship in pediatric dentistry and a Fellowship in Aesthetic Dentistry from Germany. Married in a business family and I have two daughters and live in Hyderabad. I'm also a trained Kathak dancer, voracious reader, and love listening to music," says Namrata.

Namrata says that she had chosen photography as her free time hobby but later, it turned out to be a full time profession. "My life in Delhi consisted of studying in one of the best schools (Mater Dei School), and also being inspired by the various role models at home in my family, and my various teachers at school. After this I went onto do my graduation in Dental Surgery. I returned to do my residency from Ganga Ram Hospital, Delhi and also worked as a private practitioner. I have been practicing since 2002 in Hyderabad, initially as an associate in a dental hospital and opened my own clinic in 2007 thereafter,"

"I ventured into photography when I bought a camera to pursue my passion in available time. My interest and proficiency grew and I became an avid photographer. I used to go out to shoot in my free time. Over years, I could convert my passion for photography into a fullfledged commercial photography business doing weddings, events, commercial projects and exhibiting my work. I conduct incredibly popular workshops to teach photography to enthusiasts. I also have a Fine Art Print business to make fine art prints and provide design and print solutions. I run all my businesses under the brand "Capture Life"," Namrata added.

Namrata claims that her



The joy and happiness on the faces of my clients as they view their photographs is my biggest inspiration -Namrata Motihar Rupani

health issues made her to focus on photography. "Photography was something that happened to me. I bought myself a camera at a time when I was taking a break from the clinic due to some health issues. And there was no plan in place. Things just kept unfolding organically one after the other."

About her inspiration, Namrata says, "It has been an unforgettable journey so far. It has been a privilege. Satisfaction, and joy to transform lives of patients positively by restoring and offering guidance towards their oral health. Professional photography has been challenging but I have enjoyed the process. The inspiration towards creativity and the execution of a vision are my driving forces in this venture. Also, the joy and happiness on the faces of my clients as they view their

photographs is no less inspiring. Come to think of it, Life itself to me is inspiring. I just have to look around me.'

the 'Metro Rail Project' for 'L&T'. I got to view the city from a whole new perspective and there weren't even drones then. I actually climbed high buildings in Nampally or the pillars at a metro construction site to see Hyderabad in such a different light," says Namrata. While asked about the chal-

lenges faced, Namrata said, "Dentistry just like any other medical profession throws up changes and innovations which are challenging. Challenges present themselves in the form of financial issues, finding new clients, and recently the Covid-19 pandemic. In photography, challenges centre around client satisfaction, constantly raise the creativity bar, incidents related to things going wrong at the critical moment, and of course competition. Challenges have also been trying to balance two very diverse fields, to manage both and ensure that I am giving the required time and attention to each of them. Each day is a new day, and I wake up and tackle it with the intent to try and succeed."

Namrata says that her family support is unimaginable in her journey. "In the Indian family context, a woman with professions of a dentist and photographer needs family support and encouragement. Fortunately. I have been blessed with both. At no time has odd hours, outside city locations and other

"Documenting the making of

cised or for that matter made me uncomfortable in any way. I have everybody's love and support at home.' Namrata speaks about her company "Capture Life". She says, "It is a company I started which has three verticals under it. The dental and oral health care clinic, photography business and as well as fine art printing. We take care of all the needs of the clients under those verticals. I also conduct Photography workshops and have over 700 students now in the last 6 years.'

Future endeavors

There is a plan to open a couple of branches of my clinic, and ensure that we are present in multiple locations to address the dental needs of as many people as possible.

working issues ever been criti-

Through my photography and fine art printing, I wish to capture and document memories and moments of people's lives, for them to go back to - and also immortalise those memories by printing them in the highest

How to take care of your lips?

uman lips are a tactile, and delicate sensory organ. Lips don't have sebaceous glands, which mean that unlike the other areas of your skin that don't produce their own protective oil. Lips also get thinner as you get older the body produces less collagen, causing them to lose their plumpness.

Jasdeep Singh Chadha, Founder and CEO, Seer Secrets says, "It is important to take care of your lips and it's high time when you have cracked lips and cold sores are concerned. Post all the digging; we're pretty convinced that exfoliating and masking your pout is your one-way ticket to elegant, pillowy lips. It's possible."

Thus, without further ado, he listed some simple lip care tips that promise to reveal perfectly primed lips.

Drink plenty of water - For dry

Dry lips are an indication of dehydration. Dry, cold air and central heating can wreak havoc on your body's hydration levels, so keep your skin and your lips moist by sipping plenty of water throughout the day.

Lip saviour – Natural and herbal product

Natural fruits and herbs work extremely well on dry lips. Natural herbal lip care products with ingredients such as watermelon, coconut, and turmeric. These fruits and herbs have enough water to keep your lip hydrated.

Lip scrub - For tanned and pigmented lips

Treat pigmented or tanned lips to a natural scrub. To give UV rays protection to your lips. Choose rambutan, dates, and lip

NEWS ROUNDUP **Bhumi Pednekar's** quick makeover

ctress Bhumi Pednekar treated her fans with a A treated her tans with a quick makeover on social media. Bhumi posted a video on Instagram. The clip see the actress applying foundation, contouring, and doing her lips and hair. "Let's start the week with some fun on #Reels #Bbeauty #monday," Bhumi wrote as caption. On the professional front, the actress recently announced she would star alongside Akshay Kumar in the upcoming film, "Raksha Bandhan". The film is directed by Aanand L. Rai. She also has "Badhaai Do" with Rajkummar Rao and "Mr Lele" with Vicky Kaushal lined up.



scrub. It will not only brighten your lips but also make yours pout free from flake, roughness, and parches.

Lip mask- To replenishing your

Apply coconut or lemon balm and mask on your lips for a kissable pout without a slick of a scented moisturising lip like butter, so keep your lips nourished all day long.

Lip plumper- For chapped lips To avoid chapped lips and to

penetrate nourishment and get it locked into the lips. Apply flavoured natural ingredient products containing raw mango, paprika, and mint lip plumper. These ingredients help in reducing happiness by

softly sloughing away dead skin cells to reveal fresh and revived

Blush it up - Give your lips a natural boost

To give your lips a perfect blush of nature and nourishment. Sometimes it becomes difficult to carry makeup palettes, packs of brushes, and lipsticks with you. It works multi-purposely. Blush It Up tint that can be a great replacement for your makeup. Moisturise your lips and cheeks with an oil-free look. It works as a natural blush on your skin. Lip and cheek tint are multi-tasking. It is easy to apply and handy. You can use this blush it up Tint anytime you leave for





CROSSWORD

Down

- 10 Trivial lie (3)

Across

Asia's longest river (7)

Effeminate boy (5)

Summons (7)

Unabridged (5)

- 12 Israel's Tel ____ (4)
- 15 Greek god of love (4) 16 Seinfeld regular (6)
- 17 Monarch (4)
- 19 Apprehension (4)
- 21 Movie genre (6)
- 22 Clenched hand (4)
- 23 US college (4)
- 25 By way of (3)
- 28 Spooky (5)
- 29 Large freshwater fish (7) 30 Capital of Uganda (7)

31 Jargon (5)

- 1 Frolic (7)
- 2 Branch of Islam (5)
- 3 Himalayan legend (4)
- Flesh of a cow (4)
- Paint poorly (4)
- Cause something to bend inwards (7)
- 7 Ancient invaders (5)
- 11 Disregard (6)

13 RSVP option (3)

- 14 Buddhist enlightenment
- 18 Quack remedy (7) 19 Pan-broil (3)
- 20 Smelling strongly of (7)
- 22 Anomaly (5)
- 24 Brightly coloured lizard (5) 25 Star of Lyra (4)
- 26 Indian city (4)
- 27 Australian trees (4)

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French Fries Day

Whether you call them 'French Fries', 'Chips', Finger Chips, or French-Fried Potatoes, this delicious treat is loved around the world, and French Fries day celebrates them.

Not to be confused with the American 'Chips', which are thinly sliced pieces of potato fried until crisp, French Fries are the delicious result of 'batons' of potato cut to various thicknesses and then

fried in oil. The outside of this staple companion food to hamburgers and other grease-ball favorites generally have a golden texture, varying from soft to crispy, and most often served with little more than a dusting of salt. French Fries are one of many foods whose



ing, as the origins of this fat fried food seem to be in Belgium. The story of their creation can be found in a family manuscript dated 1781, which reveals that potatoes were originally cut into the shape of fish and served in lieu of the fish normally caught in a series of small villages in Belgium. It seems the river had frozen over and the fish they normally caught and fried were unable to be caught.

Why they're called French is often attributed to troops coming over during World War I who got their hands on Belgian Fries. The official language of the Belgian army at that time was French, and as a result the men thought they were in France rather than Belgium. Interestingly, in that region of the world, they are still called "Flemish Fries" to further complicate matters. Now, these treats are loved the world round, even becoming the 'national snack' of the Netherlands.

Khattar launches 'Dial 112' for emergency response



The existing emergency numbers like 100 (police), 101 (fire), and 108 (ambulance) will be integrated into the unified toll free number 112:

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar

CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Monday launched the state's centralised emergency response and support system (CSERC) 'Dial 112'.

The CSERC's centralised telephone number will be for emergency complaints concerning police, fire, health, road accidents and any other emergencies, Khattar said in Panchkula before launching the service.

Home and Health Minister Anil Vij, state Assembly Speaker Gian Chand Gupta and Director General of Police (DGP) Manoj Yadava were among those present on the occasion. Khattar and Vij flagged

cles equipped with mobile data terminals from Panchkula during the occassion. The chief minister also inaugurated the newly-built state-of-the-art State Emergency Response Centre (SERC) at Panchkula, which is the nervecentre of the state's 'Dial 112' proj-

With the introduction of this

new response system, the existing emergency numbers like 100 (police), 101 (fire), and 108 (ambulance) will be integrated into the unified toll free number 112, Khattar said. Executed with a budget of more than Rs 300 crore, the system is designed in such a way that it promises minimum response time to citizens in distress with an average of 15 to 20 minutes all over Haryana, said Vij. The system is based on hi-tech geospatial

technology providing immediate response to the distress calls received from across the state, justifying the initiative's tagline "Just a call away", said Vij. The home minister said that two vehicles per police station will be made available for speedy response to emergencies. Vij said that four language experts -- Hindi, English, Punjabi and Haryanvi -- will be appointed in call centres to deal with complaints. After receiving calls, these language expert teams will forward the message to the response team, which will ensure to reach the complainant within 15 to 20

minutes, he said. The state government is committed to providing prompt emergency support to its citizens and hence envisaged developing a robust system, said Khattar. This state-of-the-art system would further improve the overall security scenario and would also help in prevention of crime across the state, he said. 'Dial 112' project will bring transparency and ensure accountability among the various emergency service providers, which will lead to faster emergency services delivery to the residents of Haryana, Vij said.

Chief Secretary Vijai Vardhan, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Rajiv Arora, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) IT AS Chawla and senior officers of the police department were also present on this occasion. The system shall be operated by nearly 5,000 trained personnel, while 630 brand new SUVs are equipped with 23 in-fleet items, including first-aid-boxes, stretcher, crime extrication kit, to take required action on the spot.

Maya questions timing of arrests by UP ATS

AFTER Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, BSP supremo Mayawati also raised questions on Monday on the Uttar Pradesh police's claim of arresting two Al Qaeda-linked terrorists in the state capital, saying such an action ahead of assembly polls leads to doubts in the minds of

"If the UP police's claims of busting a terrorist conspiracy in Lucknow and the arrest of two people having links with Al Qaeda are right, then it is a very serious matter and appropriate action should be taken, but no politics should be done in its garb, as such an apprehension has been expressed," she tweeted in Hindi.

The former chief minister raised the issue of the timing of the arrests. "This type of action only when the UP Assembly elections are approaching creates doubts in the minds of the people. If there is any truth behind



this action, then why were the police oblivious (to such activities) for so long? "This is the question being asked by the people. Therefore, the government should not take any action which increases unrest among the people," she said in another tweet

The Anti-Terrorist Squad of the UP Police on Sunday said it had arrested two terrorists belonging to Al-Qaeda supported 'Ansar Ghazwatul Hind' from the outskirts of Lucknow. Explosive material was also recovered from

PUNJAB GOVT DOCTORS GO ON 3-DAY STRIKE

Health services, including OPD and elective surgeries, remains suspended

 $C \\ HANDIGARH$

MEDICAL services were affected in Punjab as government doctors went on a three-day strike from Monday to protest against alleged silence of the state government over their issue of nonpracticing allowance (NPA).

Health services, including outpatient department (OPD) services and elective surgeries, resuspended government hospitals, said Punjab Civil Medical Services Association president Dr Gagandeep

However, emergency services, post-mortem and Covid-related services continued, protesting doctors said. Doctors working in government hospitals have been protesting against the recommendation of the Punjab's sixth pay commission de-linking non-

practicing allowance from the basic pay. They are also agitating the pay commission's recommendation of reduction in the NPA from 25 per cent to 20 per

The strike call was given by the Joint Punjab Government Doctors Coordination Committee (JGDCC), which has members from the Punjab Civil Medical Services Association and is supported by the Punjab State Veterinary Officers Association, Rural Medical Officers Association, Punjab Dental Medical Officers Association and Punjab Ayurveda Officers Association.

The government doctors in the state had already held strikes three times over the NPA issue. They had threatened to go on an indefinite strike from July 19 if their issues were not resolved by the state government.



GM NR holds review meet

Ashutosh Gangal, General Manager Northern Railway held a performance review meeting with the departmental heads and divisional railway managers of Northern Railway through video conferencing from Baroda House, NR headquarter office in New Delhi, Amongst many issues deliberations were on Safety, status of works for improvement of speed to 160 Kmph, infrastructure enhancement and dismantling of worn out structures at stations, yard remodeling, and maintenance of tracks and OHE, train operations, punctuality and staff training schedules.

Safety is the prime focus over Railways. The GM emphasized on improving the maintenance standards of tracks and over head electric wire systems. He advised that post covid as nor-



malcy is returning infrastructure improvement projects need to be completed on time. Remodeling of stations and improvement of infrastructure and especially dismantling of old worn-out structures like FOBs to be carried out on priority. Improvement of yards and works on 160 Kmph speed enhancement are to be expedited. Punctuality of the passenger and freight trains is to be improved and asset failure issues to be tackled earnestly.

terprise of Gov-

ernment of India.

National Power

Training Institute

(NPTI) is a Na-

tional Apex body

2022 UP polls: Priyanka holds strategy meet with party leaders

PARTY VOWS TO HIT STREETS AGAINST YOGI GOVT

AICC general secretary Privanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday brainstormed with senior Congress leaders from Uttar Pradesh on the preparations for the next year's assembly polls, as the party resolved to hit the streets against the BJP government over issues such as unemployment, price rise and law and order.

With the Congress seeking to intensify organisational activities in the run up to the polls, Priyanka Gandhi held a virtual meeting with the party's advisory council to the general secretary and the working group on strategy and planning for the state.

They discussed the rising prices, the coronavirus situation, the recently held panchayat elections in the state and organisational training camps, sources said. The Congress general secretary in-charge Uttar Pradesh noted during the meeting that people are troubled by soaring inflation with prices of petrol, diesel, mustard oil, fruits and vegetables "sky high". She also pointed out that though input costs of farmers had doubled, their income had come down.



Priyanka Gandhi also flagged the violence during the panchayat polls and alleged that BJP workers indulged in stone-pelting and

The Congress leaders who participated in the meeting denounced the Yogi Adityanath dispensation, saying it had failed on all counts. It was resolved at the meeting that the Congress will take the fight against the BJP government to the streets over issues such as rising prices, unemployment and the "jungle raj" prevailing in the state, the party sources said. Congress' state unit

chief Ajay Kumar Lallu, senior Rajiv Shukla, Pramod Tiwari and Rashid Alvi, among others, participated in the meeting. The meeting comes a day after Priyanka Gandhi met Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, who the sources said is likely to play a key role in preparing the Congress organisation in Uttar Pradesh for the assembly polls with a focus on strategising and booth management. Last week, Lallu had ex-

pressed confidence that his party has the capacity to fight the elections without aligning with either the SP or the BSP and form the next government on its own. His remarks had come days after the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party ruled out forging any major alliances for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. In an interview with PTI, Lallu had also said the Congress would fight the assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh next year under Priyanka Gandhi's "dekh-rekh (supervision)", and that under her leadership, the party would make a comeback in the state after over three decades



SUHELDEV Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) chief Om Prakash Rajbhar on Monday said that he will meet Aam Aadmi party leader Arvind Kejriwal this week to firm up an alliance for the Uttar Pradesh assembly polls. Smaller parties, he said, will play a major role in forming the next government in the state after the 2022 assembly polls "I will meet Kejriwal on July 17 in presence of Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh.

During the meeting talks will be held to include the AAP in the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha as an ally," Rajbhar told PTI. The Morcha is a front of smaller parties would contest 100 seats in the next Uttar Pradesh assembly polls in alliance with the Morcha. Rajbhar said the Morcha has held initial level talks with the SP for an alliance.

The chief of Jan Adhikar Party, which is an ally of the Morcha, met SP National President Akhilesh Yadav, he added. When asked about the result of the meeting, Rajbhar said they held preliminary level talks. Asked whether Yadav would be ready for an alliance with AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, Rajbhar said there is no enemy



Goyal given additional charge Schedule 'A' En-

MINISTRY Power, Government of India has given additional charge of the post of Director (Finance), National Power Training Institute (NPTI) to Shri R.P. Goyal, Director (Finance), NHPC Limited, India's premier hydropower company and a

LUCKNOW

AFTER the Uttar Pradesh Anti-

Terrorism Squad (ATS) busted a

terror module linked to Al-

Qaeda in Lucknow on Sunday,

sources said on Monday the

main-accused came in contact with the handler a year-and-a-

half ago, and had been asked to

assemble bombs with commonly

The ATS had nabbed two ter-

rorists from the Kakori area of

the city on Sunday, and a team of the squad had launched a search

operation in the area. The two

suspects were taken in custody

on Sunday for interrogation.

available ingredients.



for Training and Human sources Development in Power Sector with its

Corporate Office at Faridabad.

The UP ATS on Monday also got remand of the two accused;

and a 14-day remand period will

start from Tuesday.

Sources have revealed that the main accused is well-educated; and holds a diploma. He was earlier working as a lab technician and later ran a battery shop.

An improvised explosive device has also been found at the hideout being search, showing the use of potassium nitrate and phosphorus in the terror operations. During the preliminary questioning, the accused said that he had informed his handler, that obtaining phosphorus was difficult. He had thus been asked to source the compound from match sticks, the accused said. He has also revealed the names of more people who were part of

the same ring, and police is cur-

rently on their lookout. The ATS had received information that an Al-Qaeda terrorist based near Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Umar Halmandi, was trying to recruit Indian youths for the terror outfit. Halmandi had identified a few marginalised people in Lucknow to radicalise and recruit them into the AQIS organisation. This module was being readied under

Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind (AGH),

an offshoot of Al Qaeda, which

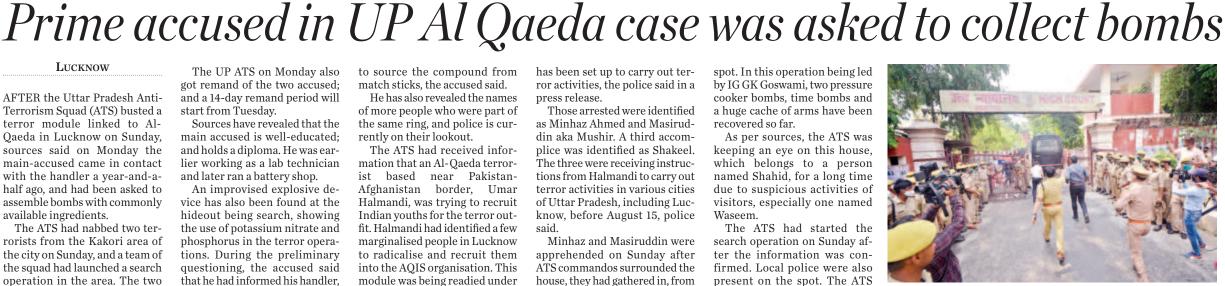
has been set up to carry out terror activities, the police said in a press release.

Those arrested were identified as Minhaz Ahmed and Masiruddin aka Mushir. A third accomplice was identified as Shakeel. The three were receiving instructions from Halmandi to carry out terror activities in various cities of Uttar Pradesh, including Lucknow, before August 15, police

Minhaz and Masiruddin were apprehended on Sunday after ATS commandos surrounded the house, they had gathered in, from all sides. The bomb disposal squad was also called in to the spot. In this operation being led by IG GK Goswami, two pressure cooker bombs, time bombs and a huge cache of arms have been

recovered so far. As per sources, the ATS was keeping an eye on this house, which belongs to a person named Shahid, for a long time due to suspicious activities of visitors, especially one named Waseem.

The ATS had started the search operation on Sunday after the information was confirmed. Local police were also present on the spot. The ATS sealed the Kakori area and evacuated the nearby houses.



Suspected Al-Qaeda terrorists being produced in court by police personnel, in Lucknow on Monday

Make industrial safety a top priority

ALARMED over the dwindling safety forms in the country, several trade union leaders recently called for urgent action by the Government of India to improve occupational health and safety. In as many as 116 industrial accidents in chemical and mining industries across the country, around 230 workers lost lives between May 2020 and June 2021.

In fact, since the resumption of industrial activities after the Covid-19 lockdown measures in May 2020, India witnessed a series of industrial accidents. From May to December 2020, around 64 accidents were reported wherein 118 workers were killed and several hundreds were injured. From January to June 2021 over 117 workers were killed and about 142 workers were injured in about 52 industrial accidents that happened in mining and chemical industries. These statistics are merely indicative of the grave situation as they are based on compilation of mainstream media reports and accidents reported by trade union affiliates. The real number may be much higher.

A large number of workers also died due to Covid

19, some of them contracting infection at their workplaces. So far in about 30 industrial establishments, 1,857 workers lost their lives to Covid in the manufacturing sector, both public and private. While untrained and contract workers add to the woes, poor safety inspection system, weak implementation of safety protocol and safety awareness, inadequate risk assessment and response; negligence; breakdown of the emergency response procedures have all exacerbated the impact

Industrial accidents in India are a serious concern; however, they are highly under-reported, and their coverage is also incomplete. All aspects of safety, including materials, tools, equipment, work environment, job and task procedures, and all stakeholders (government, employers and workers) must create a foolproof system of multiple layers of prevention. But, this is not the case. One would expect existing laws framed over a period of 100 years will enable plant safety and bring reassurance among workers. However, we are still in a worrisome situation concerning human and animal life, environmental repercussions, and property damage. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) website has published that 130 significant industrial accidents took place recently in India, claiming 259 lives and debilitating 560 people around the plant area (it does not specify any timeline, of course).

The Centre should form an expert commission to analyse the industrial accidents and identify the root causes and errors committed so as to protect the safety of workers and immediately address the safety crisis. The recently passed Occupational Health, Safety & Working Conditions Code, 2019 falls short of addressing trade unions' concerns. It has limited and confined coverage and leaves out a vast section of working people, including precarious workers. They must work with unions to devise policies and strengthen the existing laws/directives to ensure health and safety of the workers. But, concerned as it is with privatisation and changing labour laws, the government may care little for the lives of the workers.

Justice minus humanity is injustice



come to prove that we, the citizens, jailers, police, judges (from magistrates to top) and political rulers, MPs and doctors, are human beings. An average man cannot understand the due process or nuances

of justice system. But he can understand that judicial courts and prison officers have refused to allow the straw-sipper for Father Stan Swamy, who cannot hold a glass of water because of shaking of hand due to Parkinson's disease. Whether any anti-terror law empowered the authorities to deny this human health essential need? Or we lost all values of humanity at every level including judiciary?

A professor of different faculty asked a fundamental question why on the same facts and law a court says yes and the other says no. As a student of Constitutional law, I think this fundamental doubt is more powerful than guaranteed fundamental rights and unenforceable fundamental duties in our Constitution. Any length of explanation cannot clear this doubt. Due process suffers if it is in the hands of undue personalities.

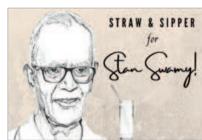
The cruelty

The cruelty of the prison officials and courts is reflected when they deferred or questioned or delayed the plea for a strawsipper for Swamy. Courts continuously rejected his bail applications including some on medical grounds. The courts were either silent or ignored the plea for sipper. The National Investigating Agency opposed the plea for sipper. On what grounds we do not know. Perhaps, they also do not know. Is it because a sipper in the hands of Parkinson patient is threat to national security? When his friends and relatives sent scores of sippers, the prison authorities rejected them. That means they were also not allowed inside.

Shaking hands

On October 9, 2020 it was submitted to the Special Court in Mumbai that Swamv could not even sign the Vakalatnama, as his hands were shaking, and he could not hold the pen. Then court was kind enough to allow him to affix thumb impression. Swamy was sent to judicial custody straight away because the NIA did not seek his custodial interrogation. This means there was no need for his custody. If it is mandated that he should be available for every inquiry or prosecution could have been enough. When his lawyers asked court to release him on medical bail based on humanitarian grounds, the NIA said there is no such provision in UAPA, and the court agreed.

LETTERS



for his straw and sipper

There is no place for humanitarian grounds at all, what a wonder?

Law that did not provide for sipper

Whether history recorded any petition for a straw-sipper? On November 6, Swamy lawyer's petitioned to the Court to provide sipper and straw as he cannot even take water without it. His counsel said when he was arrested in Ranchi Jharkhand, a packed bag was taken with his belongings, that included his clothes and a steel sipper and straw to help him drink water or tea without spilling. The prayer was for return of the straw and sipper. The NIA said it had not seized any items belonging to Swamy. After NIA's contentions, the special court has rejected the request for sipper. The judge did not ask NIA to prove the genuineness of their claim that nothing was confiscated by

Disability law

National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled wrote to NHRC that, "at the time of his arrest. Father Swamy was carrying a bag with a straw and sipper, but this was seized by the NIA. The NIA refused to hand them back and jail authorities refuse to provide him these inexpensive but essential assistive items. He has trouble eating because of tremors. He is unable to take a bath, bring water or wash clothes. Father Stan also has serious hearing problem and needs hearing aid for both ears".

The right to assistive products, accessible services, barrier-free environment, and reasonable accommodations is mandated by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 (RPWD Act) and there is a legally binding provision under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that India ratified in 2006.

Muralidharan Vishwanath, General Secretary, National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled, said that it is obligatory that Stan Swamy be provided with requisite age and disability appropriate accommodations, assistive aids including straws and sippers as also human care assistance as required. We beseech you to ensure compliance of rights of prisoners with disabilities as also providing them

Perhaps time has come for Indian judges to prove that they are also human beings besides being judges! It was only after widespread national outcry over refusal to provide him with sipper that they provided him on November 29. He suffered without sipper since his arrest on October 8, 2020

with reasonable accommodations as mandated by international conventions.

Are we human?

The entire judiciary in India and of the world should have hung its head in shame for such a strict order to save sovereignty and integrity of India, the great. The court said a fresh application could be made to provide him with the items as per jail manual. The jail manuals probably never contain a sentence for sippers and straws, if no patient of Parkinson was imprisoned earlier. When fresh application was filed and that was brought on to the bench, the NIA sought 20 days' time on November 6, 2020 to file a reply, and court readily gave 20 days and adjourned to November 26, 2020, the Constitution day or law-day in India, without asking why you need 20 days to say yes or no to sipper request? Perhaps time has come for Indian judges to prove that they are also human beings besides being judges! It was only after widespread national outcry over refusal to provide him with sipper that they provided him on November 29. He suffered without sipper since his arrest on October

Prisoners' rights

Over the years, the Supreme Court has in several cases clearly held that prisoners

also have certain fundamental rights including those stated above, which in this case are being violated.

Ten opposition parties including the Congress, TMC and DMK have written to President Ram Nath Kovind, urging his intervention in the matter to hold those responsible for the death of Stan Swamy. The letter demands the release of all those detained in the Bhima Koregaon violence case. It also accused the government of non-rightfully treating a patient in custody. Speaking about the activist's condition, it said, "He was denied treatment for his various ailments including debilitating Parkinson's. Only after a nationwide campaign was conducted that even a sipper to drink liquids was made available to him

No Covid Treatment

A complaint on May 16, 2021 was filed at Maharashtra Human Rights Commission that Swamy lodged in Taloja Central Jail, Navi Mumbai, was being denied medical facility during the COVID-19 period, had not been vaccinated yet and that there was no proper medical care in the jail hospital, that the majority of jail staff had tested Covid positive especially most of the kitchen staff, and the number of under-trial prisoners had also contracted the Coronavirus, yet no RT-PCR tests were conducted there. He was vaccinated after testing positive for Corona. While NHRC. MHRC and Bombay High Court were examining the humanity issues, the Covid infection aggravated. Covid could not wait for the NIA to file chargesheet, the High Court to decide the medical bail, on next date after adjournment and took away Stan Sway who was yet to be accused. On the hearing day (Cannot say that it was las date) the court was kind enough to feel sad after noting the proven fact that he was dead.

(The author is Professor & Dean of School of Law, Mahindra University, Hyderabad, Formerly Central Information Commissioner)

Dawn of a new era

 ${
m F}^{
m LAMBOYANT}$ entrepreneur Richard Branson pipped fellow billionaire Jeff Bezos in the space tourism race by blasting off in a Virgin Galactic spaceship on Sunday. Branson's maiden journey peaked at 85 km above the earth, where the two pilots and four passengers experienced five minutes of zero gravity and saw the earth's curvature before safely gliding back home. It was also a dream come true for Indianborn aeronautical engineer Sirisha Bandla who accompanied Branson on his flight. She joins Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams in the elite list of Indian-origin women to fly into space. The historic trip heralds a new dawn.

NJ Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

Samir's success story

TNLIKE cricket, the game of tennis is a tough game and the odds are even. Samir Banerjee, 17, despite a wobble, became the first India-American player to win a Grand Slam boys' singles title, beating compatriot Victor Lilov 7-5, 6-3 in one hour and 21 minutes in the final at the Wimbledon championships on Sunday. Though Indian American players like Prakash Amritraj and his

cousin Stephen Amritraj played on the circuit and won some titles too, Samir is the first to win the boys singles title at a Grand Slam. It is notable that four Indians - Ramanathan Krishnan, Ramesh Krishnan, Leander Paes and Yuki Bhambri — have won the boys' singles title at Grand Slam events. Even though Indian players could not make a worthwhile move in this year's Wimbledon, Samir's success is a consolation.

CK Subramaniam, Mumbai

Gruelling wait ends for Messi at last

It is heartening to note that Messi-led Argentina won the Copa America finals against Brazil by 1-0. The wait for 28 years is really a long period. However, Messi deserves the win for the efforts of a good teamwork. A word of praise for Harleen Deol for her excellent and sensational catch in the T20 women cricket match against England. Her efforts were really superb though India lost the match.

Gururajan Ramachandran, Chennai.

THE Euro 2020 Final at Wembley **⊥** gave us 120 minutes of football at its best with superb passes and headers and 10 penalty shootouts with 5 of them

yielding goals, to boot. We were rewarded for forgoing our sleep to watch the match. It was worthy of a World Cup semi-final, if not the Final. It was a real cliffhanger before Italy lifted the Cup. Not that England played worse on home soil or Italy played better, it was sheer luck that smiled on Italy that crowned it the European champions.

G David Milton, Maruthancode (Kanyakumari dt)

Ш

ARGENTINA put up a spirited display to end a 28-year title drought and reach the pinnacle of glory at the Copa America final. Angel di Maria did the star turn for the victors. Though the Selecao had more ball possession, they could not translate that into goals. However, the success would count as an extraordinary triumph for Argentinian skipper Lionel Messi - he led his country to its first major title since 1993 and lifted his first major trophy for the national team after several near misses. Well done, boys!

NJ Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

IV

THE month-long mesmerising foot-🗘 ball bonanza is over with Argentina kissing the Copa America 2021 and Italy the Euro Cup 2021 but the moments of these two tournaments will linger in the

hearts of soccer fans around the world. The various nations, football federations and authorities need a big applause as the matches were conducted smoothly and safely especially at a time when the whole world is under the grip of an epidemic.

M Pradyu, Kannur

Do justice to CPSU pensioners

A PROPOS the 'Mega cabinet raises massive expectations from Modi' published in inbox (July 11), I like to add one more point. More than sixty lakh retirees from wound up central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) are denied their legitimate right for more than two decades. They are getting a static pension and without medical aid. Whenever Employee Pension Scheme 1995 (EPS-95) case is taken up by some MPs in parliament, the stock reply is that, "the case is in Supreme Court," and the court is adjourning it every time. PM who is now holding the portfolio of pensions is once again urged to render justice. Apex court is also requested to dispose of this case which is listed for hearing on 20-07-2021.

Dr NSR Murthy, Secunderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com

A vision for centre of excellence studies in Classical Telugu

PROFESSOR K YADAGIRI



THE Central government declared Telugu as a of Andhra Pradesh and the Telugu diaspora felt happy as it was an honour to the Telugu people all over the world. Moreover, the GOI earmarked a grant of Rs 100 crore in 2010 for this purpose. It also organised a survey in all the districts of the

undivided Andhra Pradesh between 2010 and 2012 for ascertaining a suitable location for establishing a Telugu Language Classical Centre.

The government also constituted a committee for this purpose in 2012, which comprised Joint Secretary, MHRD, CIIL Director, Principal Secretary of Education, Government of AP, Secretary, Central Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, Director, Telugu Akademi, and Director, AP Cultural Department. The committee met three times and took suggestions of Telugu writers, scholars, editors of Telugu newspapers and several

Deferring to Telugu writers, scholars, editors and several unanimously in favour of locating the Telugu Classical Language centre temporarily in Hyderabad. But, in January 2020, it was allocated to Nellore, which is not a Telugu States

Telugu organisations for the location of a suitable venue for the same purpose. It decided unani-Telugu organisations, a committee mously in favour of establishing set up by GOI decided the Telugu Classical Language centre temporarily at the existing government cultural building at Madhapur near Hyderabad.

The bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh state in 2014 delayed the process of establishing the Telugu suitable place for either of the Classical Language Centre. Consequently, the Centre continued to be part of the CIIL in Mysore

for a long time, and as such it was away from the Telugu people. Meanwhile, in January 2020, the said Centre was shifted to Nellore in Andhra Pradesh as per the wish of a VIP in the Central government. Nellore is not a suitable place for either of the Telugu states. As such, it is not in the interests of Telugu people, scholars and researchers for the development of a Classical Telugu Language Centre. Hence, I propose that the Telugu Classical Language Centre be shifted to a place in or around Hyderabad in order to make it accessible to all the Telugu people.

We are aware of the activities of the CESCT (Centre of Excellence Studies in Classical Telugu) as per the guidelines of the CIIL (Central Institute of Indian Languages) at present. The government should come forward to appoint chairperson to oversee the entire language development process which is highlighted as a key task in the New Education Policy (NEP).

I propose to present my views regarding the establishment of CESCT at a place in the Telugu States by the Central government for its development. These views are based on my association with the State Institute of Telugu Akademi and Telugu University and the experiences gained by me in the process of the development of the same.

Immediate Action Needed

Immediate steps to be taken up to set up a Telugu Classical Language Centre in the two Telugu states are as follows:

- First of all, the Central government education department should arrange a meeting with the officials of the two Telugu States regarding the establishment of this Centre
- 2. An advisory council or governing body should be set up. Retired eminent scholars and popular writers should be selected and appointed to this Governing Body along with the officers as well as various organizations with administrative experience in the field of literature.
- CIIL has not had a regular director for the past six years. A renowned literary figure and a retired professor with experience in the field of administration with not more than 70 years should be appointed as the Chairman of the Institute instead of Director.
- As the Central government has already declared this Telugu Classical Language Centre as a Centre of Excellence, this Centre also shall be declared an autonomous institution just like ICHR and CIFEL.
- Proficiency, mastery, and holistic vision with broader perspective view in linguistic literature are most prevalent among the elderly skilled persons. So, the staff working in this organisation should be looked after without any restrictions on the age limit.
- When the Telugu Classical Language Centre was announced, the Andhra Pradesh State was undivided. But in 2014, the state of Andhra Pradesh Re organised into two states, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. For this reason, the funds provided by the Central government to this institution are sanctioned to the both two States in the ratio of 58:42 as per the State Reorganization Act, then only there will be no possibility of any dispute. Accordingly, a Centre for Telangana shall be established in Hyderabad. Andhra Pradesh will have to set up another centre.

Future Plan of the Centre

1. Why set up CESCT near Hyderabad

It is in the fitness of things to recollect that A.K.Singh, Joint Secretary, MHRD, organised three meetings in Hyderabad in 2012 for establishing the centre there. It was also agreed in principle that the Centre could be established in the State government cultural centre at Madhapur, Hyderabad, then. However, the then government of undivided Andhra Pradesh did not give any undertaking to the MHRD in the context of the impending bifurcation of the state. I am aware of these developments as I was a member of the proposed committee in my capacity as the Director of the Telugu Akademi then.

People of the Telugu states are aware of the prominence of Hyderabad as a centrally located place and how conducive it is for all the resource persons engaged in research in Telugu culture and language. Moreover, Hyderabad is well connected by air and trains from various places of

2. Name 10 chairs after Classical Telugu poets

There is an imperative need to select the great works of the classical poets for revisiting these great poets in order to look at these poets from a fresh perspective from the 10 proposed chairs. Several regional language centres in different parts of the Telugu states, which organise meetings, discussions, workshops and oriental training centres, can also enrich a Centralised location in Hyderabad for their mutual benefit. These proposed chairs can cater to the intellectual needs of the classical Telugu scholars. The proposed ten Chairs can develop ten Telugu regional Centres at various places in the Telugu states for the enrichment of Telugu language.

3. Preparation of monographs

I. Monographs on reputed Classical Telugu Poets: It is proposed to commission well known scholars to write 200 monographs in a simple language easily accessible to everyone on reputed ancient Telugu poets as the first phase in the first year, and get the same published. Such monographs need to be made available to most people at affordable prices so that such books should be part of every household. It was possible for me to publish 158 monograph of this kind in 2012 within four months during my tenure as Director, Telugu Akademi. These monographs were launched at the Telugu Conference in Tirupati then.

II. Monographs on Arts, Culture and Tradition: Reputed scholars can be commissioned to write 100 monographs on the classical Telugu poetical works on the above issues.

III. Monographs on ancient Science Books: Our researchers discovered that a number of science books had been written on various topics in Telugu several thousands of years ago. 100 Monographs need to be written on such books.

(Writer is a former Director of Telugu Akademi (Andhra Pradesh State Institute of Telugu Language) and former Vice-Chancellor (In-charge) of Telugu University, Hyderabad) (The second and concluding part will appear in these columns on tomorrow)

HC suspends GO on empowering VROs

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

THE Andhra Pradesh High Court on Monday issued interim orders suspending GO No 2 of the State Government transferring powers of panchayat sarpanches and secretaries to village revenue officers (VROs).

The petition challenging the GO was filed by Tokalavanipalem Sarpanch Krishna Mohan of Guntur district. The High Court questioned the State Government over introducing village secretariats while the panchayats and sarpanches were existing.

The GO No 2 issued on March 25 had brought 15,004 village secretariats, its 1.34 lakh staff and 2.66 lakh volunteers under the fold of the Revenue department. The salaries and grant of leave of absence, was to be handled by the VROs. As a result, the sarpanches would remain nominal without any control over the secretariats.

In June, the High Court reserved its order on a petition that opposed GO Ms No2 (dated March 25, 2021) through which certain powers of the village administration were sought to be transferred to the VROs. Krishna Mohan argued that the GO was issued in violation of the Constitution and the spirit of Article 73 of the Constitution Amendment Act.

His contention was that academic qualification of panchayat secretaries was graduation while for the VROs it was just SSC and hence panchayat secretaries

were more competent to provide effective administration.

Besides, the VROs are under the supervision of Tahsildars who oversee the revenue administration hierarchy while the panchayat secretaries are accountable to the Mandal Parishad Development Officers (MPDOs), District Panchayat Officers and Secretary (Panchayat Raj & Rural Development) at the district and State levels respectively.

The advocate on behalf of the State Government argued that the new system was introduced to implement the welfare schemes efficiently and make them reach beneficiaries. He said it was meant for administration convenience and not to create any parallel power centres.

RAGHURAMA ROW

SPEAKER TO TREAD CAUTIOUSLY

HANS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

LOK Sabha Speaker, Om Birla, here on Monday said that the House would follow all the processes in dealing with the disqualification process of a member but will not rush ahead unduly.

In his interaction with the media ahead of the Monsoon Session of the Parliament, the Speaker said he would listen to the arguments of both the parties

— YSRCP and its MP K Raghu-

YSRCP and its MP K Raghurama Krishna Raju — before arriving at a decision regarding the demand of the YSRCP.

He was referring to the claim of the YSRCP leader, V Vijayasai Reddy, who had recently met him to urge him to disqualify the rebel MP as the party had submitted "all evidence" of anti-party activity of the latter. Vijayasai Reddy had gone ahead and warned of



 Om Birla makes it clear that he will not 'rush ahead unduly' over demand by YSRCP to disqualify rebel MP Raghurama Krishna Raju

 His comments come in the wake of warning by Vijayasai Reddy that his party members will stage protests in House if he doesn't take action over their repeated pleas for disqualification of the MP

 Says he will listen to the arguments of both sides before arriving at a decision

protests during the upcoming session if action was initiated against the rebel member.

When asked about it, the Speaker said all members and parties had the right to protest during the sessions and he would

not comment on it. However, "one should remember the rules and regulations" in doing so, he said adding he would not resort to a "running commentary" on the same.

The Speaker had earlier re-

portedly told the YSRCP leaders who met him three days ago with their demand that he would give notices to both the groups with a 15-day time for response. Only then, the matter would be referred to the Privileges Committee, he said.

The YSRCP leadership questioned the "delay" over the matter and sought early action against the MP as he had been denting the image of the party with his anti-party stand and comments. Referring to the action taken against the former JD (U) MP, Sharad Yadav, in the past, Vijayasai Reddy, repeatedly had sought similar urgency in the present matter too.

The House will also be dealing with another complaint lodged by the MP himself over the physical torture in custody by the AP police in the past.

KRISHNA WATERS

BJP condemns TDP Prakasam MLAs' letter

- Party general secretary
 Vishnu Vardhan Reddy
 says the letter to CM is
 'anti-Rayalaseema' and is
 furthering the 'fake'
 propaganda of Telangana
 on projects
- MLAs of Addani, Kondapi and Parchur writes to CM saying that both Telangana and Seema lift irrigation projects at Srisailam are detrimental to the interests of Prakasam farmers and people
- The BJP leader while terming the letter 'a shameful act', castigates the YSRCP govt for not acting against TS to safeguard business and political interests of leaders

Amaravati

BJP state general secretary V Vishnu Vardhan Reddy on Mondaylashed out at Prakasam district TDP MLAs and called their letter to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy as 'anti-Rayalaseema' and furthering the alleged fake propaganda of Telangana.

"TDP MLAs from Prakasam district have written the letter furthering the fake propaganda of Telangana and in opposition to



Rayalaseema," he said while addressing the media in Guntur.

He was referring to the letter written by Addani MLA Gottipati Ravi Kumar, Kondapi MLA Dola Bala Veeranjaneya Swamy and Parchur MLA Elurui Sambasiva Rao.

The trio said they were writing the letter on behalf of Prakasam district farmers and people and claimed that both Telangana and Rayalaseema lift irrigation projects at Srisailam are detrimental to Prakasam district.

However, the BJP leader said that a letter like this at the moment is a shameful act and lashed out at Telangana for acting in a way which is dangerous to Andhra Pradesh.

Training his guns at the state government, Vishnuvardhan Reddy alleged that the government is not acting against Telangana to safeguard business and political interests of leaders.

"We will join the masses and start a movement for water resources," he said, questioning if there was a water resources department in the state.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are engaged in a bitter war of words over water projects in either states with both terming them as illegal. Already, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has written several letters to the Centre on the issue and has complained against Telangana.

He complained that Telangana's unilateral siphoning of water from Srisailam, Nagarjunasagar and Pulichintala reservoirs will jeopardise the drinking and irrigation needs of Rayalaseema, Nellore and Prakasam districts, including Chennai city's drinking water requirements.

Jagan Mohan Reddy said Telangana continues to blatantly violate the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014, acting in a whimsical manner with utter disregard to the operational protocols and directions of Krishna River Management Board.

Though power generation is incidental to irrigation needs, he complained that Telangana has started utilising Srisailam reservoir waters for power generation from the very first day of the water year which started on June 1, well below the minimum draw down level (MDDL) of over 834 ft. (MANS)

GVL writes to CM opposing renaming of Telugu Akademi

 Alleges that the move appears to be aimed at reducing the importance of Telugu language

> HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

BJP Rajya Sabha Member G V L
Narasimha Rao wrote to Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy stating that the decision taken by the state government on Telugu
Akademi is detrimental to the interests of Telugu language and culture. He appealed to the Chief Minister to withdraw the decision of renaming Telugu Akademi as Telugu and Sanskrit Akademi, or else the BJP will strongly oppose it in every manner.

In his letter, the MP said that the decision of the state government to change the name of Telugu Akademi to Telugu-Sanskrit Akademi seems to be part of efforts to reduce the importance of Telugu language. He said establishing new academy for Sanskrit may be ideal but it should not reduce the importance of Telugu language.

The MP said the decision by the state government earlier to abolish Telugu as medium of instruction has become a nightmare for thousands of students studying in the medium. He said last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the technical education should be offered in Indian languages and the AICTE has prepared B Tech textbooks for the coming academic year in eight Indian languages.

Udaya Lakshmi assumes office as PCA member

- Calls on CM after being appointed as AP State Police Complaints Authority
- Says AP has set up the body following the directives from the SC
- Explains that unlike in the past, the people now can approach the PCA if their rights are violated by police

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

B Udaya Lakshmi, IAS, who retired as principal secretary, has been appointed as member of AP State Police Complaints Authority (APPCA).

Udaya Lakshmi who assumed office on Monday as a member of the Authority, called on Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Speaking on the occasion, Udaya Lakshmi said that the APPCA was established by the state government as per the orders of the Supreme Court for the first time.

She said until now if there is a serious crime like lockup death, crime against women and children like kidnap of minor girl, rape of a woman due to inaction of police or illegal detention, violation of



as a member of APPCA at Tadepalli on Monday

law by police, the people have to approach High Court. But now after establishment of PCA, the aggrieved persons can directly approach it and lodge a complaint. The PCA will play a role of a judge on wheels and is accessible to any victim of a serious crime involving police, she said.

The former bureaucrat said PCA is a specialised body to bring transparency and accountability of police officers towards people.

officers towards people. Similarly, she said, the

police while taking a person into custody in a crime, have to inform jurisdictional police station as per Criminal Procedure Code. But sometimes they do not inform local police and bring that suspected person, illegally detain him/her for many days and they may be tortured. In such cases, the person concerned may lodge a complaint with PCA and it will act immediately by sending notices to the police officer involved, she added.

TS Guv takes vax in tribal thanda

Says tribals should overcome vaccine hesitancy and take the jab to prevent falling prey to coronavirus

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

MOTIVATING the tribals to get vaccinated to protect themselves from Covid, Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan on Monday got her second dose of vaccine at KC Thanda in Maheshwaram mandal of Ranga Reddy district.

Concerned about reports indicating low percentage of vaccination among tribals, the Governor took her second dose in presence of tribals and urged them to take vaccine as it was safe.

"I just want to set an example by taking the vaccine at their remote habitation and motivate tribals to overcome vaccine hesitancy and come forward to get vaccinated," she said.

Seated along with tribal women, who came in their traditional attire, the Governor took the jab evoking instantaneous applause from tribals and the Health staff and the media personnel present at the Primary Health Centre.

mary Health Centre.

The Governor, a doctor herself, called for cent per cent vaccination of all tribals with special attention to the primitive groups living in remote forest areas. "The tribal people should be given vaccination on a priority basis. They should be protected from this deadly virus," she added.

A tribal woman, Sunitha, said the Governor herself coming to



the habitation and getting vaccinated was a huge honour for them. She said Dr Tamilisai's visit has inspired the tribals and gave them a new hope and courage about vaccination.

courage about vaccination.
"I have a special fondness and liking towards tribals. I came here to give you all courage to get vaccinated and get pro-

tected," she added.
She appreciated Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's efforts in effectively containing

the pandemic in the State and taking the vaccination drive forward.

Education Minister Sabitha

Education Minister Sabitha Indra Reddy stated that it was a huge honour for the tribals across the State that the Governor took the vaccine at a tribal habitation and thus set a personal example for others.

Earlier, the Governor planted a sapling at the village garden and offered prayers at Shiva Ganga temple along with her husband and eminent Nephrologist Dr P Soundararajan. She surprised villagers by distributing sweet boxes to each of the household in the Thanda and handed over sweet boxes to some participants at the meeting.

Zilla Parishad chairperson Dr Anitha Harinath, senior police officials, public representatives, officials and a large number of tribals turned up for the Governor's visit.

HEAVY RAINS IN TS FOR TWO DAYS

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Indian Meteorological Department bulletin has warned of heavy to very heavy rains on July 13 and 14 at isolated places in Siddipet, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak and 11 other districts in the State. The bulletin said thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds with 30-40 kmph speed were very likely at isolated places across the State. Heavy rains to lash Hyderabad, Medchal-Malkajigiri, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak and four other districts.

According to the bulletin, on July 14, there will be thunderstorms coupled with lightning and gusty winds at isolated places across Telangana. Heavy to very heavy rain is likely to occur in Adilabad, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtial, Rajanna-Sircilla, Suryapet, Warangal (Rural & (Urban), Janagaon, Yadadri-Bhongir, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak and Kamareddy districts.

Heavy rains are also very likely in Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Mahabubabad, Siddipet, Mahbubnagar and Nagarkurnool districts.

On July 15, heavy rains likely to lash Adilabad, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtial, Rajanna-Sircilla, Warangal (Urban), Janagaon, Siddipet, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Medak, Kamareddy and Mahbubnagar districts.



Power network strengthened under 'Palle & Pattana Pragathi'

TSSPDCL CMD G RAGHUMA REDDY ATTENDS THE PROGRAMME

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

UNDER the "Palle and Pattana Pragathi" programmes, the Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Ltd (TSSPDCL) has strengthened its distribution network at an expenditure of Rs. 100 crope

Participating in the programme on Monday CMD G Raghuma Reddy said that the network has been strengthened in 8,539 villages and 84 urban local bodies.

"Various works like erection of intermediate poles, replacement of bent, rusted, damaged poles, replacement of damaged stay wire, re-stringing of loose and hanging conductors, arranging separate lines for streetlights, replacement of damaged, stuck up streetlight metres and arranging separate metres and boxes for streetlights has been taken up," he said.

The CMD, along with J Srinivas Reddy, director (operations), reviewed the works taken up under Palle and Pattana Pragathi with engineers of Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy, Medak, Mahbubnagar and

Nalgonda combined districts through a video conference.

Reddy informed that the government was giving top priority for energy sector. Since the State formation Rs. 31,000 crore was spent on various development works, including 33/11kv sub-stations, laying of new lines, distribution transformers, transformers, laying of underground cables, and RMUs for strengthening the distribution sector. The CMD reviewed maintenance of department stores in field offices.

Yogi's population control policy will go against Hindus: VHP

New Det h

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) affiliate, on Monday registered its strong opposition to the draft proposal on population control recently released by the Uttar Pradesh State Law Commission that excludes people with more than two children from availing benefits under government schemes. The VHP, in its letter to the state law commission, has not just cited policy's adverse impact on children, it also lists imbalance in communities as 'different communities respond differently to incentives or disincentives related to family planning and contraption'. The organisation suggested the deletion of Sections 5, 6 (2) and 7 to avoid contraction of population and also undesirable social and economic consequences of a one-child policy.

VHP's international working president Alok Kumar, who himself is an advocate, advised Uttar Pradesh to

avoid getting into a situation where only one community takes the benefit of the policy whereas the other keeps expanding. It is also concerned about the Hindu population contracting whereas other communities are expanding.

'The Total Fertility Rate of Hindus in states like Assam and Kerala has declined far below the replacement rate of 2.1 but that of Muslims is 3.16 in Assam and in Kerala, it is 2.33. 'In these states, one of the communities has thus entered the contraction phase while the other is still expanding,' reads the letter.

Also, about the two-child norm, the RSS affiliate believes that single child is socially less accommodating. 'This is because they don't learn to share with siblings and partly because they are overindulged and pampered. This has been referred to as Little emperor syndrome,' read the letter.

VHP's international working president also believes that this policy will disrupt the balance between the



"Total fertility rate of Hindus in states like Assam and Kerala has declined far below the replacement rate of 2.1, but that of Muslims is 3.16 in Assam and in Kerala, it is 2.33"

working and dependent population ratio.
Citing an example of China, he said that it implemented its one-child policy in a relaxed manner.
BJP MP from Mandsaur Sudhir Gupta blamed "people like Aamir Khan", the Bollywood actor, for "population imbalance" in India.

Lok Sabha MP from Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur, Gupta said, "Talking in Indian perspective, it is Aamir Khan, whose first wife Reena with two kids and second wife Kiran Rao with one kid, has been left to wander around by him who is unbothered and has started he search for the third wife.

Opposition parties have hit out at the Uttar Pradesh government over the proposed draft bill on population control, with the SP terming it as an "election propaganda" while a Congress leader asked the state government to tell how many "legitimate and illegitimate children" its ministers have.

Congress leader Salman Khurshid said, "before making the law government should tell how many legitimate and illegitimate children its ministers have.

"Politicians should declared how many children they have. I will also declare how many I have and then it should be discussed," he told reporters on Sunday. Modi's Bihar ally Nitish Kumar has once again publicly voiced his strong disagreement.

"States can do whatever they want. But I clearly believe that it is not possible to ensure population control with a law. Look at China or any other example," Nitish Kumar told reporters on Monday.

WINDOWS

New IT Min loses Twitter's blue tick, restored

New Delhi: Union Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Skill Development, Raieev Chandrasekhar lost the blue verified badge on Twitter, which was restored later Twitter said the name change of his handle on the micro-blogging site could be the reason. Ominous beginnings, but Rajeev Chandrasekhar has changed his name from Rajeev MP to Rajeev_GOI. As explained in the Twitter verification policy, if an account holder changes their username, Twitter may automatically remove the blue verified badge from their account.

Five sailors stranded in Iran, seek PM's help

New Delhi: Five Indian sailors stranded in Iran have urged PM Narendra Modi to help them get back to India and act against agents who duped them in the name of giving employment abroad, informed the Indian

World Forum on Monday. In a statement, the President of the forum, Puneet Singh said: "I have received concerning and distress messages seeking assistance from five Indian seafarers who are stranded at Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchestan

Chabahar, Sistan and Baluchestan
Province, Iran for approximately two
years." "We had been in jail almost
400 days in a fraud case. Despite being released on March 9, Iranian authorities have not given our passports

Lightning, cloudburst kill 68 in 3 states

PM Modi announces ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh each for the next of kin of those killed

LUCKNOW/BHOPAL/JAIPUR

A total of 68 people died in separate lightning and cloudburst incidents across Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan on Sunday.

While the death toll due to heavy lightning in Uttar Pradesh mounted to 41 on Monday, seven people were reported to be dead in Madhya Pradesh.

Lightning strikes claimed 20 lives in Rajasthan. Among the deceased, seven were children from Kota and Dholpur districts. Over 10 more people have been reported to suffer injuries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each for the next of kin of those killed due to the lightning strikes in all the three states and Rs 50,000 for the injured

states and Rs 50,000 for the injured. So far, a total of 41 people have been killed in lightning strikes across UP, according to preliminary informa-

Parts of UP's Prayagraj also received rainfall where 14 people were killed in separate incidents after being struck by lightning. Five people each died in Kanpur Dehat and Fatehpur, four people in Kaushambi, three in Firozabad, one each in Unnao, Hamirpur and Sonbhadra. Two each died in Kanpur Nagar and one each lost their lives in Pratapgarh Hardoi and Mirzapur.

As many as 20 people died due to lightning strikes in different parts of Rajasthan on Sunday. Over 10 more



An earthmover machine removes a car stuck in flood water near Bhagsunag, as heavy rains lashed the area after a cloudburst in McLeodganj near Dharamshala on Monday

were reported to suffer injuries.

Among the deceased, 11 were from Jaipur, three from Dholpur, four from Kota, one from Jhalawar and one from Baran. A total of 17 people had already suffered injuries on Sunday. They were rescued by joint teams of the police and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF). The injured have been taken to the Sawai Man Singh Hospital in Jaipur. Meanwhile, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each for the family members of those who died in lightning strikes.

Out of this, Rs 4 lakh will be given from emergency relief fund and 1 lakh

from the Chief Minister Relief Fund (CMRF). As per information, 11 people were killed in Jaipur's Amer area as sky lightning struck the watch tower twice on Sunday in less than 40 minutes. Four children died in Kota district of Rajasthan whereas three others passed away in Badi in Dholpur district due to the heavy lightning on Sunday. Sky lightning struck several parts of Rajasthan on Sunday, a day on which heavy rains lashed different parts of the state, signalling the arrival of the monsoon in the desert state. Not only Rajasthan, but lightning also claimed seven lives in different districts of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday. Of these, two people were from Sheopur district and two from Gwalior district. One person died in Shivpuri district along with one each in Anuppur and Betul districts, re-

A biker was washed away by the swift currents of a rivulet flooded by heavy rains between Tharali and Gwaladam in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on Monday, police said.

The motorcyclist was trying to cross the swollen Lolti rivulet when he lost balance of the vehicle and was swept away by its swirling waters, Tharali Station House Officer (SHO) Dhwaj Vir Singh said. Locals informed the police about the incident after which a search operation was launched, he said. The bike got stuck about 100 metres downstream but the man was washed away. He has not been found yet, the SHO said.

BJP leaders held by protesting farmers, freed after HC order

CHANDIGARH

Around a dozen BJP leaders "detained" for nearly 12 hours by protesting farmers at a house in Patiala's Rajpura were released early Monday following a Punjab and Haryana High Court order, officials said.

Scores of protesting farmers had on Sunday laid siege to a BJP worker's house where several party leaders including Punjab unit general secretary Subhash Sharma and Patiala incharge Bhupesh Aggarwal were also present.

The BJP leaders petitioned the Punjab and Haryana High Court through their lawyer, saying they were illegally detained

by a mob at a house in Rajpura. The court Sunday night directed the Punjab police to ensure the petitioners are provided a safe exit with adequate security and no harm is caused to them.

The court had also asked for a report to be submitted at 2 pm on Monday. Patiala Deputy Superintendent of Police (Rajpura Rural) Jaswinder Singh said the BJP leaders were taken out of the house around 4 am Monday.

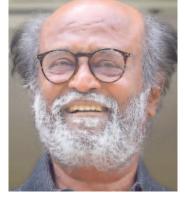
Police used mild cane-charge to disperse the protesters. Earlier, the protesting farmers allegedly disrupted a district-level BJP meeting at

Rajpura on Sunday following which the party leaders and workers had gathered at the residence of a party worker. Punjab BJP general secretary Subhash Sharma who was present among others in the house said the protesters had even disconnected the power supply. Sharma alleged the protesters damaged the

vehicles of some BJP leaders, besides the windscreen of a police van. He also alleged the protesters hurled bricks at them when they were being taken out of the house by the police. Sharma said they would be lodging an FIR in this matter. On their part, the farmers alleged the BJP workers used inappropriate language against the protesters

and a security personnel of BJP leader Bhupesh Aggarwal allegedly brandished a pistol at them.

Aggarwal allegedly brandished a pistol at them. They were demanding an apology from the BJP for the same. Earlier, on Sunday, a group of farmers, protesting against the Centre's new agri-marketing laws, had chased away local BJP leader Shanti Sapra and allegedly manhandled him as they held a protest against the party's district level meeting at Rajpura. Later, the BJP's general secretary Subhash Sharma had rushed to Patiala to enquire about leaders and other workers who faced the wrath of protesters.



Rajinikanth closes political chapter

Chennai: Top star Rajinikanth on Monday announced disbanding the Rajini Makkal Mandram, launched for his political entry and reiterated that he has no intention of involving himself in politics in future. Hours after he flagged questions among fans and Mandram functionaries as to "whether or not I am going to come to politics in future," the actor, following discussions with office-bearers said he would not join politics.

Due to circumstances, "what we thought did not materialise," he said apparently referring to his previoulsy proposed political entry which he subsequently dropped. "I have no intention of involving myself in politics in future," he asserted in a statement.

Hence the RMM is disbanded and the functionaries would as before work under the Rajinikanth Fans Forum (Rajinikanth Rasigar Narpani Mandram) which is aimed at carrying out activities for people's welfare, he said.

China objects to Dalai's birthday celebrations

Soldiers enter Ladakh's Demchuk

LADAKI

Chinese soldiers and some civilians appeared on the other side of the Sindu river in the Demchuk region of Ladakh and displayed banners and Chinese flag in protest when Indian villagers were celebrating the birthday of the Dalai Lama. The incident occurred on July 6.

The Chinese, comprising Army personnel and civilians, came in five vehicles and raised banners near the village community centre where the Dalai Lama's birthday was being celebrated.

Lama's birthday was being celebrated.

Last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted the Dalai Lama on the occasion of his 86th birthday. This is the first time Narendra Modi has publicly confirmed speaking with the Dalai Lama

In a tweet on Tuesday morning, PM Modi said, "Spoke on phone to His Holiness the @DalaiLama to convey greetings on his 86th birthday. We wish him a long and healthy life."

President of the Tibetan government-in-Exile Penpa Tsering told India Today TV last week that the Dalai Lama was expected to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the Covid-19 situation stablises. PM Modi's tweet shows a significant shift in India's Tibet policy vi's-a-vi's China and a strong message to Beijing. The Indian government had not wished China on the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party.

India and China have been in a military standoff since April-May last year and are yet to find solutions to de-escalate tensions at the friction points, including the Hot Springs-Gogra heights.



Indians sell gold as Covid wave pushes millions into poverty

aul Fernandes, a 50-year-old waiter, last year took out a loan using his gold as collateral to pay for his children's education after losing his job on a cruise liner. This year, he is selling his gold jewelry to meet expenses, after failed attempts at starting a home business and finding another job.

"A gold loan is after all a debt that I am taking on," he said from his hometown in the coastal state of Goa. "Selling my jewelry means I am not obligated to pay someone back along with an additional interest on that"

With the pandemic pushing millions into poverty or bankruptcy, many Indians are now turning to their last resort: selling their gold jewelry to make ends meet. In rural India, the biggest bullion buyer, a brutal new wave of the virus has had a catastrophic impact on the economy and incomes. With fewer banks around,

people in rural areas rely on gold in times of need as it can be easily liquidated.

The likelihood of financial distress caused by the second wave is much higher and it could lead to more outright sales of gold, unlike in 2020, when consumers chose to take out loans against their stash of the metal, according to Chirag Sheth, a consultant at London-based Metals Focus Ltd.

Gross scrap supplies, which include old gold melted to make new designs, may exceed 215 tons and surge to the highest in nine years if a new wave emerges, he said. For a nation that imports almost all its gold mainly from Switzerland, higher local supply will also limit overseas inflows.

"You already had a financial problem last year and you got out of that problem through gold loans. Now again, you are having financial problems this year



with a potentially third wave on the way, which can again mean lockdowns and job losses," said Sheth.
"We can expect distress sales in a big way in August and September when the third wave could actually set in."

Many Indians who had clawed their way out of poverty face grim job prospects as lockdowns crippled the economy. More than 200 million have gone back to earning less than minimum wage, or \$5, a day.

In an initial sign of stress among consumers, Manappuram Finance Ltd., one of the nation's biggest gold loan providers, auctioned 4.04 billion rupees (\$54 million) of gold in the three months through March from loans that turned sour following a sharp drop in prices. That compares with just 80 million rupees auctioned in the prior nine-month period. The jewelry was sold as Manappuram's borrowers -- typically

daily wage earners, small time entrepreneurs, and farmers -- couldn't afford to repay the money.

In South, the country's biggest per capita consumer, about 25% more of old gold than usual has been sold to jewelers, according to James Jose, managing director of Kochi-based refiner CGR Metalloys

"After the lockdown, the shops are open and you can see very good footfalls in the shops for two reasons: one is purchases in relation to the wedding season and some amount of liquidation for cash," Jose said by phone.

Indians have been cutting down on their gold purchases in the past couple of years as a weak economy and the virus outbreak trims their spending power. In 2020, gold sales fell to the lowest in more than two decades, according to the World Gold Council.

Farmers' hard work made agri sectors Covid resilient

The agriculture and allied sectors remained strong during the pandemic, registering a growth of 3.5 per cent in 2020-21, mainly due to tireless hard work of the farmers, the skill of the scientists and the farmer friendly policies of the government and the resolve of the progress of the villages showed a new ray of hope in the Corona crisis — Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister



Paytm shareholders approve public offer plan

Paytm on Monday received approval of shareholders for the country's biggest public offer of Rs 16,600 crore, according to a source aware of the EGM outcome. The shareholders have approved raising of Rs 12,000 crore during the initial public offer and sale of secondary shares will take the total amount to Rs 16,600 crore

			ALC: NO
FOREX (bu	ıy rates iı	n ₹)	
US Dollar	75.49	South	N. B.
Euro	89.66	African Rand	5.52
UAE Dirham	20.7	Hong Kong Dollar	10.08
Thai Baht	2.4	Japanese Yen	0.78
British Pound	104.75	New Zealand Dollar	52.68
Australian Dollar	56.42	Saudi Riyal	21.86
Canadian Dollar	60.57	Swedish Krona	9.21
Swiss Franc	82.61	Singapore Dollar	56.18

DELHI TUESDAY 13 JULY 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Zeiss' new lens coating

Zeiss Vision Care has developed a process to incorporate antimicrobial silver into the anti-reflective coating package of eyeglass lenses. The precious metal (Ag+ ions) deactivates viruses and bacteria present on the lens. The new coating contributes to enhancing the hygiene of eyeglass lenses while ensuring low reflection, high scratch resistance and easy cleanability of the lenses. Rohan Paul, Business Head, Zeiss Vision Care India, said: "Our customers and the eveglass wearers are at the core of everything we do. The global Covid-19 pandemic has drastically influenced our mindset on hygiene and therefore also the hygiene of eyeglasses. In this context, a survey conducted by Zeiss shows that consumers are aware of various types of bac-

Ather opens new outlet

Ather Energy has inaugurated its new retail outlet Ather Space in Visakhapatnam, in association with SN Auto. The Ather 450X, alongside the Ather 450 Plus will be available to test ride and purchase at Ather Space. The experience centre will offer customers an opportunity to learn about every aspect of the vehicle and provide a complete overview of the various parts with a stripped-bare unit on display. They can also book test ride slots on Ather Energy's website before visiting the experience centre. Ravneet Phokela, Chief Business Officer, Ather Energy: "We are pleased to partner with SN Auto to support our expansion plans with a new experience centre in Visakhapatnam. SN Auto has done a phenomenal job in setting up the experience centre and has been a great support in organis-

FDC launches Covid drug

ing the test rides in the city."

DC Limited has announced The launch of oral suspension of Favipiravir - Favenza oral suspension. It is used to treat mild to moderate cases of Covid-19. This prescription solution is currently available at all retail medical outlets and hospital pharmacies across the country. The Favenza suspension is unique due to its Convenient Loading Dose (Day 1) of 18 ml in the morning and 18 ml in the evening. The results of which are equivalent to nine tablets of Favipiravir 400mg making the process of Covid-19 treatment hassle free. Mayank Tikkha, GM, **Business Development and** Commercial Excellence, FDC Ltd. said: "In order to combat Covid-19. we believe in offering best efficacy along with convenience to our patients and as such we have focused our efforts in making the process of Covid-19 treatment hassle-free."

WazirX partners with TRM labs

WazirX has announced their collaboration with TRM labs, a blockchain analytics provider, to enhance antimoney laundering and antifraud measures for transactions conducted on the WazirX platform. TRM Labs provides a full-service platform for crypto compliance and risk management, including tools for wallet screening, transaction monitoring and investigations. The partnership comes as crypto usage and demand surges in India, with trading volumes increasing significantly. "Ensuring that our operations are secure and compliant with global regulatory requirements is critical to our success. TRM's platform helps us achieve this balance with an AML (Anti Money Laundering) solution that's easy for large compliance teams to use." said Nischal Shetty, Founder, CEO, WazirX.

Mfg pushes up IIP 29.3% in May

Manufacturing, mining and power sectors stage good performance, but still below pre-Covid level

New Delhi

INDUSTRIAL production surged 29.3 per cent in May, mainly due to low-base effect and good performance by manufacturing, mining and power sectors, but remained below the pre-pandemic level. The manufacturing sector which constitutes 77.63 per cent of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) – grew 34.5 per cent in May this year, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Monday. The mining sector output rose 23.3 per cent in May while power generation increased 7.5 per cent during the same month. In May 2021, the IIP stood at 116.6 points compared to 90.2 point in the same month last year. The index was at 135.4 points in May 2019 as per the NSO data. The data showed that industrial production recovered but was $still\,below\,the\,pre-pandemic\,level$ in May 2019. The IIP had contracted 33.4 per cent in May 2020.

"The IIP for May at 29.3 per cent suggests the supply chains have adopted over the last year to dampen the impact of second wave. This points to a robust Q1 considering the high frequency parameters for June are also pos-

RAY OF HOPE

• Mfg accounts for 77.63% in IIP Factory output up 34.5% in May 2021

HANS BUSINESS

- Mfg contracted 37.8% in May 2020
 - IIP surge suggests lesser impact of Covid 2.0

- Indicates robust Q1
- Positive high frequency parameters in June
- Supply chains taken up in 2020 showing results

itive," Shravan Shetty, MD Primus Partners, said. Industrial production had plunged 18.7 per cent in March last year following the COVID-19 outbreak and remained in the negative zone till August 2020. With the resumption of economic activities, factory output rose 1 per cent in September. The IIP had grown by 4.5 per cent in October. In November 2020, the factory output fell 1.6 per cent and then entered the positive territory by growing 2.2 per cent in December 2020. The IIP had recorded a contraction of 0.6 per cent in January and 3.2 per cent in February this year. In March, it grew 24.1 per cent. For the month of April, the NSO held back the release of complete IIP data. The second wave of the pandemic started in the middle of April this year and many states imposed restrictions to curb the spread of coronavirus infections.

"The growth rates over corresponding period of previous year are to be interpreted considering the unusual circumstances on ac-

Retail inflation flat at 6.26% in June NEW DELHI: Retail inflation remained

nearly flat at 6.26 per cent in June compared to 6.3 per cent in the previous month, official data released on Monday showed. Inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), however, remained above the Reserve Bank's comfort level for the second month in row.

The RBI has been mandated by the government to keep retail inflation at four per cent with a margin of two per cent on the either side. According to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), inflation in the food basket was 5.15 per cent in June compared to 5.01 per cent in May.

count of Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020," NSO said in a statement.

The government had imposed a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus infections on March 25, 2020. With the gradual relaxation of restrictions, there has been a relative improvement in economic activities as well as in data reporting, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation had said in a statement in November.

Adani: Country will touch \$15-trn mark

Says it's possible in next 2 decades

New Delhi

ADANI Group Chairman Gautam Adani has said that India can become a \$15 trillion economy in the next two decades and also turn out to be among the largest global markets.

Addressing the annual general meeting (AGM) of Adani Group, he noted that although there will be bumps along the road, the largest middle class that will ever exist, augmented by an increase in the working age and consuming population share, will have a

positive impact on India's growth "India will be a five trillion-dollar economy - and then go on to

be a 15 trillion-dollar-plus economy over the next two decades. India will emerge as one of the largest global markets, both in terms of consumption size and market cap," he said.

On group achieving the \$100

market cap, he said that the performance of the group's listed entities propelled its portfolio to cross \$100 billion in market capitalisation in the very first week of this new financial year. "This valuation milestone is a first for a first-generation Indian company. While there is reason to feel proud, valuations are simply an outcome what truly matters to me is the path that led us here - and even more importantly, the path we have charted ahead," Adani said.

"I credit our performance and resilience to the core values that we believe in. These values drive our purpose of Nation Building and this past year further reinforced my faith in our organisational values," Adani said.

On the recent reports on accounts of three FPIs holding significant investment in Adani companies being suspended, the Chairman said that "the group is few media houses indulged in reckless and irresponsible re-

porting related to administrative actions regula-

Sensex, Nifty shed early gains to end flat

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmarks Sensex and Nifty on Monday slipped from the day's highs in the closing hours to end flat as profit-booking in mainly IT and metals shares outweighed hectic buying in banking counters. Registering its

third loss in a row, the BSE Sensex ended 13.50 points or 0.03 per cent lower at 52,372.69. Intraday, the index swung nearly 500 points as it touched a high of 52,700.51 and a low of 52,208.96. While, the broader

0.02 per cent higher to close at 15,692.60. "Benchmark indices erased gains towards the final session of the day as profit-booking in IT,

NSE Nifty inched 2.80 points or

metals and financial services dragged markets. Barring realty, auto and select banks, most key sectoral indices traded in red. However, realty and cement stocks witnessed strong rebound

today as ongoing revival in real estate market attracted investors' attention. Notably, midcap and smallcap stocks continued to outperform as improved prospects of earnings recovery augurs well for them, he

added," said Binod Modi, head (strategy) at Reliance Secu-Vinod Nair, head (research) at

Geojit Financial Services, said that "domestic indices trimmed early gains tracking cues from its European peers ahead of the release of key inflation data later on

Megha Gas to open 24 CNG stations

HANS NEWS SERVICE WARANGAL

MEGHA Gas, a party of MEIL Group, has embarked on the expansion of its operations in Telangana. It has already started its services in Yadaadri Bhuvanagiri district and Megha Gas is now operating in Warangal district as well. The first CNG station in Warangal district was on Monday inaugurated by M Dharmarao, Deputy General Manager, Retail Sales, Indian Oil Corporation, at Sri Rama Filling Station, Warangal.

The event was attended by IOCL Engineering Division Chief Manager PVRL Hari Prasad, Retail Sales Manager MM Kishore, Megha Gas Retail Sales Manager Deva Chandra Shekhar, Technical Manager Raj Kumar and Site In-Charge M Rajesh. Megha Gas recently started selling compressed natural gas to vehicles along with supplying gas to households

Launches first CNG station in Warangal



Megha gas has started its operations in Warangal district. M Dharmarao, Deputy General Manager (Retail Sales), Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), inaugurated CNG station at Sri Rama Filling Station in Warangal on Monday.

through pipes in Yaadaadri Bhuvanagiri district. Deva Chandra Shekhar said that in the current scenario of rising petrol and diesel prices, CNG consumption will save money for the vehicle owners. He said Megha Gas would open 24 CNG stations in Telangana this financial year. He said another CNG station would soon be opened in Shamshabad in Rangareddy district followed by one in Vikarabad districts and near Warangal Central Jail also.

Brick&Bolt launches Hyd operations

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

BRICK&BOLT, a tech-enabled construction company, has launched operations in Hyderabad. The company's entry into the Hyderabad market will complement its existing presence in Bengaluru and Mysore.

Powered by state-of-the-art technologies, it simplifies the construction process for the inexperienced by making it transparent, ensures zero overhead costs and enables timely project deliveries.

Data from the company shows that customers who used their platform saved 10 to 15 per cent of their time in the whole project duration as opposed to people who rely on traditional contractors. For first-time home builders, Brick & Bolt plays the role of a trusted end-to-end construction partner.

TNDIA is the world's second **L**largest telecom market. Telecom infrastructure is at a centre stage for all the sectors. Of late this sector is experiencing turbulence. It has not witnessed new telecom service providers (TSP) for a decade, while many existing operators are withering away resulting in the market being controlled by just a few

Britain's Vodafone and India's Idea had been two strong telecom players in our country. They merged in 2018 to form Vodafone Idea (VI). Vodafone group and Aditya Birla group own 44.39 per cent and 27.66 per cent stakes in VI. It has a customer base of 27 crores. Vodafone has won a decade long legal battle with Government of India (GOI) as the Singapore seat of permanent court of Arbitration, Hague, struck down GOI's demand for RS 20,000 crores to be paid as retrospective taxes by VI.

Although this is a win for VI, the company is being plagued by other issues as follows:

■ Reliance JIO is the first player to bring VOLTE (Voice over LTE). LTE (Long Term Evolution) is 4G technology. It took a longer time for VI to launch VOLTE and 4G and in that process it lost many subscribers.

What went wrong with Vodafone Idea? ■ JIO brought a major disruption to India's telecom market by providing freebies in the first six months. Because of the competitive tariff structure of JIO, other TSPs were forced to match their tariff. VI is lagging amongst its peers in Average Revenue per User (ARPU). In Q4 of financial year 20-21, its ARPU was RS 107 against RS 138 for JIO and RS 145 for Airtel. As a result of such price wars and fierce competition in the industry,

its cash reserves got depleted.

■ Department of Telecom (DOT) collects Licence Fee (LF) and Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC) as a percentage of AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue). There was a dispute between DOT and TSPs on the interpretation of AGR. DOT contention was that the total revenue of the TSP (including the revenue earned from other than telecom operations) should be taken into account for the computation of AGR. However, TSPs stand was that only telecom revenue should be considered. Until the case was pending in the Supreme Court (SC), operators were paying LF and SUC on AGR computed only on telecom rev-

As per the SC verdict, the TSPs were ordered to pay LF and SUC on AGR computed on total revenue. They also have to pay AGR dues retrospectively along with interest. Vodafone/Idea should have made a provision for this additional payment anticipating unfavourable SC judgement. Surprisingly, their auditors have also not



co-promoters of VI have to put their own efforts to come out of the woods before banking on investors/ TRAI/DOT

pointed out the same. SC has given ten years duration to telecom firms to pay the AGR dues. Currently, VI owes a sum of RS 40,000 crores to GOI which led to massive downfall in its credit rating.

■ The share price of the company dipped by 15 per cent after it suffered a loss of RS 6985 crores in the Q4 of 20-21. It reported a negative net worth of RS 38,228 crores. Its cash balance stood at RS 350 crores on 31.03.21.

■ Amidst the lockdown during the second wave of Covid-19 in Q1 21-22, subscriber additions were impacted and Validity Extensions were given which will affect ARPU. ■ In the Telecom sector which has cut throat competition, the operator has to constantly expand the network, upgrade the capacity and

induct new technology to improve

the quality of service for which

Capital Expenditure (Capex) has

to be incurred. Otherwise customers will migrate to other TSPs through Mobile Number Portability (MNP). During the quarter ending in March 21, Vodafone Idea Capex was only at RS 1,540 crores against RS 6,847 crores by Airtel and RS 5,754 crores by JIO.

■ Last week VI reportedly breached its loan agreement with lenders. Its efforts to raise RS 25,000 crores by way of equity and debt have pushed it into a complex loop of conditionality. Further, its poor financial health is hampering its efforts to attract potential investments for its much needed capital infusion.

■ Financial analysts estimate that VI has to raise around RS 70,000 crores in equity. Without capital infusion, VI's ARPU should become twice the current level for it to have free cash flow.

■ As a separate development, GOI has challenged verdict of Hague court. If GOI wins, there will be a further setback to VI.

The 'Ideas' for way forward which could help VI to revive itself are as follows:

■ The co-promoters should themselves initiate some capital infusion so that the comfort level of investors is boosted.

■VI is expecting to monetize its assets, fixed landline broadband subsidiary, optic fibre unit, data centre business and land parcels that were bought for data centres, to raise about RS 10,000 crores. It wants to go with 'sell and lease back' deal for its fibre assets to use them in future. ■ With 'below the cost tariff', TSPs will not be able to survive. TSPs (other than JIO) have requested Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to introduce 'Floor Pricing', to protect them against predatory pricing. In deciding the Floor Price, the cost of service will be factored in. Floor pricing in a market becomes necessary due to the presence of operators with deep pockets. Such operators by offering predatory tariff attract customers from other operators monopolizing the competition. After other operators exit the market, they could increase the tariff causing inconvenience to the customers. To thwart such an unfair practice, the sector regulator,

TRAI, has to take a call on the Floor

Pricing policy. If this policy is im-

plemented the TSPs will have as-

sured ARPU. They can offer com-

petitive tariff which will be above

Floor Pricing. There will be fair competition and TSPs will not be cash trapped. This will ensure enough funds for expansion/upgradation of the network, thereby improving the quality of service benefitting the customers. Investors believe that unless there is a significant increase in tariffs, the health of VI will not recover and they will incur a loss on their investments.

■ VI requested DOT a duration of another year to remit spectrum payments of RS 8,292 cores which are due in March '22 as it is not generating adequate cash from operations and AGR payments are siphoning away its liquidity. DOT should consider their request favourably charging interest for the delayed period.

Four viable operators playing in this vital sector would be an ideal business model which would avoid monopoly and ensure fair competition. One of them should preferably be a PSU. To reiterate, the copromoters of VI have to put their own efforts to come out of the woods before banking on investors/ TRAI/DOT. Let us hope that JIO, Airtel, VI and BSNL/MTNL will emerge as strong and dynamic operators competing not only in tariffs but also in the quality of service, thus benefitting the customers who deserve nothing less than world class telecom service.

(The author is retired Advisor, Department of Telecommunications (DOT), Government of India)

EURO 2020 C'SHIP

Donnarumma the hero as Italy clinch title

LONDO

GOALKEEPER Gianluigi Donnarumma was the hero with two saves in the penalty shootout as Italy won the Euro 2020 title 3-2 on penalties after the final against England ended 1-1 after extra time.

Marcos Rashford sent his penalty into the post and then the Italian goalkeeper saved shots from Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Sako after England goalkeeper Jordan Pickford had done well to thwart Jorginho and Andrea Belotti on Sunday evening, reports Xinhua.

Once again the penalties were cruel on England, but Italy will argue that after suffering in the first half, they did enough in the remainder of the game to deserve the win.

While Italy were unchanged from the squad that beat Spain in the semifinal, England coach Gareth Southgate returned to the three central defenders who had served so well against Germany.

Southgate's tactics paid immediate dividends when Luke Shaw volleyed England into a second-minute lead. Harry Kane dropped deep and created space for Kieran Trippier and the wing-back had time to pick out Shaw's run at the far post.

Once ahead, England looked comfortable with Kieran Trip-



pier seeing a low cross cleared, but overall, the English were shot just content to close down the wide, by spaces in midfield and Federico defence, with Kalvin Chiesa. Phillips, Declan Rice, Italy came Mason Mount and out strongly at times even at the start Harry Kane, closof the secing down and denying the Italians angles to pass the ball. Perhaps that meant the English at times lacked men to launch effective counter-attacks, but Italy were unable to build anything and Italian players celebrate with the their only chance trophy after the Euro 2020 soccer of the half came final match on Sunday

ond half, looking to dominate where they had struggled before the break. Insigne fired a free kick just high and wide after a needless foul from Raheem Sterling and although Harry Maguire headed a free kick over, it was game on for Italy.

Federico Chiesa's

run ended with Pickford blocking from a narrow angle and the England goalkeeper did even better to block

minute.
Italy were playing in and around the England populty

Chiesa's shot in

62nd

area and although Maguire flicked Chiesa's cross out for a corner, Leonardo Bonucci was able to scramble home from close range after Pickford had blocked Marco Verratti's original header.

Bukayo Saka and Jordan Henderson came on as England reverted to four at the back, while Chiesa had to limp off with an ankle injury as the game went into extra time.

With four minutes of normal time remaining, a pitch invader stopped the action and stewards struggled to catch him adding to a sense of chaos at the stadium after ticketless fans earlier forced their way in.

England were struggling to string passes together and it wasn't long after Kalvin Phillips fired wide that Jack Grealish replaced Mount and the former almost set up Saka with his first action, while at the other end Pickford did well to deny Federico Bernadeschi.

Pickford blocked Brernadeschi's free kick, while John Stones was inches away from a free kick as Donnarumma came flying out as nerves got frayed, legs tired and England looked to retake the initiative. Gareth Southgate made two late changes, bringing on Rashford and Sancho for the penalties, but the move backfired as neither scored their spot kick. (ANNS)

those achievements and that dedication

across seven full days. Taking place

every year, the celebration starts on a

very special day - July 12 - the day back

Djokovic celebrates Wimbledon triumph by eating grass again

LONDON

EATING grass to celebrate his Wimbledon title is becoming a habit for Novak Djokovic and the Serb engaged in his customary act again on Sunday after beating Matteo Berrettini of Italy in the final in four sets.

Soon after securing a 6-7(4), 6-4, 6-3 victory, Djokovic plucked some grass from the Centre Court surface and chewed on it -- something he has done after each of his five previous triumphs here.

He first did this in 2011 after beating Rafael Nadal for his first Wimbledon title. Djokovic had once explained why he celebrates in this manner at Wimbledon.

"When I was younger, I always dreamt of winning Wimbledon and I wanted to do

the players with the most number of Grand Slam singles titles in the Open Era.

Federer, the winner of eight Wimbledon titles, was among the first to wish Djokovic, saying, "Congrats Novak on your 20th major. I'm proud to have the opportunity to play in a special era of tennis champions. Wonderful performance, well done!"

Nadal, who lost to Djokovic in the French Open semifinal this year after a gruelling four hour and 10 minute battle tweeted, "Congrats @DjokerNole on this amazing achievement. 20 Grand Slam titles is huge and it is amazing that we are 3 players tied on this. Well done and, again, congrats to you and your team for



"When I first broke into the Top 10, for three or four years, I lost most of the big matches against these guys (Federer and Nadal) and something shifted at the end of 2010 and the beginning of 2011. The past 10 years have been an incredible journey and it's not stopping here,"

Novak Djokovic

something different. And I didn't come up with a more original idea, so I thought I might as well just eat some grass," Djokovic had said.

He once again referred to his childhood dream during the prize distribution ceremony on Sunday.

"A seven year old boy preparing Wimbledon trophy with improvised material in his room, and today standing here with my sixth Wimbledon trophy, it's incredible," he said on Sunday.

Federer, Nadal lead tributes to Serb after 20th Grand Slam win

Swiss ace Roger Federer, Spaniard Rafael Nadal and several present and former tennis greats hailed world No. 1 Novak Djokovic for winning his sixth Wimbledon title and 20th Grand Slam crown overall at the hallowed Wimbledon centre court.

By winning the title on Sunday after beating Italy's Matteo Berrettini, the Serb top seed joined Federer and Nadal, the this!@Wimbledon."

Tennis great Billie Jean King urged the Serb to continue his sublime form and win the Olympic gold. "Congratulations to @DjokerNole, 6x #Wimbledon champion! He's simply the best, and thrives on pressure. The Golden Slam is still in his sights. Next up: the Olympics."

Legendary tennis player Rod Laver, winner of four Wimbledon titles in the 1960s, tweeted, "Congratulations Novak. Amazing achievement, you are on your way to a Grand Slam. Matteo, you played a fantastic tournament and I have no doubt your time will come." India's cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, tweeted, "Great win @Djoker-Nole! Many congratulations on winning the @Wimbledon & your 20th Grand Slam title. Despite a challenging start and taking time to find your groove, you fought on and took your game to the next level. Absolute champion mentality to win this one." (IANS)

Hyd'bad FC signup Spanish midfielder Eduardo Garcia

from an individual

Hyderabad

INDIAN Super League (ISL) side Hyderabad FC on Monday signed Spanish attacking midfielder Eduardo 'Edu' Garcia on a one-vear contract. The experienced 31-year-old joins Manolo Marquez's side from last season's runners-up ATK Mohun Bagan. Born in Zaragoza, Spain, Garcia spent three seasons with the Real Zaragoza's B side before going on to represent the senior side in the 2016/17 season of the Spanish Segunda Division. He moved to India for the first time with Bengaluru FC in 2017, making 14 appearances in the ISL before joining Chinese side Zhejiang Greentown who paid a transfer fee to secure his signature. He returned to India with ATK FC in January 2018 and helped the Kolkata-based side to the ISL title in 2019/20 scoring in the final against Chennaiyin FC. Garcia

spent the 2020/21 ISL season with Antonio Lopez's ATK Mohun Bagan and helped his side as they narrowly finished second in the league, and made it to ISL final. During his time in the ISL, Garcia has made 47 appearances, netting 10 goals while providing 12 assists. Coach Marguez believes that Garcia's versatility will help the team. "Edu (Garcia) is a good player and such players are always important. He has lots of experience of playing in India and will certainly help the youngsters in the squad," said Manolo. "He can play in centre midfield, attacking midfield and on the wings too. His versatility will be a huge asset for the squad. I am sure he will be comfortable with the group," added Manolo. "I am very excited to start my journey with Hyderabad FC. I promise to give my best and help the club grow with my experience and my work," said Garcia after signing the contract.

International Handball Week kicks off

Hyderabad District Handball Association begins celebrations for the 2nd International Handball Week at Chintal Basti grounds (Ram Leela

Ground). International Handball Week this year is unique as it also marks the IHF's 75th anniversary. The celebration was inaugurated by B. Manohar Babu, TRS leader. SR Sanjeev Kumar General Secretary, R. Sudhakar jt. Secretary, Ratnakar Treasurer. Six

Ratnakar Treasurer, Siva Kumar Jt. Secretary and others executive members Including players attended the function. The celebration will be held till July 18 and various matches will be held in Hyderabad. International Handball Week was born to celebrate

in 1946 when the International Handball Federation was founded in Copenhagen, Denmark. The debut edition in 2020 saw a celebration of the sport across the world through various events. In addition, the IHF also launched a new, vibrant logo.



Conway, Sophie named ICC Players of the Month

DUBAI

NEW Zealand opener Devon Conway and England leftarm spinner Sophie Ecclestone have been named ICC Players of the Month for June. "Conway won the award ahead of team-mate Kyle Jamieson, who was the Player of the Match in the WTC (World Test Championship) final against India, with South Africa's Quinton de Kock the other nominee for his fine performances on their tour of the West Indies," said a statement from the International Cricket Council (ICC).

The left-handed batsman is the first New Zealand player to win the ICC Men's Player of the Month award after an impressive first month in Test cricket, cracking a solid double century on debut against England at Lord's and following it up with two half-centuries in his next two games, including in the ICC WTC Final in Southampton.

"I am truly honoured to win this award. That I have received it for my performances in Test cricket makes it extra special," said Conway. The England left-arm

Indian pair of Shafali Verma and Sneh Rana to become the second English woman player to win the ICC Women's Player of the Month award after Tammy Beaumont, who won it in February. Sophie, a winner of the annual ICC Emerging Player of the Year award in 2018, was the most successful bowler in the one-off Test against India in Bristol, in which she grabbed an eightwicket haul. She also grabbed three wickets each in the two ODIs which followed. "It is really nice to win this award. It is after a period in which we've played all three formats so it feels good to be recognised for my performances in the Test and the white-ball series," said Sophie. "We've been happy as a team how we've performed across this series. We would have liked to have won the Test match but hopefully we can clinch the multi-format series," she added.

spinner Sophie pipped the

"It's all crucial preparation for the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup in New Zealand [in 2022], when we'll be defending the title we won in 2017, and we feel in a decent place as a team." (IANS)

Manpreet-led hockey side has lots of quality players: Tirkey

BENGALURU

THE Manpreet Singh-led Indian men's hockey side has a lot of quality players, giving the team a good chance of finishing on the podium, said Dilip Tirkey, one of the best defenders India has produced.

"I have great expectations from the current

Indian men's team. I think there is a lot of quality in the side, and they have a good chance of finishing on the podium at Tokyo. I would like to wish the team all the very best and I hope that they do well in the Olympics this year," said Tirkey, who represented the country in three Olympics - 1996 Atlanta, 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens.

Speaking about the excitement of playing in his first Olympics in Atlanta, Tirkey said, "Every athlete has a dream of becoming an Olympian, and I got a chance of playing in the Olympics for the first time in 1996. We had some big players in our team at that time such as our captain Pargat Singh. I was very excited to play in the Olympics."

On his memories from 2000 Sydney, Tirkey said that the 1-1 draw against Poland will always remain a big regret for him and the Indian team.

"We performed very well in the league stages of the 2000 Olympics. We played well against Argentina, Australia, and Spain and we needed to defeat Poland to qualify for the semifinals, but we couldn't do it. The match against Poland got so difficult for us and it ended in a 1-1 draw in the end.

"We were leading 1-0 after I scored in the 53rd minute but Poland managed to score in the last few moments of the match. If we had beaten Poland, then we could have qualified for the semifinals and after that anything could have happened. So that draw against Poland has remained as a sad memory for us."

The 43-year-old said that there were many exciting moments during the 1996 Games, including Leander Paes's bronze-winning feat.

"There were many exciting moments for us at the 1996 Olympics. Tennis star Leander Paes also made history in the Olympics by winning bronze. It was India's first Olympic medal in an individual event in a long time. We got to see the US President Bill Clinton as well, who visited the Olympic Village. I went to watch the athletics and football events at the Olympics as well." (IANS)



